

WRESTLING WITH ANGELS

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A. Introduction

In this article, I discuss my thoughts regarding Christian Complementarianism and Egalitarianism. The article covers some of the differences between the two positions. Hopefully, I will show why our views regarding the topic are important. Also, I discuss some of the factors with which I have had to wrestle as I consider these two divergent opinions. Good and dedicated Christians take both positions, but as in matters such as end time studies, what we believe can make a profound difference in our life now and in our future.

B. What is Complementarianism?

In the *Wikipedia* article on *Complementarianism*, the Complementarian belief encompasses “that men and women have different but complementary roles and responsibilities in marriage, family life, and religious leadership.” Complementarianism takes the position that God has ordained certain specific and different roles for men and women to fulfill in the home and in the church.

Alyssa Roat in an article dated July 5, 2019 entitled “*What are Complementarianism and Egalitarianism? What is the Difference?*” and found at www.christianity.com sets off some of the helpful characterizations of Complementarians:

- Complementarians see the father as being the head of the family
- Church leadership is the responsibility of men
- Women generally may hold positions in the church so long as they are not in authority over men.
- Men are to love and protect women as Christ loves the church.

In the marriage relationship, a husband is to lead, protect and guide his family. The wife is to respect her husband and to be his “helper” in managing the household and in raising the children. Husbands are to love their wives as Christ loved the church and gave himself for it.

a. A Detailed Example of Complementarianism as found in the 2000 Baptist Faith and Message.

Interestingly, both Baptists and Catholics are Complementarians. A review of the 2000 Baptist Faith and Message relating to marriage, makes clear many of the details of their Complementarian view. Part of Chapter XVIII of the 2000 Baptist Faith and Message dealing with The Family reads as follows:

The husband and wife are of equal worth before God, since both are created in God’s image. The marriage relationship models the way God relates to His people. A husband is to love his wife as Christ loved the church. He has the God-given responsibility to provide for, to protect, and to lead his family. A wife is to submit herself graciously to the servant leadership of her husband even as the church willingly submits to the headship of Christ. She, being in the image

of God as is her husband and thus equal to him, has the God-given responsibility to respect her husband and to serve as his helper in managing the household and nurturing the next generation.

The background and commentary given to Chapter XVIII is beautifully written, thoughtful, and is helpful in understanding the thinking behind the Complementarian view. That commentary is set forth in Annex A and should be studied carefully to understand fully the Complementarian View.

b. Roles in the Church.

As a general rule, men are in ultimate authority in the leadership of the church according to Complementarian beliefs. In essence men hold the roles as pastors over churches where both men and women are members. In some churches, the position of evangelist is also reserved for men whereas in other churches the position and role of evangelist may be held by either men or women. Many churches, even those with Complementarian beliefs, permit the use of female missionaries.

c. Organizations Supporting Complementarianism

One of the well-known organizations supporting Complementarianism is The Council on Biblical Manhood and Womanhood ("CBMW"). The CBMW has been instrumental in developing The Danvers Statement and Nashville Statement, both of which are discussed below and both of which support Complementarianism. The purpose of the CBMW was to help the church "defend against the accommodation of secular feminism." The CBMW is interdenominational. The members of CBMW include a number of theologians and professors from such colleges, universities and seminaries such as Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, Liberty University, Midwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, Dallas Theological Seminary, Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary, Reformed Theological Seminary, Phoenix Theological Seminary and numerous other organizations and institutions.

d. Statements Regarding Complementarianism

The Danvers Statement

The Danvers Statement was developed in 2007 in Danvers, Massachusetts. It sets forth many of positions of Complementarianism. One of its affirmations was: "Distinctions in masculine and feminine roles are ordained by God as part of the created order, and should find an echo in every human heart."

Another affirmation which sets forth its position on women as leaders in the church was the following: "In both men and women a heartfelt sense of call to ministry should never be used to set aside Biblical criteria for particular ministries (1 Tim. 2:11-15; 3: 1-13; Tit. 1:5-9). Rather, Biblical teaching should remain the authority for testing our subjective discernment of God's will." Although, the Danvers Statement is saying it somewhat obliquely, the meaning is that 1 Tim. 2 forbids women speaking in church despite the views of popular ministries which would have women speaking and holding leadership positions.

Finally, the Danvers Statement seems to take a more open view of women ministering in the mission field where it talks about the mission field that is outside the reach of indigenous evangelism, which at least suggest to me that the authors were contemplating a strictly Complementarian role for indigenous churches and a slightly more open rule toward women missionaries in evangelistic efforts outside the

indigenous church framework. To put it simply: Women ministers in church are NOT O.K.; women missionaries are O.K.

The Danvers Statement did not go far enough for its drafters as traditional sexual mores exploded after the Danvers Statement; therefore, we have the Nashville Statement.

The Nashville Statement

The Nashville Statement was drafted in 2017 during the annual conference of the Ethics and Religious Liberty Commission of the Southern Baptist Conference. It was later posted online and subscribed to by 150 evangelical Christian leaders of multiple denominations.

Although the Nashville Statement has a Complementarian view of gender, its purpose was to support a man-woman definition of marriage and to oppose more secular and modern definitions including homosexual unions.

In Article 3 it says: “WE DENY that the divinely ordained difference between male and female render them unequal in the dignity or worth.” Article 4 says: “WE AFFIRM that divinely ordained differences between male and female reflect God’s original creation design and are meant for human good and human flourishing.” Thus, the Nashville Statement seems to be built upon a Complementarian foundation; however, it does not deal expressly either with the roles of the man/woman relationship (other than to say that women are not second-class citizens) nor does it directly deal with women’s roles in the church. Instead the Nashville Statement moves on from the Danvers Statement to deal with items such as homosexuality, sexual morality, and transgenderism.

Numerous evangelicals support The Nashville Statement including a number of well-known people such as Francis Chan, James Dobson, John F. MacArthur, R. Albert Mohler, Jr., Russell D. Moore, J.I. Packer, John Piper and R.C. Sproul.

C. What is Egalitarianism

Egalitarians believe that men and women have equal roles. There are no gender restrictions on what rules women and men can play regardless of whether those roles are in the home, family or society.

The Christian Egalitarian believes that Jesus and the New Testament pulled down the laws regarding separation between man and women, Jew and Greek and between all racial restrictions.

Some of the characteristics of Egalitarians according to Allysa Roat are:

- Both women and men can hold any leadership position, including the role of pastor in the church.
- Marriage is a partnership of two equals who mutually submit to one another
- Both spouses are mutually responsible for the family.
- Roles should be ability-based, not gender-based.

Other characteristics suggested by others include:

- Both men and women are equally guilty regarding the fall of mankind and Eve was no more culpable than Adam.

One of the foundational verses for Christian Egalitarianism is Galatians 3:8 which states: “There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is neither male nor female; for you are all one in Christ Jesus.” In other words, the distinctions between male and female in the family, church and society are based upon legalism not upon the grace of God which abolishes all distinctions.

Further, Egalitarians will point to various roles where women have taken leadership positions in the Bible including Deborah in the Old Testament and the prophetess Hulda. In the New Testament, Egalitarians point to women in positions of leadership including the positions of house church leaders, prophets, deaconesses and even apostles. (See Rom. 16:1-7; Col. 4:15, 2 Jn. 1:1; Acts 16:13-15)

a. Roles in the Church

Christian Egalitarians believe that women are fully qualified to serve any role in the church that a man can serve including the roles of elder, pastor, bishop and deacon.

b. Organizations supporting Egalitarianism

In 1987 a number of people established Christians for Biblical Equality (“CBE”) to provide education, support and leadership based upon the principles of biblical equality. This organization created a statement regarding Egalitarianism entitled “Men, Women, and Biblical Equality” which will be discussed below. The CBE holds conferences, publishes publications and books and maintains a blog dealing with gender

c. Statements regarding Egalitarianism

CBE International has issued a statement supporting Egalitarianism which is entitled “Men, Women and Biblical Equality.” This statement I will hereafter refer to as the “CBE Statement.”

The CBE Statement begins with an introduction stating that “Scripture is to be interpreted holistically and thematically.” It also states that interpretations of Scripture should be “in harmony with the totality of Scripture”.

The CBE Statement first focuses upon “Biblical Truths.”

In Creation some of Biblical Truths are that:

- Men and women were created in full partnership.
- The forming of women from men demonstrates fundamental unity and equality
- Both men and women are co-participants in the fall and that Adam is just as guilty as Eve.
- The Rulership of Adam over Even was a result of the fall and not God’s ideal order (and I presume was reversed by Jesus and the New Testament).

Some of the other Biblical Truths in the church context are:

- Both men and women are “divinely gifted and empowered to minister to the whole Body of Christ, under His authority.”
- Women (like men) have the prophetic, priestly and royal functions and those isolated Scriptures that appear to restrict women must be interpreted “in relation to the broader teaching of Scripture.”

In connection with the family, “The husband’s function of “head” (*kephale*) is to be understood as self-giving love and service within this relationship of mutual submission.”

A selection of some of the people supporting the CBE Statement would be F.F. Bruce, Dr. Tony Campolo, Jimmy Carter, Dr. Richard Foster, Deborah M. Gill, Roger Nicole, Mary Stewart Van Leeuwen, Cecilia Yau and many others.

D. SOME KEY SCRIPTURES TO CONSIDER

Below are some of the verses of Scripture which should be reviewed in seeking the differences between the Complementarian and Equalitarian approach.

a. 1 Cor. 11:3-16--

But I want you to know that the head of every man is Christ, the head of every woman is man, and the head of Christ is God. Every man praying or prophesying, having his head covered, dishonors his head. But every woman who prays or prophesies with her head uncovered dishonors her head, and that is one and the same as if her head were shaved. For if a woman is not covered, let her also be shorn. But if it is shameful for a woman to be shorn or shaved, let her be covered. For a man indeed ought not to cover his head, since he is the image and glory of God; but woman is the glory of man. For man is not from woman, but woman from man. Nor was man created for the woman, but woman for the man. For this reason, the woman ought to have a symbol of authority on her head, because of the angels. Nevertheless, neither is man independent of woman, nor woman independent of man, in the Lord. For as woman came to man, even so man also comes through woman; but all things are from God.

Judge among yourselves. Is it proper for a woman to pray to God with her head uncovered? Does not even nature itself teach you that if a man has long hair, it is a dishonor to him? But if a woman has long hair, it is a glory to her for her hair is given to her as a covering. But if anyone seems to be contentious, we have no such custom, nor do the churches of God.

Comment: The verses above make a number of statements which Egalitarians may find disturbing. The statement that man was not created for woman, but instead woman was created for man is a statement which would not be met with rejoicing by feminists. However, Paul goes on to say that creation of both women and men are from God.

There are some who argue that during the time that these verses were written a woman who did not have her head covered might be thought of as being a person involved in immorality. Further the punishment for one who was involved in prostitution or adultery might have involved the shaving of a woman's head. Further in Tarsus, where Paul had grown up and in certain other areas of the Roman Empire, modest women in effect dressed modestly and covered their hair. Today, in Islamic countries we see similar practices in which some women are veiled but others simply cover their hair with a hijab. Uncovered hair by women in some societies is seen as a sexual stimulant to the male libido. The point is that in the times and places where Paul was operating, modest women often kept their head covered. Further Paul was also dealing with women who came out of synagogues into Christian meeting places. In the synagogues, women kept their hair covered and the failure to do so in the young church would have restricted the easy transition of religious women who were coming out of the synagogue into the church and would have given rise to offense and criticism to the nascent church.

The custom of keeping one's head covered was followed for years in the Catholic Church and even from time to time in a few non-Catholic Christian churches of various denominations.

Despite the passage above, the vast majority of Christians, including evangelical Christians, simply ignore the need for women to use head coverings believing that it was a Scripture appropriate for the time in which Paul lived but due to the changing customs today in the West is no longer considered to be a necessity despite the fact that Paul used strong wording utilized in the passage—"But if anyone seems to be contentious, we have no such custom, nor do the churches of God."

In fact, amusingly, this passage was quoted in a sermon by John McArthur as he was making a strong support of the principles of Complementarianism in his church in Los Angeles. As I watched this sermon on YouTube, it was obvious that the women in his church were not wearing head coverings as demanded by the various Scriptures which he was using as proof texts for women to be submissive to their husbands. The point is that although there is specificity in the commands of Paul, some adjustment in Scripture has been made, where the Scripture is not strictly interpreted but is interpreted spiritually to get to the underlying concept of "dressing modestly" or showing proper love and respect for authorities in life.

b. 1 Cor. 14:34-38—

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 anything, let them ask their own husbands at home; for it is shameful for women to speak in church. Or did the word of God come originally from you? Or was it you only that it reached? If anyone thinks himself to be a prophet or spiritual, let him acknowledge that the things which I write to you are the commandments of the Lord. But if anyone is ignorant, let him be ignorant.

Comment: The prohibitions against women speaking in church appear to be absolute in the above Scripture; however even advocates of Complementarianism appear to make numerous exceptions based upon the fact that situations today are far different than in the time of Paul. For instance, following the practice in the Jewish synagogue, there would have been a reading of Scripture and a period in which the reader or others might explain or comment upon the Scripture read. During the time of Paul there were no Sunday Schools, no all women's meetings and the like. Numerous

Complementarians seek to limit the requirements of this passage to the public proclamation of the Word of God at the main service of the Church. Further they make exceptions when a Senior Pastor or other male authority invites a woman to speak under their authority and permission. Often there are other unwritten exceptions for female missionaries.

In short, despite what the passage says, it is fairly liberally interpreted by Complementarians and even more liberally interpreted by Egalitarians who in effect write the passage out of their Bible with the conclusion that it is not applicable today.

For instance, note Biblical Truth No. 9 in the CBE Statement supporting Equality which says:

Therefore, the few isolated texts that appear to restrict the full redemptive freedom of women must not be interpreted simplistically and in contradiction to the rest of Scripture, but their interpretation must take into account their relation to the broader teaching of Scripture and their total context (1 Cor. 11:2-16; 14:33-36; 1 Tim. 2:9-15).

In other words, the CBE Statement suggests that it is simplistic to take the Scriptures discussed above literally. Instead, the Egalitarians read them in light of other Scriptures more sympathetic to the Egalitarian position. In short, I believe this translates into the fact that the Egalitarians do not have good answers to these Scriptures and would just as soon read them out of being divinely inspired. The Complementarians would, on the other hand, prefer to acknowledge these Scriptures as being divinely inspired but seek to limit them to some degree.

c. 1 Tim. 2:9-15—

...in like manner also, that the women adorn themselves in modest apparel, with propriety and moderation, not with braided hair or gold or pearls or costly clothing, but, which is proper for women professing godliness, with good works. Let a woman learn in silence with all submission. And I do not permit a woman to teach or to have authority over a man, but to be in silence. For Adam was formed first, then Eve. And Adam was not deceived, but the woman being deceived, fell into transgression. Nevertheless she will be saved in childbearing if they continue in faith, love, and holiness, with self-control.

Comment: This particular passage presents numerous challenges to the beliefs of Egalitarians. It stands in direct opposition against the attacks of feminist theologians. The first part of the passage about women learning in submission and silence might be explained away by culture in the time in the time in which it was written. However, the second part of the passage makes a theological leap regarding creation and the specifics of the fall. First the passage says that Adam was formed first. Due to the fact that there is more than one account of creation given in Genesis, it leads the reader to the fact that Paul taught that the creation of man and woman were done sequentially. A number of Egalitarian theologians directly challenge this account of creation. If they accept a two-step creation involving the creation of woman from man, then Egalitarians then have to posit that in such event that man was created first had no significance. This is probably dealt with to some degree in Article 2 of the CBE Statement where it says: "The Bible teaches that woman and man were created for full and equal partnership." Complementarians also agree in the concept of an equal partnership but would describe as "separate roles which are different in nature, but which are equal."

In addition, Paul stated that Adam was not deceived but that the woman, Eve, was deceived and fell into transgression. In short, Paul makes it clear that his reading of the Genesis account is that it was woman who fell first into sin and that was because she was deceived. Obviously, Paul's conclusions can be said to be the result of the cultural influence of his age, but assuming Scripture is inspired by God, Paul's comments go to his interpretation of the Genesis passages which are different from that held by the majority of the Egalitarians. Article 4 of the CBE Statement says, "The Bible teaches that man and woman were co-participants in the Fall: Adam was no less culpable than Eve." Although it is true that both man and women sinned, the Genesis passages and the 1 Timothy passages make it clear that woman fell first and it was because she was "deceived." It seems likely that one of Paul's justifications for male leadership in the church was because he believed that women were more susceptible to being deceived than men.

The last part of the 1 Timothy passage above states that women "will be saved in childbearing if they continue in faith, love, and holiness, with self-control." Obviously, this does not refer to the salvation of the individual soul because that salvation is done only by grace through faith through Jesus Christ both for men and women. Moreover, the salvation of the soul is the same for both men and women. In my opinion, Paul is speaking to some type of redemption of women and/or mankind as a group through childbirth. The Catholic Church and many Protestants believe that this might refer to the redemption of mankind through the childbirth of Jesus Christ through Mary. In Genesis 3:15 it was promised that the Seed of Woman would bruise the head of the Serpent. John MacArthur in one of his sermons summarily dismisses this interpretation of the meaning of the childbearing passage in 1 Timothy as being "obtuse." I am not sure that MacArthur is right.

Perhaps a more acceptable interpretation of the passage about women being saved "through child-bearing" goes to the fact that it is women who were responsible for bearing children and therefore not only propagating the race but propagating the church. From one perspective, the bearing of children and propagation of the race is not only one of the most basic and important functions of mankind and is in a real sense more important to the "race" than leadership, art, or any other achievements of either women and men. Moreover, women were the primary raisers of children and often were the ones who led the children into following Christ. Some of the examples of this were Godly women who had given birth to the Marks, the Timothys and Tituses of the time. In many cases it is clear that the righteous upbringing was attributable mainly to the woman and the man was scarcely mentioned. Further as the church continued to grow many of the saints and leaders of the church made mention to the spiritual contributions of their mothers. In short, women actually kept the entire creation and church going through child-birth and through the natural, moral and spiritual education of children. That is, of course, a concept which is anathema to the Egalitarian. The CBE Statement expressly rejects this concept at Item 12 which states: "The Bible teaches that both mothers and fathers are to exercise leadership in the nurture, training, discipline and teaching of their children."

d. Titus 2:3-5—

... the older women likewise, that they be reverent in behavior, not slanderers, not given to much wine, teachers of good things—that they admonish the young women to love their husbands, to love their children, to be discreet, chaste, homemakers, good, obedient to their own husbands, that the word of God not be blasphemed.

Comment: In this passage, Paul instructs Titus about the things he is to teach to the young church. The older women are to teach the younger women to love their husband, to love their children, to be homemakers and obedient to their own husbands. Obviously, at the time that Paul wrote the legitimate opportunities for women to earn income outside the family were limited. However, there were working women. Lydia was in the purple-dyeing business and Priscilla and her husband were in the tent business like Paul. Nevertheless, there was a perceived order in the world. People were expected to obey secular authorities, slaves were to obey masters, children to obey parents and women were expected to be submissive to their husbands. Generally, women did not work outside the home but often were diligent in modest money-making activities such as demonstrated by the Proverbs 31 Woman who sewed, wove, bought property, oversaw the planting of vineyards, made tapestries, made clothes and was always diligent to take care of the needs of her family. Today, the woman who works outside the home is the norm.

Despite this, there was still a hierarchical authority structure and women were encouraged by the church to be a part of this structure. Today, as society has departed from a patriarchal authority structure, there are many who desire to see the Bible reinterpreted more liberally. In fact, the term “patriarchy” is anathema to the feminist in effect meaning a system where man subjects and dominates women through social, religious and governmental systems. The CBE Statement illustrates a liberal interpretation of the Titus 2 passage in connection with the discussion of the family in Item 3 of its section called “Application” when it says:

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

In so doing, husband and wife will help the Christian home stand against improper use of power and authority by spouses and will protect the home and wife and child abuse that sometimes tragically follows a hierarchical interpretation of the husband’s “headship.”

Notwithstanding the views of the Egalitarians, the entire book of Titus appears to be about the subjection of authorities on earth to obedience of God as the ultimate authority. When we are subject to proper authorities, we set an example to the world. The book is not about slavery or the imposition of a subordinate position of women. Instead it is about order and demonstrating a good witness so that the word of God will not be maligned in the world. Wives are to be subject to their husbands (Titus 2:5); slaves are to be subject to their masters and not steal (Titus 2:9-10) and everyone is to be subject to rulers and authorities (Titus 3:1). Finally, Christians are to be gentle to all. (Titus 3:2). An in depth discussion of authority and submission by the believer to authority can be found in Exhibit B which is attached hereto.

In my opinion, the message of Christ was not about an Egalitarian revolution in the here and now, but about an ultimate submission to Christ and a belief in a just judge who not only would give eternal life but who would reward those who suffered wrong in this life with a Christian spirit.

e. 1 Peter 3:1-7—

Wives, likewise, be submissive to your own husbands, that even if some do not obey the word, they, without a word, may be won by the conduct of their wives, when they observe your chaste conduct accompanied by fear. Do not let your adornment be merely outward—arranging the hair, wearing gold or putting on fine apparel—rather let it be the hidden person of the heart, with the incorruptible beauty of a gentle and quiet spirit, which is very precious in the sight of God. For in this manner, in former times, the holy women who trusted in God also adorned themselves, being submissive to their husbands, as Sarah obeyed Abraham, calling him lord, whose daughters you are if you do good and are not afraid with any terror.

Comment: Although Paul takes the brunt by many feminists of being “misogynistic”, here we find another apostle, Peter, taking a similar attitude as Paul toward women. Peter encourages women to have a “gentle and quiet” spirit not only for themselves and as a tribute of their devotion to God but also that they may even draw their unbelieving husbands toward the faith. In short, a gentle spirit was to be shown even if a husband did not even love his wife as Christ loved the church. The church, however, also dealt with the issues of when unbelieving husbands wanted to leave their wives and made provision for that sort of thing on a practical basis knowing that sometimes the issue was a matter of peace rather than staying together. Early Christianity encountered all types of situations, including abusive employers, slave-owners who were unreasonable, army leaders who were harsh and husbands who were abusive. In many cases, the church encouraged submission as unto the Lord, but there were other cases where the church took the position that enough was enough. The goal of the church was that men and women would be saved and the likelihood of the salvation of others was enhanced by believers (both men and women) honoring and respecting authority. But there were limits such as when civic authorities called upon believers to reject Christ. At the same time, both Paul and Peter were practical, if slaves had the opportunity to become free, they were encouraged to take that opportunity rather than just remain slaves (1 Cor. 7:21).

One significant difference about today and the early days of Christianity was the focus of the church. The focus of the early church was more about obedience to God and the hope in the next life. Today, men and women are more interested in obtaining the benefits of this life and are generally uninterested in suffering wrongs so that people might come to Christ. Instead we are ever quick to defend our rights and more than willing to sacrifice the rewards of tomorrow for the benefits of today. Social justice has become the end result of many modern Christians rather than the eternal salvation of souls.

Peter encouraged the women of the church to be more concerned with the inward beauties of a gentle and quiet spirit than the physical attractiveness of beautiful clothing and hair. Further, he encouraged women to be submissive to their husbands utilizing Sarah, the wife of Abraham, as an example. This is a far cry from taking the approach of utilizing the methods of conflict resolution when there is a dispute between husband and wife as suggested by Item 3 in the “Applications” of the CBE Statement.

E. SOME OBJECTIONS TO COMPLEMENTARIANISM

a. Promotes Bondage

Egalitarians and others have made numerous objections to Complementarianism which they view somewhat akin to an Uncle Tom justification of the slavery of women. One of the first attacks is that Complementarianism in effect promotes the bondage and domination of women. In short, it gives a theological justification for men who want to keep women “in their place” and who desire to see women deprived of leadership not only in the church, but in more extreme cases, in the market place, in marriage and in every other area of life. Egalitarians not only do not see the Complementarian theology as good, they would go further and say even if the theology is good, the results are bad. Egalitarians would point out that Jesus was more open to women in important roles in life and that the Holy Spirit makes us free and not slaves. One of the key Scriptures surprisingly is Paul’s scripture that in Christ there is no male nor female (Gal. 3:8).

Sometimes good Scripture can be used for bad purposes by people who have impure intents. For instance, verses on giving can be used by the greedy and by wolves in sheep’s clothing to fleece the Christian poor. Similarly verses on subjugation can be used by False Shepherds to keep their flocks in line and to keep people from leaving the control of a bad leader. Similarly, Scriptures regarding submission of women can be used by evil men to keep their wives and girlfriends subjugated and controlled even when all of the other Scriptures on marriage are ignored by the man.

b. Complementarianism Reflects Ancient Cultural Biases

Another objection to Complementarianism is that it is a product of ancient cultural biases. The Jews, the Greeks and the Romans all had biases against the role and position of women. Aristotle, Galen and others believed that women were inferior to men both physically and morally. Both Paul and other writers of Scripture reflected the patriarchal view which promoted men and demoted women. These cultural influences made their ways into Scripture and the church in essence destroying God’s efforts to make men and women equal and the work of the Holy Spirit in setting captives, including women, free. In Christ is freedom. The sacrifice of Christ reverses the effects of the fall. God loves women just as much as He does man. To the Equalitarian, even the very concept of God as a man reflects a patriarchal view and God has both male and female characteristics. In fact, God in a number of Scriptures is shown to have a maternal love for his children, the people of God.

c. Legalism

Complementarians seem to be legalistic. They take a no prisoners point of view and do not deal with exceptions to their views. Complementarians complain that Egalitarians do not take a literal view of Scripture and at the same time, they seem not to deal with the issues of women holding positions that do not fit within the Complementarian framework. Some examples would be like Deborah who was a judge, Huldah who was a prophet and Phoebe (Romans 16:1).

Further, Complementarians are considered by Egalitarians to ignore women who have been positions of leadership in the church and on the mission field during various periods of Christian history.

The concept that the most inept man might be a leader of a church (and indeed, there have been a host of inept leaders over the years) and all of this is preferable to the most talented and called woman is a matter which exceeds reasonable belief.

Complementarians adhere to the letter of the law (much as the Pharisees) and somehow miss the spirit of the law, which is that God calls who he wills for the tasks which He desires and he is not restricted by the historic roles which have been enjoyed and proposed by men who were already holding positions of leadership.

F. EGALITARIANISM, COMPLEMENTARIANISM AND SLAVERY

As indicated previously, Christianity focused upon the saving of the soul and the ultimate spiritual destiny of the believer. In one sense it was revolutionary since it saw all people regardless of social status as being equal before God. A popular saying which reflects that attitude today is “At the foot of the cross, the ground is level.” In other words, God treats us all as children Galatians 3:28 says: “There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is neither male nor female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus.” Interestingly, Paul neither tried to destroy slavery as an institution and neither did he seek to destroy a patriarchal approach to marriage. Instead Paul appears to have encouraged order and submission as a way reaching others for Christ and as a way of honoring God. Social revolution and political revolution were not a part of Paul’s agenda. Many theologians today would expand or transform the agendas held by Peter and Paul to include social activism.

Today, slavery is viewed as a racial issue; however, in Greece and Rome it was not primary racial but many different ethnicities were enslaved and one was likely to encounter slaves of all different races. Early Christian writers such as Paul reminded those believers who were slaves to be obedient to their masters:

Col. 3:23—Slaves, obey your earthly masters in everything; and do it not only when their eye is on you and to curry their favor, but with sincerity of heart and reverence for the Lord.

Eph. 6:5—Slaves, obey your earthly masters with respect and fear, and with sincerity of heart, just as you would obey Christ.

Paul, also had warnings for Christian slaveholders:

Col. 4:1—Masters, provide your slaves with what is right and fair, because you know that you have a master in heaven.

Eph. 6:9—And masters, treat your slaves in the same way. Do not threaten them, since you know that he who is both their Master and yours is in heaven, and there is no favoritism with him.

In U.S. history, indentured servitude often involved people of European descent but later slavery became primarily racial involving people of African descent. During the days preceding and during the Civil War, many preachers and Christians in the North utilized the Bible to condemn slavery and seek its abolition whereas many pastors and Christians in the South utilized verses from the Bible to justify the institution of slavery. Today, there is almost universal agreement that slavery was a moral evil and should have been abolished despite what Paul may have written about slavery.

Further, feminists are eager to hitch their wagons to the racial issue and perhaps with good reason. They take the position that the submission of women to the leadership of men in the church is morally the equivalent to the submission of the black slave in South to the white master. Further some of the Egalitarians take the belief that the views of Complementarianism where women and men have different roles but are equal before God are no more tenable than the belief that separate but equal accommodations between blacks and whites were morally justifiable by the South in early half of the twentieth century.

Egalitarians are quick to place play the “race card” when they are discussing the rights of women and find that women’s rights are perfectly analogous to the rights of blacks in seeking complete equality and not just separate but equal accommodation.

I am illustrating this fact from a book written by Beth Allison Barr entitled The Making of Biblical Womanhood (Brazos Press 2021). I selected this book for example for a number of reasons. Ms. Barr teaches in the History Department of Baylor University and has her PH.D. from North Carolina at Chapel Hill. Both Ms. Barr and I have a history of being Baptist. Similarly, I double majored in History and Greek from Baylor University, have a Masters in History from LSU and a law degree from the University of Texas. I also taught at Dallas Baptist University many years ago before I embarked upon my legal career. Some examples of Dr. Barr playing the “race card” follow:

On page 33 of her book she identifies herself as a “white” woman. At first, I questioned why a racial identification was necessary but the answer soon became clear. In the same paragraph she quotes Clarice J. Martin regarding how patriarchy “defines” subjugated peoples and races as “the others” to be dominated.” Dr. Barr goes on to write: “Patriarchy walks with structural racism and systemic oppression....” In short, Dr. Barr is letting you know that if you are a Complementarian and subscribe to a “patriarchal view” of the Bible, then you are a racist. Thus, the feminist witch hunt for Complementarian “racists” begins.

The hunt continues. On page 173 she links women’s spiritual submission to the direction of men (such as the male pastor of the church) as being one of the tricks of the devil. Again, she links submission as a result of sex or gender with skin color again linking those who believe in Complementarianism because of Biblical verses with racists. On page 186 she links anyone who believes in Complementarianism and some type of spiritual patriarchal view of the church as being a racist when she says, “Like racism, patriarchy is a shapeshifter---.”

In case you missed the point, Dr. Barr sets forth her views clearly in effect calling anyone who subscribes to the Complementarian view as a racist as follows on page 208 of her book:

Isn’t it time that white Christians realize that the roots of biblical womanhood extend from white supremacy? In order for early modern Europeans to biblically justify their

white superiority, they had to champion the subservience of both women and Black people. As Katie Cannon explains, “Ideas and practices that favored equal rights of all people were classified as invalid and sinful because they conflicted with the divinely ordained structure that posited inequality between Whites and Blacks....The institutional framework that required Black men, women and children to be treated as chattel, as possessions rather than as human beings, was understood as being consistent with the spirit, genius and precepts of the Christian faith. Patriarchy walks hand in hand with racism, and it always has. The same biblical passages used to declare Black people unequal are used to declare women unfit for leadership. Patriarchy and racism are “interlocking structures of oppression.” Isn’t it time we get rid of both?

Of course, the underlying assumption in all of this is that because the Bible did not condemn slavery outright it is racist even if slavery was not at that time characterized in a racial context. Further, Paul should have out and out opposed the subjugation of people who were enslaved and should have rejected the role of women in a society which was patriarchal in nature. It is no wonder that Dr. Barr begins Chapter Two of her book with the words: “I HATE PAUL.” (page 39).

In essence Dr. Barr has equated a literal interpretation of some of the verses utilized by Paul and Peter as being the equivalent to being “patriarchal.” Furthermore, the role of women in the Biblical period is the equivalent of being subjugated as a slave. Therefore, those who believe women should be submissive to their husbands are racists. In addition, those who subscribe to the Complementarian position are equivalent to being racists according to Dr. Barr. Never have Complementarians been tarred with being racists so eruditely.

After watching Dr. Barr’s logical leaps in her book, I cannot say that I am particularly surprised that a church which had taken a clear Complementarian position might have some concerns about her teaching especially since she was in the process of rejecting the positions of the local church where she and her husband served both on the view of Complementarianism as well as perhaps the position regarding the infallibility of Scripture. However, we will deal with this at a later point.

G. EGALITARIANISM AND THE INSPIRATION OF SCRIPTURE

Authors and theologians such as James McArthur and Alfred Mohler, Jr. have pointed out that Egalitarians do not take a strong position on the inspiration of Scripture. In fact, Alfred Mohler, Jr. states in a Question and Answer session entitled “Should Women preach in Church? “ and dated May 31, 2019 that some of the key questions in dealing with these issues have to do with Biblical authority and whether Paul in his writings was inspired by God. I think his point is well made.

The fact that Egalitarianism may have a “broader” view of Scripture and not take verses at issue literally results from the fact that a plain reading of certain Scriptures appears not to support Egalitarianism and require extensive explanation so that the casual reader can understand their “true” meaning. Complementarians seem to have an easier ability to deal with these Scriptures. That being said, as I have pointed out earlier, other scriptures are ignored by Complementarians as well.

The CBE appears to take a wider or perhaps more elastic view of Scripture as opposed to one which emphasizes inerrancy. Below is the statement of the CBE regarding Scripture in their Statement of Belief:

The Bible teaches that God has revealed Himself in the totality of Scripture, the authoritative Word of God (Matt. 5:18; John 10:35; 2 Tim. 3:16; 2 Peter 1:20-21). We believe that Scripture is to be interpreted holistically and thematically. We also recognize the necessity of making a distinction between inspiration and interpretation: inspiration relates to the divine impulse and control whereby the whole canonical Scripture is the Word of God; interpretation relates to the human activity whereby we seek to apprehend revealed truth in harmony with the totality of Scripture and under the Guidance of the Holy Spirit.

Admittedly, I am bit of a cynic; however, I interpret this type of language to be another way of saying: “Don’t take the passages regarding submission to male authority” seriously but look to all of Scripture. Don’t be a literalist!” Also, language such as found in the CBE Statement at least suggests to me that the writers of the CBE Statement do not have a high view of the seriousness of the infallibility or inerrancy of scripture.

Once again, I turn to Beth Allison Barr’s book The Making of Biblical Womanhood for insight as to how Dr. Barr sees inerrancy’s effect upon the view of women.

At page 189 Dr. Barr writes:

As these women rose in prominence, so too rose inerrancy teachings. And these teachings buttressed male authority by diminishing female authority—transforming a literal reading of Paul’s verses about women into immutable truth.

Also, at page 191 Dr. Barr writes:

Inerrancy wasn’t important by itself in the late twentieth century; it became important because it provided a way to push women out of the pulpit. It worked extremely well.

In short, Dr. Barr takes the position that inerrancy was not so much as a theological or hermeneutical issue as it was a social issue and a tool by which women could be excluded from the pulpit. To me this is a chicken/egg question. Did a literal reading of Scripture lead to excluding women from leadership in the church or did the desire to exclude women from leadership lead to Baptists and others into taking an inerrancy view.

Dr. Barr comes down on the side that the desire to exclude women gave birth to the inerrancy view. I disagree and believe that a literal reading of Scripture (and inerrancy view) is much more likely to have fashioned the view of literalists to the position of women as leaders in the church.

Dr. Barr also sets forth her view at some other parts of her book comparing some Complementarians who had wandered into Arianism who had also believed in inerrancy. She writes at page 196:

They poured their ideas about submission and authority, embedded in the very Nature of God, into the teachings imbibed by their congregations—the same Evangelicals who already believe that inerrancy is bound up in female submission.

To summarize, in Dr. Barr's opinion, Complementarians are in many cases guilty of Subordinationism and Arianism making them both heretics and racists as well.

As mentioned above, Complementarians seem to have a little more ability to be comfortable with the concept of inerrancy of Scriptures believing that that their read on a number of key Scriptures is closer to a plain or literal reading of them. The CBMW (supporting Complementarianism) recites that one of the important things at stake goes to the authority of Scripture.

1. The authority of Scripture is at stake.

The Bible teaches that men and women are equal in value and dignity and have distinct and complementary roles in the home and the church. If churches disregard these teachings and accommodate to the culture, then the members of those churches and subsequent generations will be less likely to submit to God's word in other different matters as well.

The views of the CBMW on the inspiration of Scripture can also be inferred from Item 8 of The Danvers Statement which says: "The increasing prevalence and acceptance of hermeneutical oddities devised to interpret apparently plain meanings of Biblical Texts." In short this is an oblique way of saying that feminists and Egalitarians are not above twisting Scriptures and utilizing a host of explanations to explain away the clear meanings of Scripture.

I agree with the position taken by some Complementarians such as Mohler that the overriding issue is inerrancy of Scripture as opposed to the subjugation of women as expressed by Dr. Barr. That being said, there is no question that people of impure intent have utilized good Scriptures for bad purposes including the subjugation of women and the subjugation of slaves in the United States.

H. ORDER, AUTHORITY AND SUBMISSION

To a degree one's view of the world affects one's views regarding gender and the relationship of man and woman. For the Complementarian and the Egalitarian, the differences in position originate at the beginning of creation with the Complementarian believing that man was created first and the differences between the roles of man and woman began at the time of creation and were not the result of the fall. The Egalitarian sees an equal creation of man and woman, the imposition of penalties upon both man and woman as a result of sin and a restoration of that original equality with the work of Christ.

The issue regarding authority is important. The question is whether God has imposed an authority structure upon nations, upon the churches and upon families. If so, what is that authority structure and should we adhere to it today? Those who believe that God has set up "authorities" and that it is proper to respect instituted authorities are likely to find their values validated by a Complementarian world view. On the other hand, those who find their validation challenging accepted authority structures or more accepting of vague authority structures may find themselves more comfortable in the Egalitarian camp. A review of Scripture seems to indicate that both Jesus and the early apostles were generally comfortable with lines of clear authority. That being said, both Jesus and the early apostles found themselves challenging the accepted religious hierarchy from time to time. Exhibit B contains information regarding the views of the ancient world, Jesus and the apostles regarding order authority and submission and the need for it in our world. Submission to authority was considered to be a virtue

and brought blessing. Writers and thinkers today equate submission to authority to be the functional equivalent to subjugation and slavery.

I. MARRIAGE AS A SIGN TO THE WORLD AND TO ANGELIC AUTHORITIES

Scripture makes it clear that marriage, among other things, is a sign both to the world and the angelic authorities of the relationship of Christ to the Church. Christ evidences his love to the church and to mankind by dying to save those who will become the people of God. In addition, the church becomes like the bride and has a loving and submissive relationship to Christ. We go where the Spirit leads us and we are obedient to the leadership of Christ. If we work backward and say that the Church has an Egalitarian relationship with Christ, I believe we miss the point. We do not assume the place of Christ's leadership in the Church, nor do we share it. Instead, the church is in love with her leader and the church follows the direction which Christ leads. At the same time, Christ not only gives direction to the church but also gives the church supply and protection. It is hard to imagine that if the church does not want to do what Christ says that we consider some type of dispute resolution. In Christ is all of the wisdom of God and all of the power of God. There is no one to mediate between Christ and his Church because Christ is already our mediator.

Interestingly enough, in the sense that the church is the bride of Christ, there is the equality that the feminist seeks. Men and women are both submitted to Christ. Both men and women both submit to the leadership of Christ. Both men and women are to love Christ and join with Mary in breaking the alabaster jar of loving adoration and worship. In a real sense, we are co-servants of Christ.

In one sense, I believe that both Egalitarians and Complementarians have missed the point. The focus is not so much as men's relationship to women or women's relationship to men. Instead, the real issue is that the church is to be the bride of Christ and that we are mutually to be servants to Christ and servants of Christ to others. We have focused upon our rights not on the needs of others. Both men and women need to heed the words of Christ to Peter when he said to Peter regarding John: "What is that to Thee, follow thou me."

Both male-oriented and feminist theologians have fought over whether they are getting their rights and what is due to themselves. They ask themselves how they can throw off domination of their fellow believers. The nature of the Christian faith is to remove the log from our own eye first before attending to the splinter in our brother or sister's eye.

Men need not to be so concerned about whether their wives are being submissive as they need to refocus upon their responsibility to love their wives as Christ has loved the church. Men not loving their wives is a gigantic log in the eye of men and it needs to be removed.

Women for their part need to focus upon retrieving that gentle and kind spirit that Paul talks about instead of trying to make themselves into men to replace men.

Both men and women need to reacquire the humility of Christ as he washed the feet of his disciples. Love needs to return both to the marriage relationship and to the church. The Church needs to illustrate to the angelic authorities and to the world a loving rather than a competitive relationship.

Instead of focusing upon what the opposite sex or the opposite partner has done wrong, we need to focus upon what we have done wrong and submit our sinful actions to God. Instead of a spirit of

rebellion, we need a spirit of loving compassion and submission in the church for this is the way of Christ.

J. ORDER VS CHAOS

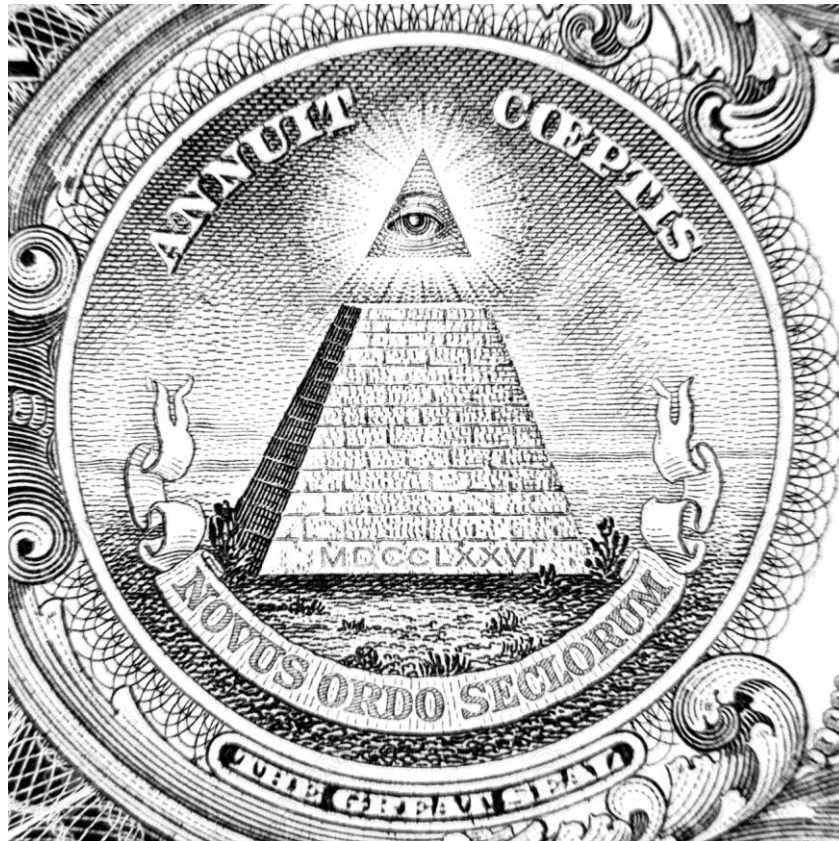
In the ancient world, order was considered preferable over chaos. Further, the progress of the faith through evangelization appears to be more effective during time of order. Historically, the response to chaos has been to impose order; however, the imposition of order in history often involves the subjugation of individual rights to the larger concerns and rights of the state. However, it is important to balance the rights of the state with the protection of individual rights. In a riot, you may have a high degree of individual freedom, but at the same time you may experience being subject to a variety of masters. One of the alternatives that mankind experiments with from time to time is the concept of nihilism and anarchy. Both can afford the opportunity for experiencing a wide range of freedoms. For instance, if one does away with law you may have a greater degree of personal freedom such as the freedom to kill someone but to do away with law also increases the opportunity that you may be killed by someone exercising their expanded freedom to kill without the constraints of law.

From a historical point of view one can review history as a number of swings between order and chaos with one coming into prominence and then falling out of favor. Therefore, history could be viewed as a succession of conflicts between chaos and order over time. Here are a few simplifications to illustrate the point. The rise of the Roman Empire was in essence an effort to increase order in order to keep chaos (as exemplified by the barbarian hords) at bay. Law is an effort to protect individual rights as order is imposed. We have the concept of law and order with the protection of individual rights through a due process in the midst of a larger order which keeps people under control so that social goals can be reached.

As the Roman empire became overburdened by administrative functions, we find that the barbarians become more prominent, sacking the empire and once again chaos increased as law disappeared. During the early Middle Ages, we have a period where chaos continues to reign but there is growth once again of the city states in Italy and in the nation states. With the rise of the nation states, order once again begins to dominate and at the same time we see concepts such as the divine right of kings.

As monarchy eradicated personal rights and freedoms we find a search for individual freedom again in countries like the United States and like France in the French revolution.

The United States at its inception saw itself as a nation which was a natural successor to God's order. This is evidenced simply by looking at the back of our dollar bill which is represented below.



On the back are two mottos. The one under the pyramid uses the Latin words *Novus Ordo Seclorum*. This means that the government of the United States embodies The New Order of the Ages. In short, our government was to bring order but we still protected the rights of mankind. These protections would be embodied later in our Bill of Rights or the First Ten Amendments to the Constitution.

General Washington would write in his 1783 farewell letter to the Army: “the foundation of our Empire was not laid in the gloomy age of Ignorance and superstition but at an Epoch when the rights of mankind were better understood and more clearly defined than at any former period.”

The language used for the motto was selected by Charles Thompson and was a partial quote from the fourth Eclogue of Virgil (lines 5-8) meaning:

Now is come the final era of the Sibyl's song;
 The great order of the ages is born afresh.
 Now justice returns, honored rules return
 Now a new lineage is sent down from high heaven.

Above the pyramid and the all-seeing eye of Providence is another Latin phrase from Virgil “*Annuit Coeptis*” meaning “I (Providence approves). In short, our seal has on it the concept that the establishment of the United States was to be a new order (including law) and the establishment of that order was approved by Providence.

In one sense, there had been a golden age of order and law under Augustus Caesar. Medieval Christians believed that there would be a second golden age of law and order when Christ returned. The United States felt that the establishment of our country had been done under the guidance and guarding hand of Providence and under the laws of the United States would be an age of order with freedom.

Christianity looks forward to a golden age of law and order but that law and order will only be established when Christ returns and establishes His kingdom on earth.

After the establishment of the United States a number of totalitarian governments have made efforts to establish law and order but the attempts have sacrificed personal and individual rights. National Socialism under Adolf Hitler cast itself as a law and order government but its totalitarian aspects crushed individual freedoms and brought war to the world. Likewise, Communism despite advertising itself as not even being a state, crushed human freedom and eventually crumbled of its own weight. After the fall of Communism, this author spent a short time in Russia and found that it was a place of great freedom since Communist authority had been removed. However, in its place (nature abhors a vacuum) came other oppressive factors including the Russian mafia and oligarchs. The tyranny of the one State was replaced by the tyranny of the many. Gradually the Russians have reinstated a stronger state to restore order.

Today the United States grapples with forces seeking to balance law and order with the enjoyment of personal freedoms. There is often a difficulty in balancing safety and order while seeking to respect personal freedoms.

The culmination of the conflict between the order and chaotic freedom is, in my opinion, not likely to be resolved prior to the establishment of the Kingdom of God on earth by the personal return of Jesus Christ who is the only one who has the wisdom and ability to run that Kingdom with mercy, judgment, wisdom and love.

K. SATANS DESIRE FOR CHAOS

It is my belief that we are experiencing end-time warfare over key areas of faith and practice. Satan desires the destruction of order. He comes to "kill, steal and destroy." (John 10:10). Those efforts include the destruction of the authority of scripture in the life of believers. It includes the influence of Scripture and law in the society in which we live. As order is destroyed, personal freedom is proclaimed. Instead of submission to authority in society, rebellion and independence from law and authority is glorified and justified. Those seeking the promotion of order are vilified as being totalitarians, bigots and haters. Building blocks under the state are also destroyed. The family is in essence destroyed and is replaced by the tribe. The role of mothers and fathers are despised and vilified. Households with a father and a mother are superseded through various mechanisms with one parent families and through families with same sex families. In short, the building blocks of the nation which are the families are either destroyed or they are redefined.

In addition, the role of the male priesthood in the church and the family is destroyed. Strong men seeking to walk in spiritual leadership are no longer desired in the church or in the larger society. They are vilified as racists, slaveholders, dominators and abusers. The church instead gravitates back to a priestess hierarchy and a God more identified as a Magna Mater.

I believe Satan promotes rebellion in the home, church and nation. Children are encouraged to rebel against their parents, wives are encouraged to reject their husband's spiritual leadership and citizens are encouraged to reject their country and God. Rebellion and independence are lauded as being enlightened. Further personal freedoms are glorified often at the expense of authorities designed to protect the individual, the person and the church.

God's goal in these end times is to have a church which has a pure love for Christ and which is faithful to Christ. The church is to be in the process of purifying herself to get ready for the return for Christ. The role of the Church as submissive bride of Christ is greatly feared by Satan. There can be no submission as a bride if the concept of a submissive wife is destroyed. For this reason, Satan seeks to destroy the concepts of husband and wife as well as the basic concepts of male and female. If there is no female, there can be no submissive bride of Christ. It is for this reason that lesbianism and homosexuality are so strongly promoted by Satan. With the increase in homosexuality and lesbianism, there is a decrease in the Levitical priesthood where men were married and the elders in the church who are to have one wife and be experienced in the raising of children successfully.

With the destruction of gender and sexuality, there is no model for the church. There are no spiritual male leaders and no submissive wives. Sexuality and gender become only points on a sliding scale and not role models for family life, the church or national life. Children are taught in school the new approaches to sexuality and gender leading to personal and civic confusion. With that confusion comes chaos.

It is no wonder that the Council on Biblical Manhood and Womanhood wrote the following in its Statement and Vision:

2. The health of the home is at stake.

If families do not structure their homes properly, in disobedience to the teachings of Ephesians 5, 1 Peter 3 and Colossians 3, then they will not have the proper foundation from which to withstand the temptations of the devil and the various onslaughts of the world. This hinders the sanctification of married couples and also introduces confusion about basic parenting issues such as raising masculine sons and feminine daughters.

3. The health of the church is at stake.

Just like the home, if the church disobeys the teaching of 1 Timothy 2, 1 Corinthians 11 and disregards the structure that God put into place for the community of faith from the beginning, then the church will be weakened. If the church is weakened in its convictions it will be less effective in accomplishing its mission.

6. The advance of the gospel is at stake.

Ephesians 5 calls husbands and wives to relate to one another as a picture of Christ and the picture involves the humble, sacrificial leadership of the husband and the joyful intelligent submission to that leadership by the wife. Husbands and wives who model this improperly portray a distorted and false picture of Jesus Christ, the Head and Savior

of his bride, the church. Deviation from biblical teaching on manhood and womanhood hinders the advance of the gospel.

It is interesting to me that one of the statements regarding the rationale of the Danvers Statement is that the reinterpretation of female roles by feminist theologians leads to what is called at Item 8 of the Rationale: “the increasing prevalence and acceptance of hermeneutical oddities devised to reinterpret apparently plain meanings of Biblical texts.” One of the stranger instances in my opinion is what happens to Titus 2:4-5:

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.

In essence, older women who teach younger women to be keepers at home and to obedient at home in essence instead of doing a good service are doing a terrible thing by participating in the continuing domination of women.

L. CHECKS AND BALANCES

One of the greatest safe-guards for women who live in a Complementarian Christian world would be if the husband actually loved his wife as Christ loves His church. That type of love means that a husband listens to his wife and sacrifices for his wife. He puts her needs ahead of his own. The problem, of course, is that most husbands, including those who are Christians and who are Complementarians, do not really love their wife as Christ loved the church. They ended up appropriating what they consider to be the benefits of Complementarianism without carrying out the mandates of Christ. It is no wonder that some women find it necessary to reject anything that their spouse believes. In short, it is somewhat like a situation where the husband comes in to a wonderful meal at a table and instead of seeing that his wife is fed first, states that he believes he is to be fed first and then gobbles up everything on the table leaving nothing for her. The problem with Complementarianism is that men are talking the talk but not walking the walk.

There are protections however, but they are not blatantly obvious. In one instance in my own marriage, my wife felt that some of the family’s needs were not being met despite the fact that we both discussed and prayed over our financial situation which was at the time very tight. She disagreed with some decisions which I ended up making and basically told me that she was going over my head and taking her complaints to God. She did and I changed. The wife does have right to appeal decisions in marriage over the head of men and take them to God who is her true source and, if necessary, her avenger. Please don’t get me wrong. I am never suggesting that a woman put up with abuse in marriage. If she chooses to do so as an act to God, then her decision should be respected. However, if she chooses to go and seek shelter for herself and /or her children, she should always be supported and loved by the church. One of the great issues is that those who are in abusive situations are often enslaved through the actions of the abuser and find themselves to submitting to abuse long after they or others should have taken positive actions to protect them.

All of that being said, are there ways of spiritual appeal from the decision of a husband and does the wife have the ability to avail herself of that appeal? Below are some things we know:

- a. The wife has an equal standing before God as a daughter of God;
- b. God does not hear the prayers of a man who is unfaithful to his wife (Malachi 2:13-16);
- c. God hears the prayers of the widow but he also hears the prayers of abused and ignored wives;
- d. God brings judgment when authority is abused;
- e. Women have a direct link to God which does not go through men. In essence they are somewhat like a female high-priest (just as men are a high-priest). The veil is rent not just for men but for women as well.
- f. Women are partners in marriage. See Malachi 2:4.
- g. Women and men are seen as one person in God's eyes.
- h. In the leadership of the church, elders are to be humble, gentle and kind. Elders are to have illustrated their ability to lead by loving and being faithful to their one wife and to have shown their ability to be gentle as illustrated by raising their own children in the faith. Elders are to have a foot-washing, servant mentality.

Sarah is a great example of a woman who appealed to God despite the decision of her husband. We like to think of Sarah in the words of Peter in 1 Pet. 3:5-6:

For in this manner, in former times, the holy women who trusted in God also adorned themselves, being submissive to their husbands, as Sarah obeyed Abraham, calling him lord, whose daughters you are if you do good and are not afraid with any terror.

Yet Sarah was not quite the demure and submissive wife when it came to her child Isaac. When Sarah sees Ishmael scoffing at the feast when Isaac is weaned, Sarah demands that Ishmael and Hagar be cast out. See Genesis 21: 9-13:

And Sarah saw the son of Hagar, the Egyptian, whom she had borne to Abraham scoffing. Therefore she said to Abraham, "Cast out this bondwoman and her son; for the son of this bondwoman shall not be heir with my son, namely with Isaac." And the matter was displeasing in Abraham's sight because of his son. But God said to Abraham, "Do not let it be displeasing in your sight because of the lad or because of your bondwoman. Whatever Sarah has said to you, listen to her voice; for in Isaac your seed shall be called. Yet I will also make a nation of the son of the bondwoman, because he is your seed.

In our First Peter passage, we have Peter holding Sarah up as a submissive woman. However, when we go to Genesis we find that Sarah gets her way and God takes her side even though Abraham does not want to cast out Hagar and Ishmael. Sarah has appealed to God and God has taken her side instead of Abraham's side.

In one sense, having a daughter of a king living in your family says a lot about how she is to be treated and about the protections which should be accorded her. Imagine being a Vice President in a major corporation. Interestingly the department that you are over has the boss's only daughter working in it. Yes, you get to be "the decision maker" but every night the daughter of the CEO goes home to have supper with the CEO and discuss the events of the day. Having experienced a similar situation, I can assure you that there are practical limits upon your power as a decision maker. The daughter, in effect, has power that is far superior to yours despite your position and title. Relationship and access protect the daughter.

If you are going to take the Complementarian position, then the man, at least, must be willing to carry out the obligations of being a husband and to be the spiritual leader of the family. You are not permitted to play the Complementarian Card if you do not carry out the obligations imposed upon the husband by Scripture.

M. WHAT IS ALL THIS STUFF ABOUT GODLY CHILDREN ABOUT?

One of the methods by which the church increases is by one or more parents raising Godly children. Interestingly we see some of the great leaders of the church coming from women who raised Godly children. Two that come to mind are Mark and Titus. Mark was the nephew of Barnabas and was taken on the first Missionary journey by Paul and Barnabas. Mark left in the middle of the journey to return home. Despite that, Mark became a great man of God writing the earliest Gospel (Mark) and then going on to become the bishop of Alexandria where he was martyred for the faith. The other individual who was raised by a Godly mother was Titus who accompanied Paul on many of his mission trips. Children being raised in the faith especially by Godly mothers have contributed greatly to the expansion of the kingdom of God.

The importance of children harkens back to Eve who received the promise of God that through her womb would come the one who would crush the head of Satan (Gen. 3:15). But how about women who did not have children.

Since Satan knew that his demise would result from the offspring of Eve, he made it difficult for there to be children from the line of Adam and later from the line of Noah. Abraham did not have children until he was 100 years old and Sarah was about 90 years old. Difficulty in having children would plague Rebecca, Rachel, and many other women in the Bible. In addition, where there were two children it seemed that Satan worked overtime to disqualify both. We have Abel dying and his brother Cain being a murderer, we have wars between the descendants of Isaac (Israelites) and the descendants of Ishmael (Arabs). Satan also attempted individual murders of children through foreign practices relating to sacrifices of children to gods and the mass execution of children when the Israelites were in Egypt and the murder of innocents by Herod to keep the Messiah from being born. Satan has no love for children. Today we see the bloodletting continue through the promotion of abortion and the applause of women's rights groups who promote and approve abortion. In the Third Reich we see forced sterilization and the murder of children and Jewish parents in concentration camps. In other words, Satan has made a calculated plan to extinguish the lives of Jewish and Christian children. Part of the initial reason was to keep the Messiah from being born. After the birth, life, death and resurrection of the Messiah it is to keep the kingdom of God from increasing through children.

We have mothers and fathers who are raising children for the kingdom which they have birthed. We also have mothers and fathers who have rescued and adopted children and bringing them into the kingdom today. Further we have those who cannot have children and who do not care to adopt bring into the kingdom of God spiritual children. Indeed, it is God's will that his kingdom increase and all of us male and female have the opportunity to help expand the kingdom of God to grow by bringing in both natural and spiritual children. We rescue people from the domain of darkness and bring them into the Kingdom of Light. Here is a lovely statement regarding the sacrifices of many men and women who due to their love of the Lord choose not to take husbands or wives and forsake natural children and yet bring forth spiritual children for the Kingdom of God. This is a quote from a missionary to China, Bertha Smith:

Calling upon a nearby peak to be my witness, I made a covenant with the Lord. Lord, I want to enter into an agreement with you today. You called me to China and You gave me grace to follow in coming. I am here to win souls for You. The only thing that will take the the place of my own children will be spiritual children. If You will take from my heart this pain, I will be willing to go through with just as much inconvenience, self-denial, and pain to see children born into the family of God, as is necessary for a mother to endure to see children born in the flesh.

Multiplication and fruitfulness is the right and privilege of the believer and we all have the right to see new members birthed into God's Kingdom.

N. EXCEPTIONS FOR THE EXCEPTIONAL

One of the difficulties which I run into in studying this particular area of gender and the views of Complementarianism and Egalitarianism is that theologians seem to be a little unforgiving in their conclusions. Like the Sphinx in *Oedipus Rex* by Sophocles, they seem to measure the conclusion and stretch it if it is too short or lop it off if it is too long. The fact of the matter is that we appear to have a number of exceptions to the Complementarian and Egalitarian theories. In the Bible we seem to have numerous women of God who have a strong mind of their own running around breaking the molds instead of embracing their roles. We have Sarah taking charge when it comes to Isaac and Ishmael. In addition, Rebecca is hardly the model wife when she encourages her son Jacob to steal the blessing of Isaac which would normally have gone to Esau. So much for the "Godly" authority of the husband! Yet even here the actions worked according to God's plan. Strong minded women like Tamar made sure that she got her legal rights from Judah. Also, there is the wise Abigail who overrules her husband Nabal's decision not to help David. We have independent women including the prostitute Rahab who enters not only into Jewish society but even into the very line of David and Christ. We have Deborah sitting under the Tree and leading the Israelites as a Judge and Huldah acting as a prophetess. There are frankly many women used by God in Scripture that simply do not quite fit the mold that men and the church would like them to fulfill.

In the New Testament, we run into women like the saucy women at the well, as well as the devoted Mary Magdalene and others who provide examples of devotion to Jesus. In the first century church we run into numerous women including some of whom worked with Paul. For instance, there was Priscilla, who was in business with her husband Aquila. There were business women like Lydia who was the first person converted to Christ in Greece. In addition, there were other well-known women working for the

kingdom such as Phoebe, Junia, Eudia and Syntyche. Often women were “the first.” Mary Magdalene was the first to see Christ. Lydia was the first to be converted in Greece.

In modern times, we find women who do not always fit into our pre-conceived molds ministering to Jesus. Some of these women fall into the Complementarian camp; others do not. Here are a few of which I am familiar. There was Marilyn Hickey who worked under her husband’s authority but was a wonderful teacher and became a very famous media personality. There were great revivals held by Aimee Semple McPherson. Most people recognized the healing services of Kathryn Kuhlman, who claimed that God had offered her ministry to a man first but that he had refused to take it (Somewhat like Deborah and Barak so to speak). There were great women writers and teachers such as Elizabeth Elliot and Beth Moore. There were great missionary leaders who were women such as Lottie Moon and others. Many of these women were single and a number of them were martyred for following Christ to the mission field. In short, there are volumes which can be written about Christian women who have followed Christ. Sometimes these women do not fit into our strict theological parameters for females in ministry but they exist in history and are somewhat reminiscent to the women bathing Jesus feet with oil at a dinner. Men sit around and debate whether the oil should have been sold and whether the ministry is outrageous and extravagant, whereas Jesus seems to be content to accept the ministry.

Throughout history there have been women who did not fit the mold that is made popular. Sometimes these women were even outspoken and brash and due to the force of their personalities and intellects and ended up standing out in a world filled with ignorance and mediocrity. Some of these women who come to mind are women like Joan of Arc, Harriet Beecher Stowe, Catherine Booth, Hildegard of Bergen, Catherine of Sienna, Teresa of Avilla, Teresa of Lisieux, St. Helena and Mother Teresa. These are not women known for “staying in their place” or following the norms.

Of course, one of the problems is that the average Protestant church unfortunately has a scant knowledge of either the contributions of women or even of rudimentary Christian history. Satan has attempted to rob the church from knowing its inheritance from Christ and its inheritance from the acts of faith lived out through the lives of those who have followed Christ in history.

The issue is one of exceptions. We have our general promulgations of women being subordinate to their husbands and husband loving their wives, but perhaps we need a little elasticity and allow history and God to sort out what ministries will be honored in the long term. If men do not want to sit under a woman’s ministry (and many do not), then rest assured they will not do it.

One of the problems to the conservative (of which I count myself) is that we are afraid that exceptions will eat up the rule. There is an old Arab saying that you not let the camel put his nose under the tent because pretty soon you will have the entire camel inside of the tent. Rather than take the risk that the camel will get inside the tent, conservatives have nailed theological tent stakes all along the sides of the tent due to the fear that women’s ministry will eat up men’s ministry and the admonitions of Scripture regarding male leadership will be lost. For various reasons that fear is not totally unfounded. For instance, women have been shown to have superior ability in the area of language and speaking. After barriers were rightfully dropped on entrance into law schools and law firms by women, the entrance of women into the profession was inundated. In short there are areas where women can greatly excel.

The fear is that the exception will become the rule and in time the concept of male leadership in the church which many conservatives believe is required by Scripture will be lost. Of course, the response to this by feminists is the sooner the better.

Although we like to have bright lines as we consider women's issues in the church, unfortunately bright lines are hard to find and the fact is that studies in this are, like life itself, messy. Sometimes, a couple of my granddaughters are described as a "hot mess." The study of gender and women's position in Scripture and the Church is often "a hot mess."

O. SCIENTIFIC STUDIES

Scientific studies on the unique abilities and limitations of the male and female would be helpful. Unfortunately, in my opinion, we are not likely to see much help from that direction in the near future. For various reasons, scientific studies relating to issues which are socially sensitive appear no longer to be likely or reliable. At one time, science was held captive by the church. Most of us know the history of Galileo. As Galileo supported the fact that the earth revolved around the sun, the Catholic Church became outraged and the Inquisition in 1615 concluded that the proposition that earth revolved around the sun was a contradiction of Scripture. When Galileo defended his view, he was tried by the Inquisition and forced to retract his views. For Galileo's beliefs, he was forced to endure house arrest for the rest of his life. In the modern world, the state has replaced the church in controlling science.

Several examples support this proposition. For instance, it is clear that science became the servant of the state both in the Third Reich and under Communism. In the Third Reich, science was forced to serve the beliefs of the Nazi party as illustrated by its conclusions regarding race and the Jews. It is important to keep in mind that this subjugation and distortion of science occurred in one of the most advanced and leading scientific communities of the world during that age.

In the United States the reliability and integrity of the scientific community has been regularly impugned in connect with discussions and studies relating to COVID and alternatives for curing COVID. The scientific and medical communities have fractured with many taking one position and many taking another. Unfortunately, with the advent of fake news, there has also been fake science with lay people having no idea of what to believe as scientists appear on news and talk shows taking adverse opinions.

Moreover, not only is science becoming doubted due to different views, but there are areas of science where science is either subservient to the state and even more subservient to political correctness and the opinion of social media. For instance, scientific studies which suggest differences in races or genders are not welcome unless those studies support equality and acceptance. Topics which in any way might contravene the goals of the LGBT+ agenda are not welcomed. Unwelcome studies do not receive funding and those academics who are involved may lose jobs or tenure. For instance, any scientific studies regarding reparative or conversion therapy are not welcomed and any conclusions other than they are harmful are not welcomed. The issue has been closed by such institutions as the American Academy of Pediatrics, the American College of Physicians, the American Counseling Association, American Psychiatric Association and the American Psychological Association. Any further scientific studies are neither welcome nor appreciated.

Another example is that any scientific studies which reject Darwinism, evolution or the transmutation of species is rejected. Any belief regarding creation of the earth which indicate even the possibility of a personal creation is rejected out of hand. Studies indicating the weakness or impossibility of the Darwinian hypothesis being incorrect are not welcomed. The study of Creation Science, Neo-creationism or Intelligent Design are all branded as being "pseudoscientific."

Recently our country has experienced the effects of Critical Race Theory where any criticism of the theory is considered by its proponents to be proof that the theory is correct. In other words, the theory can never be wrong because if you say it is wrong that is evidence that you are racially biased. All historical facts of our Nation's history have been questioned. In addition, at the time we have endured the Cancel Culture phenomenon where if your beliefs do not line up with the latest nuances of a diversified viewpoint you are "called out" on social media. In the name of tolerance, we act intolerantly. If you disagree with the prevailing social view, you are called out and punished. We are experiencing a new Cultural Revolution analogous to the one experienced in China some years ago. If you are engaged in "wrong think" you need to be reeducated for the good of all.

While schools and universities were at one point considered to be places of free thinking and tolerance, there is currently little room or tolerance for anything other than the latest beliefs regarding diversity, inclusion and political correctness. The former President of Harvard, Lawrence H. Summers, at one point called out a "creeping totalitarianism" on college campuses. That totalitarianism is now here. Dissent to diversity is no longer tolerated.

The point of this section, is that any study which might show any superiority of one gender over another for any purpose, except perhaps for child-birth, is not welcome and if made will be distorted, challenged and questioned by those who feel that the study is not supportive of their views regarding an absolute equality. Science has again become the servant of the state instead of an impartial arbiter of facts. Scientific conclusions unfortunately have become as biased as the news.

P. BETH MOORE AND THE THREE TIERS

Beth Moore was a Southern Baptist who began her ministry under the late Pastor of First Baptist Church of Houston, John Bisagno. She began as an aerobics instructor there giving a Bible teaching with each class. Later her ministry grew to hosting very popular Bible studies at First Baptist. In the early 1990's she began to do written Bible studies for Lifeway, a publishing arm of the Southern Baptists. Her first study "A Woman's Heart: God's Dwelling Place" was published in 1995. Beth Moore later operated out of Living Proof Ministries and promoted Bible studies especially for women and public speaking at stadiums and other events sponsored by Living Proof Ministries.

The almost tragic story of Beth Moore resulted from a perfect storm of factors. Moore had been a victim of sex abuse growing up and was outspoken regarding both the need to protect victims and the fact that religious, and in particular Baptist leaders, needed to take responsibility for sexual abuse in Baptist churches and for keeping silent as offending pastors went to new pastorates. The fact of the matter was that there had been numerous cases of sexual abuse relating to pastors and others in authority. The Houston Chronicle had reported in 2019 that there had been 700 cases of sexual abuse among Southern Baptist in a twenty year period. One of the issues was whether the Southern Baptist Convention ("SBC") would step up to accept responsibility and take sufficient measures to significantly reduce incidences of abuse. This problem was compounded by the fact that Southern Baptist Churches are by nature independent of one another and cooperate with one another mostly when it comes to missions. Various issues floating around the Convention in a similar time frame dealt with whether the SBC was open enough in the areas of race (this was compounded by the belief of certain Black pastors relating to Critical Race Theory). Other issues dealt with a purging from Baptist colleges and seminaries of those who did not believe in a verbal inspiration of Scripture.

A second but related aspect of the storm dealt with Donald Trump's admission of sexual shenanigans and comments made by Trump against women. Beth Moore took an unpopular stand against Donald Trump and questioning how American Evangelism, and Baptists could in effect look away from his comments and have an on-going political affair with Donald Trump. On one occasion she tweeted: "I'm 63 ½ years old & I have never seen anything in these United States of America I found more astonishingly seductive & dangerous to the saints of God than Trumpism. This Christian nationalism is not of God. Move back from it."

The third aspect of the political storm resulted from a tweet on Twitter that she was speaking on Mother's Day. Generally speaking Moore had just been a public speaker and evangelist and not the leader or pastor of a church. The tweet reignited issues regarding women speaking in the pulpit. Amusingly enough, Beth Moore, like Donald Trump, seemed to get into trouble in connection with "tweets." The tweet igniting the Beth Moore brouhaha about speaking in church began with Beth Moore tweeting on April 27, 2019 about the five things she would still like to do. She then tweeted "PS. My original #5 was Teaching a men's Sunday class at a church full of Calvinists just to get everybody going. But I deleted it. Reluctantly. I'm in a tad of a mischievous mood." Her friend, Vicki Courtney then tweeted: "Yours truly is preaching 3 services at a SB church on Mother's Day. But, shhhhhh." In a reply to Ms. Courtney, Beth Moore tweeted: "I'm doing Mother's Day too! Vick, let's please don't tell anyone this." Amazingly these somewhat innocent tweets seemed to set off a firestorm on whether women should be preaching in Southern Baptist pulpits. (This seems strange to me because even in a Complementarian church there could have been arguments made that a female in the pulpit was done under the authority of a pastor or under the authority of the leadership of the church).

In June 2019 Beth Moore participated in a panel on sex abuse in the Southern Baptist Convention. She came away from that panel realizing that she no longer felt at home in the Southern Baptist Convention. In an interview with the Religion News Service ("RNS") on March 5, 2021, Moore announced that she was "no longer a Southern Baptist."

Beth Moore on April 7, 2021 began to take on Complementarianism. Her tweet said:

Let me be blunt. When you functionally treat complementarianism—a doctrine of MAN—as if it belongs among the matters of 1st importance, yea, as a litmus test for where one stands on inerrancy & authority of Scripture, you are the ones who have misused Scripture. You went too far.

She continued her tweeting apologizing for her past beliefs by saying:

I beg your forgiveness where I was complicit. I could not see it for what it was until 2016. I plead your forgiveness for how I just submitted to it and taught it. I trusted that the motives were godly. I have not lost my mind. Nor my doctrine. Just my naivety.

It should be mentioned that Beth Moore kept the door open to her beliefs saying by sending an e-mail to the RNS responding as to whether she abandoned Complementarianism. She stated: "I'm not going to be pushed into either category right now because that's not my point...My point is that it has taken on the importance of a first tier doctrine."

The reactions to Beth Moore's disavowal of the SBC and Complementarianism were electric. Feminists became rapturous about the significance of Moore seeing the light. Conservatives and Complementarians immediately jumped to the defense of Complementarianism

Examples of Responses Supporting Beth Moore

Here are just a few examples of some of the those supporting Beth Moore:

Jacki C. King-wife of a Southern Baptist Pastor. Mrs. King has a teaching ministry said: "I am so deeply grieved and sorry for the hurt and deep losses you have taken from your own....It is the deepest sting and betrayal. Thank you for paving a way, for being faithful, for your example. I think and pray for you so often. Thank you, sister."

Dr. Beth Allison Barr of Baylor, compared Moore to Joshua commanding the walls of Jericho to fall down. Barr said: "She just shouted...This is going to be the beginning of the end of complementarianism". Another tweet from Dr. Barr was: Her courageous admission of complicity in a system that harms women and clear recognition of complementarianism as man-made took my breath away."

Jemar Tisby, who is President of a Black Christian collective called the Witness said: "Beth Moore has more influence and more cachet with Southern Baptists, especially white Southern Baptist women, than the vast majority of Southern Baptist pastors or other leaders. So her leaving is not just about one individual."

Diana Butler Bass, Christian author, said: "Beth Moore leaving the Southern Baptist Convention is the religion news equivalent to Prince Harry leaving the royal firm. A big and unthinkable deal."

Responses Opposing Beth Moore and Supporting Complementarianism

Others clearly differed with Beth Moore especially on her comments regarding Complementarianism:

Denny Burk, a professor at Boyce College which is an undergraduate college associated with Southern Seminary and the President of the Council on Biblical Manhood and Womanhood, said: "The claim that Complementarianism is a man-made doctrinal innovation is a myth. The word "Complementarianism" is indeed a relatively new term. But it is a new term coined to refer to ancient teaching that is rooted in the text of Scripture. On the contrary, Egalitarianism is the doctrinal innovation, not the biblical idea that men and women are created equally in God's image with distinct and complementary differences."

John MacArthur, well-known Los Angeles California pastor's acidic advice to Beth Moore in a sermon was "Go home."

Dr. Owen Strachan, Professor of Theology at Grace Bible Theological Seminary and a former President of CBMW, tweeted this on May 8, 2019: "Complementarians disagree cheerfully about much. One thing we have massive agreement on: Women do not preach on Sunday to the church. Doing so is functional egalitarianism. We will not capitulate here". Beth Moore responded on May 9, 2019: "Owen, I am

going to say this with as much respect & as much self-restraint as I can possibly muster. I would be terrified to be a woman you'd approve of. And I would have wasted 40 years of my life encouraging women to come to know and love Jesus through the study of Scripture."

John Hagee, a Texas pastor, responded to Beth Moore's quote on Complementarianism being a doctrine of MAN as follows: "As a pastor and lifelong student of God's Word, I will tell you unapologetically that the Bible speaks clearly to the most critical issues of our time".

Responses by Dr. Albert Mohler (President of Southern Baptist Seminary) and Dr. Albert Greenway (President of Southwest Baptist Theological Seminary)

On April 8, 2021, Dr. Mohler responded to Beth Moore's statements that Complementarianism was a doctrine of MAN and that for her it was not a first order doctrine. Dr. Mohler's post was entitled "Is Complementarianism a First, Second, or Third Order Doctrine?" which he wrote on his blog "The Briefing." Mohler said that in one sense most Biblical doctrines are doctrines from man giving the example of the doctrine of the Trinity which is not a word used in the Bible although the concept is there. Mohler next reviewed three levels of Biblical triage. The first level relates to matters which are essential to Christian faith. The second level are matters which define "our congregation and our denomination." The third level are those where people can disagree without affecting the unity, faithfulness or theological integrity of the church. Mohler stated that he was not aware of anyone who considered Complementarianism to be a First Tier issue. Instead, because Baptist had affirmed Complementarianism in the Baptist Faith and Message in 2000, that it was a Second Tier Issue.

Mohler also quoted Dr. Barr's statement that "Beth Moore has just declared the beginning of the end of complementarianism." His response to Barr's comment was: "I don't think so." I would have to agree with Dr. Mohler on his assessment of Dr. Barr's comment. Mohler concluded by stating that he believes that Complementarianism is the "teaching of Scripture" and is part of the Baptist Confession of Faith and is required of all those who teach at the six seminaries of the SBC.

Another response to Ms. Moore was by Adam W. Greenway. Adam Greenway is President of Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary in Ft. Worth, Texas. Dr. Greenway is a Complementarian and on May 9 quoted one of the longtime Baptist pioneers B.H. Carroll, one of the founders of Southwestern Seminary, who said "The Custom in some congregations of having a woman as pastor is in flat contradiction to this apostolic teaching and is open rebellion against Christ our King, and high treason against His sovereignty...Under no circumstances conceivable is it justifiable." Of course, B.H. Carroll died in 1914 and so did not have the enlightenment of today's feminist theologians.

Despite Greenway's beliefs relating to Complementarianism, I found his response to the Moore brouhaha given below to be instructive and more in light of what I would consider to be a better response than most. Greenway said in a Tweet dated April 6, 2021:

Southern Baptists will truly live up to our moniker as Great Commission Baptists when the outrage expressed toward the men of our tribe who never "preach" the Gospel (cf. Romans 10:14-17) exceeds the outrage expressed toward the women of our tribe who actually do.

Hopefully, I am correct in understanding Greenway to be saying that instead of men fighting about women who share the Gospel, should not we all be more concerned to see that men share the gospel like women are doing. In short, stop fighting and let us all, men and women, carry out The Great Commission (Matt. 28:19-20) like Jesus told us to do.

Q. WOMEN ON THE FRONT LINES

Adam Greenway's tweet brings us to the strange situation that Complementarians have to deal with relating to women in the mission field and on the front lines of sharing the Christian faith in a dark and materialistic world. There is apparently a sense that women, just like men, are very much equals (and sometimes even leaders) in sharing the Gospel to the unbelievers on mission fields. We see the same thing with Priscilla with her husband Aquila establishing churches and working with Paul.



Aquila and Priscilla

One must ask why women should be treated as full equals and as ministry partners on the front lines but not treated as full equals back “behind the lines” of course. (We all admit that no one is ever behind the lines these days). Is it that women should not be elders and pastors but they can be evangelists and speakers so long as they are not “ruling” the church? At any rate, the concept which I am dealing with is that it seems to me that women should be treated in our country much as they are treated when they are missionaries. In other words, there certainly must be a role for women in sharing the gospel, speaking to groups and even establishing churches.

In fact, the Danvers Statement seems to almost “red-circle” the area of missions and acknowledge the important role of women in reaching the lost. Section 9 of the Affirmations of the Danvers Statement reads as follows:

9. With half the world’s population outside the reach of indigenous evangelism; with countless other lost people in those societies that have heard the gospel; with the stresses and miseries of sickness, malnutrition, homelessness, illiteracy, ignorance, aging, addiction, crime, incarceration, neuroses, and loneliness, no man or woman who feels a passion from God to make His grace known in word and deed need ever live without a fulfilling ministry for the glory of Christ and the good of this fallen world (1 Cor. 12:7-21).

Although this is not a strict affirmation of “red-circling” missions, it is in effect a back-handed acknowledgement of the great work that women have done in the mission field and work which in many cases which might have been eliminated or reduced if Complementarianism had been interpreted or enforced strictly.

The fact of the matter is that no one seriously believes that the Great Commission as expressed in Matthew 28:19-20 should be limited to just men. Both men and women are responsible for spreading the Gospel and all that entails. Sometimes the Great Commission is fulfilled through simply sharing Christ individually; however sometimes it is shared through teaching, preaching and establishing churches.

Interestingly, after Jesus is resurrected he appears FIRST to a woman, Mary. She runs and tells the good news (Gospel) to the eleven disciples and they did not believe her (See Mark 16:11). Later, Jesus appears to the two men on the walk to Emmaus and when they report back to the disciples, the disciples still don’t believe. (Mark 16:12-13). Finally, Jesus appears to the eleven disciples and rebukes them for not believing Mary and the two disciples who saw him on the way to Emmaus and Jesus says,

He rebuked their unbelief and hardness of heart, because they did not believe those who had seen him after he had risen. And He said to them, “Go unto the world and preach the gospel to every creature. He who believes will be saved; but he who does not believe will be condemned.

The first person to share the Gospel after the resurrection was Mary and the disciples (a group of men) were rebuked for not believing her. Our hearts as men should not be callous and hard because the word of God comes to us from time to time through a woman.

A look at what happened in the mission field during 18, 19 and 20th century is instructive. A great amount of the Protestant expansion into world missions resulted from missionaries from England and the United States. In short, the nations sending out the missionaries were “patriarchal” (i.e. chauvinistic and sexist according to feminist and Egalitarians) and generally they were sent to other “patriarchal” nations such as for example China, India and Korea which were also “patriarchal.”

It seems that there was almost a progressive expansion of outreach in the missions area which began with the exclusion of women and step by step expanded to the inclusion of women. Below is a short summary of those steps.

1. Men are sent out to preach the gospel alone.
2. Protestant men bring along their wives to help have a family life on the mission field.
3. Wives begin to minister to women and to children.
4. Women minister in auxiliary roles such as doctors, nurses, teachers and teaching language.
5. Women minister to women.
6. Women minister to mixed groups.
7. Women preach the Gospel to women and then to mixed groups.
8. Women establish churches turning the leadership over to men.
9. Women sometimes serving as pastors and elders.

Women who served in China

Using China as an example, it is instructive to briefly review the lives of some of the brave women who served in China. One historian (Kathleen Lodwick) has estimated that about 50,000 foreigners served as Protestant and Catholic Missionaries in China from 1809 to 1949. Although we do not know exactly how many were women we do know that almost 60% of the American missionaries during the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries were women. Many of the missionaries were single women. These women served China in all types of capacities. I am including this list so that my readers will have a small taste of the heroic activities of women. I use China as a model. Similar actions of heroism were carried out by women at missionary locations though out the world.

- Mary Ann Aldersey (1797-1868)—Went to Indonesia where she founded a school for Chinese girls. Later she went to Ningbo China where she built a school for Chinese girls.
- Charlotte Digges Moon (1840-1912)—“Lottie” Moon was a Southern Baptist Missionary to China. A separate section below will go into Lottie Moon’s life in more detail.
- Margaret E. Barber (1866-1930)—An Anglican Missionary, who later became an independent missionary with ties to the Plymouth Brethren. She taught in an Anglican girl’s school in Fuzhou, Fujian, China for seven years returning to England afterward. She and her niece who was member of her independent church, Surrey Chapel, returned to Fuzhou until she died in 1930. She spent most of her time in China writing hymns, praying and being a spiritual counselor to a number of people including Watchman Nee. Ms. Barber had taught a Bible Class in Fuzhou and influenced a number of Christian leaders in China.
- Dora Yu (Yu Cidu) (1873-1931)—Dora Yu was actually a daughter of a Chinese minister who was trained in medicine and became a medical missionary from China to Korea. After 6 years in Korea, Dora Yu returned to China and became a preacher who did revivals. She led revivals around Shanghai and coastal cities in South China. One of her converts was the mother of Watchman Nee. When Watchman Nee was converted he studied at her Bible School. She not only preached in China but shared at the Keswick Convention in England in 1927.
- Jenny V. Hughes(1874-1951)—Sent to China by Methodist Church in 1905 and worked with Shi Meiyu (Dr. Mary Stone) in Jiujian. She left the Methodist Church and formed Bethel Mission of China in Shanghai. Bethel Mission ran a hospital, primary and secondary schools, nursing schools, an orphanage and a Bible school. The Bible school sent out “Bible Bands” consisting of

groups of students and others who would sing, speak and preach and were very popular. Some of the groups would be men and others women. One of the most famous consisted of a group of men who had graduated or been associated with Bethel. One of the best-known Bible Bands consisted of five young men which would later include the great Chinese evangelist John Sung. It is said that this group travelled to 13 provinces of China sharing Christ.

- Gladys Aylward (1902-1970)—Went to China in 1930 with China Inland Mission and became a citizen in 1936. Established an orphanage during WWII in Shanzi Province and then moved it to Xi'an. In 1949 she went to Taiwan where she established a children's home.
- Bertha Smith—Bertha Smith was a Southern Baptist Missionary to China who began her mission service in 1917. She began running a girl's boarding school and teaching English and Bible. She participated in the Shangtung Revival which converted many people in Northern and Central China and which emphasized a life filled with the Holy Spirit and prayer. When Bertha Smith returned from furlough to China in 1940 she was held in a Japanese prisoner camp. Later Bertha Smith was expelled by the Chinese when she was 60. She then went to Formosa where she worked for 10 years. After retirement Bertha Smith spoke at churches across the world, authored several books and established a prayer retreat. I personally heard Bertha Smith speak on several occasions including hearing her share (preach) about Christ at Baylor University when I was a student there.

The Hidden Scandal of Lottie Moon-A Baptist who was not a Complementarian

We have looked at some of the mission work to China to illustrate the both the role and importance of women to mission outreach. The life of Charlotte Digges ("Lottie) Moon (1840-1912) not only provides an insight to one of the greatest missionaries to China but also to the natural "evolution" of the role of women from an assistant and helper to a preacher and leader in the mission area. All of this occurred in an environment which was patriarchal both in the country from which the missionary came from (the United States) and in the country to which she was sent (China). In fact, the work done by Lottie Moon was done in an area which was a stronghold of Confucianism demanding subjugation of children and wives to the husband. In Exhibit C, I have set forth an account of the life of Lottie Moon and her thoughts on a number of topics including the rights of single female missionaries.

In studying Complementarianism and Egalitarianism, I am not sure that Lottie Moon would have fallen into either camp. She was a person who believed in equality but her vision of herself was that of a follower of Christ and not that of a social reformer. However, due to her views, if one had to choose, I suspect that she was more Egalitarian than Complementarian. Moreover, Lottie Moon did not so much worry about the leadership of men. She moved ahead into the interior and allowed the men to catch up later.

I believe that Lottie Moon is a bit of an embarrassment regarding her views and her strong personality to those who are strict Complementarians. Ironically those who might have been uncomfortable with her views have beatified her for their own purposes in raising funds to help expand the Gospel. For much more on Lottie Moon, see Exhibit C.

The Salvation Rescue Boat

In the same year that Lottie Moon died (1912) another event occurred which was considered to be much more newsworthy. On April 15 of that year was the sinking of The Titanic. Also, in the same year a hymn was written called "Love Lifted Me" with the famous refrain: "I was sinking deep in sin far from the peaceful shore...." As I considered the role of men and women in the mission field and ministry, I could see ships filled with people called by God to save those drowning in sin "sinking to rise no more." Some of these rescue ships were captained by Complementarian men who had mixed crews of men and women. It is hard to imagine that such a captain would instruct his crew that women should pull out of the waters only women and children but men could pull out men, women and children. Even Complementarian captains would not be so insensitive but would allow their crews pull out anyone as fast as possible. Likewise, I saw ships run just by women. They would not pull out just women and children but would save people of all ages and sexes who had need. It seems to me that this is what the church does. We all called to spread the Gospel and we are all called to carry out the Great Commission of Matthew 28:19-20.

Although, there may be different considerations for church organization, we have to wrestle with the issue of why we would have one rule for the most important function of the church in reaching others but change the rule when the situation is less hard and less desperate. It seems almost illogical to have one set of rules for the front-line work of saving souls and another rule for institutions behind the front lines.

Renewing People or Reforming Society

Certainly, there are good reforms that need to be made in society. Society is often terribly unjust. There is slavery, prostitution, immorality, suttee, foot-binding and numerous other evils that beg to be reformed. However, the goal of the early was not always to reform society but to renew the heart through the transforming work of Jesus Christ. As people are renewed internally, they then effect change upon the society in which they live. Our goal is not to build Utopia here but to bring the Kingdom of God to the hearts of men and women. Many of the articles which I read bemoan the patriarchal society in which the people live with the priority of changing the patriarchal society to a better model in order to bring in the Kingdom of God. I suggest, and believe, that as we bring the Kingdom of God to the hearts of men and women, society will be impacted in a better way. "Seek ye first the Kingdom of God and all of these things will be added unto you."

A Few Remaining Thoughts About China

For various reasons, China has taken divergent opinions on the role of women in leadership positions. In one sense, China has been Equalitarian due to the fact that women had an important role in the planting of Christianity in China. In addition, the Communist Chinese have supported in egalitarian approach politically and in its churches including the government supported Three-Self Church. The underground church in China, on the other hand, is not monolithic in its beliefs. Many underground churches are Complementarian when it comes to the role of women as is the Catholic Church. Some believe that the positions taken by many of the well-known reformed pastors today are causing some of the underground churches to depart from the Egalitarian position and to adopt a Complementarian position.

Other underground churches are more supportive to the role of women due to the fact that women have been instrumental in the founding of some of these churches and the fact that in many areas of endeavor outside the role of women in the church, women are accorded an equal status.

It is not surprising that some Oriental women are agast at the position of Complementarians believing that the Complementarian position is a throwback to a position not held in the Chinese church. A good example of this view is presented by Cecilia Yau who is a supporter of Christians for Biblical Equality and who has been head of the Chinese Christian Mission of over forty years. Ms. Yau gave this statement as part of CBE's Board of Reference:

It puzzles me why we still have to work so hard for biblical gender equality, especially in contemporary America. When missionaries came to China they brought the Gospel and its liberating power. Today, in Hong Kong, Taiwan and China, men and women serve the Lord side by side without any discrimination. Yet the churches in the West are going backwards. They are 'binding the feet of women' and put unnecessary hurdles on their way to serve the Lord.

CONCLUSIONS AND FINAL COMMENTS

First, there are a group of men and women who believe that the role of leadership in the organization of the local church should be under the leadership of men. Their belief in most cases is the result from what they consider to be a plain and unambiguous reading of Scripture. The convoluted explanations of why Scripture really says something else from modern feminist theologians is not acceptable to them. Further, those who have a literal belief in the inspiration of Scripture are less likely to adopt the Equalitarian position. As I have indicated above, those with Complementarian beliefs are in the majority of cases not born out of a love for a patriarchal system as argued by feminist theologians but, instead, are birthed from a simple reading of certain Scriptures and an honest belief in the inspiration of Scripture by God. For these people, neither a change in culture nor a complicated explanation of Scripture is enough. In addition, some men and the women who love and support them, will simply absent themselves from involvement in churches led by women. As Dr. Moeller said in an edition of "Should women preach in church?" in [Ask Anything Live](#) on May 31, 2019:

If men don't have to do it, women will. And if women will, men won't. There is something honestly about men that comes down to this—men don't lead unless they have to....If you look at the denominations where the women are doing the preaching, they are also the denominations where the people are leaving.

Mohler admits that this is just his opinion about men and why the Scripture might say what it does about men leading the church. However, I am not convinced that this is a good argument. It basically says that if men can't be in charge of the church, they will not participate in the church. This may be indeed true but it is somewhat like saying that I will not play in your game unless I can be in charge and make the rules. It is not an argument that I would be proud to make.

Other men and women are fully supportive of women in leadership roles. There should be room in the Christian church for this approach as well. Can the Complementarians and Egalitarians cooperate with one another? I believe that in the area of outreach to the lost, cooperation should be possible. However, local polity presents a more difficult problem. Despite whether one uses the term “Complementarian” or “Equalitarian” the fact of the matter, the role of leadership of the local church must be one way or the other.

Further, there is some elasticity in Complementarian Churches which can authorize women to minister under the supervision or umbrella or authority of its male leadership. In this sense the woman ministering is doing so under the authority of the male rulership of the church in their function as elders. Although this concept is offensive to the strict Egalitarian and for the feminist, nevertheless, it can be certainly workable from a practical standpoint. For instance, a Beth Moore operating under the authority of her pastor John Bisagno should meet the concerns of most of the “soft” Complementarians yet afford an opportunity for women to minister. Likewise, female missionaries operating under the direction of Complementarian denominations and boards should also be able to have a great amount of independence and still fall within the Complementarian view of Scripture and the role of women in Scripture as interpreted by Complementarians.

The second point is one that I address to my Complementarian brothers. It seems to me that our priorities are skewed. Instead of being worried so much as to whether we are dealing with women who are appropriately submitted, instead our focus should not be on them at all but instead it should be whether we are appropriately loving our wives as Christ loved the church. Have we taken the appropriate servant relationship with our sisters in Christ. Instead of worrying about them being out preaching to the unsaved, shouldn't we be asking ourselves why it is the women are out preaching rather than the men. Why are the women leading in mission work and giving rather than the men. It is time for the Christian men in the church to remove the log in their own eye before complaining so vociferously about the cinder in our Christian sister's eye.

Also, we as men, should remember that there in Christ there is no male or female when it comes to sharing Christ and carrying out the great commission. In fact, when I read about the sacrifices that our Christian sisters have made in sharing the Gospel, we should be profoundly embarrassed to complain or nitpick. Instead men need to repent and rise to challenge women in their fervency and willingness to share Christ both on the mission field and locally. In fact, it is somewhat ludicrous that we should allow women to have freedoms on the mission field where service is the hardest and then try to restrict those freedoms at home.

Another insight from my study in this area is that “one size does not fit all.” We love to pigeon-hole and make rules. It makes life simpler. However, life and following Christ is not always easy or well defined. We need to leave room for the Deborahs, Huldahs and Priscillas. We need to give freedom to the Aime Semple McPhersons, Katherine Kuhlmanns, Beth Moores, Lottie Moons, Corrie Ten Booms and Mother Teresas in the church. The validation of their callings is not the blessing of the male or female

theologians but in the fruits of their labors. Permit their works to speak for themselves. It is clear from Scripture that God uses both men and women and sometimes utilizes them in very surprising ways.

Lastly, we need to be more kind and forgiving in our judgments. Paul once wrote that although some preached Christ for evil motives, but the important thing was that Christ was preached. (Philippian 1:15-18) Likewise on one occasion the apostles complained to Jesus that someone was baptizing in Jesus' name. Jesus' response was: "He who is not against me is for me." (Matt. 12:30). In short, in both instances there is an openness and generosity and grace in allowing people to share the Gospel. We should enlarge our heart and move more in this spirit of openness to those do not see eye to eye with us on these important issues regarding the role of women in the church.

Lastly, we should keep in mind that God made half of the population women. It was not his intent to make women into second-class citizens and we should not do that either. Christ has used women as the image of his beloved church. Women played a great ministry in the church. They were there at the cross when most men had fled. They were among the first to see Christ. They were leaders in showing devotion and adoration to Christ and ministering to Christ. In addition, women are the image of the church which is to be devoted to Christ and to bring Christian children into the world both through natural birth and even more importantly through spiritual birth. During the early years of the church, much of the growth of the early church involved women who were spiritually sensitive to the calling of Jesus Christ. Men, instead of being so sensitive about what God is doing with women should be more concerned about what God is calling them to do. At one point, Peter was concerned about the calling and will of Christ for John and Jesus said to Peter: "What is that thou to thee, follow thou me." (John 21:22) We as men need to be far less concerned about God's calling to women and much more concerned about God's calling to us individually and to us as men in the Kingdom of God.

ANNEX A

Commentary to Chapter XVIII Of the 2000 Baptist Faith and Message

The Fall introduced distortions into the relationships between men and women just as it brought chaos and tragedy throughout the world. The husband's loving, humble headship has often been replaced with domination or passivity. The wife's voluntary and willing submission has often been exchanged for usurpation or servility. Redemption in Christ would call for husbands to forsake harsh or selfish leadership and to extend loving care to their wives (1 Pet. 3:7) and for wives to forsake resistance to the authority of their respective husbands and to practice willing, joyful submission to that leadership (1 Pet. 3:1-2).

Husbands

God commands husbands to love their wives as Christ loved the church (Eph. 5:25). This love is protective, nurturing, serving, and edifying. It is not replaced with, but accompanied by, headship. This headship calls the husband to a loving leadership in which he cares responsibly for his wife's spiritual, emotional, and physical needs. As defined in Scripture, the husband's headship was established by God before the Fall and was not the result of sin (Gen. 2:15-17; see also Num. 1:2-3, 17-19). It is a responsibility to be assumed with humility and a servant's heart rather than a right to be demanded with pride and oppressive tyranny....

Wives

Wives, on the other hand, were created to be "helpers" to their husbands (Gen. 2:18). A wife's submission to her husband does not decrease her worth but rather enhances her value to her husband and to the Lord (1 Pet. 3:4). This humble and voluntary yielding of a wife to her husband's leadership becomes a resource for evangelism (1 Pet. 3:1-2), an opportunity for glorifying God (1 Pet. 3:4-6), a channel for spiritual growth as ultimately the wife trusts herself to the Lord, and a means for bringing honor to His Word (Titus 2:3-5). The term "helper," which is also used by God to identify Himself (Ex. 18:4; Deut. 33:7), describes the woman God created to become a partner with the man in the overwhelming task of exercising dominion over the world and extending the generations (Gen. 1:28; 2:18). There is no hint of inferiority in the term, which describes function, rather than worth. As the man's "helper," the woman complements him through her own unique function in the economy of God; as one "comparable to him," she, too, is created "in the image of God" (Gen. 2:18). Both bear God's image fully, but each expresses that image in God-ordained ways through manhood or womanhood. Thus, distinctions in masculine and feminine roles are ordained by God as part of the created order (Gen. 1:27). Their differing roles in relating to one another provide a picture of the nature of God and the way He relates to His people. As the realities of headship and submission are enacted within loving, equal, and complementary male-female roles, the image of God is properly reflected.

Conclusion

Doctrine and practice, whether in the home or the church, are not to be determined according to modern cultural, sociological, and ecclesiastical trends or according to personal emotional whims; rather, Scripture is to be the final authority in all matters of faith and conduct (2 Tim. 3:16-17; Heb. 4:12; 2 Pet. 1:20-21).

EXHIBIT B
ORDER, AUTHORITY AND SUBMISSION

Both the Bible and the Ancient World during the time of Jesus and Paul envisaged a cosmology and a universe built upon authority and order. Instead of authority and order being considered to be an evil, a divine order ordained by God in creation and in history was considered to be a good and to be an attractive alternative to chaos. That divine order manifests itself both in heaven and earth. The very act of God's creation was an imposition of order upon chaos

The divine order in heaven manifests itself with God being in charge and with the angelic beings and the principalities and powers and authorities being subject (submissive) to God. Psalms 19:1 states that "the heavens declare the glory of God; And the firmament shows His handiwork." The stars, the heavenlies, and the creation of the world all testify to the divine order. Romans 1:20 says that "For since the creation of the world, His invisible attributes are clearly seen being understood by the things made...."

According to Judeo-Christian belief, Satan and other angelic beings rebelled against this divine order. Ultimately, man was involved in this rebellion against God as recounted by Genesis. The fact of the matter was that the divine order in heaven was disrupted both by angelic authorities and by man believing that they knew better than God and by exchanging their submission to God and to the word of God for rebellion against God.

Just as there was a divine order in heaven, many believed that there was a divine order and authority upon earth. It was believed in the time of Christ and Paul that authority was not a bad thing. Rather the proper submission and fulfillment of one's roles in life contributed to an orderly and productive society.

Rome was able to accomplish a domination of the barbarian world through a system of order and submission. Conquest over barbarian armies resulted through the order of the Roman army. Order also related to such things as the construction of Roman roads and aqueducts, Roman baths and commerce throughout the Roman empire. Limitations on totalitarianism resulted in part through well- defined Roman laws. Roman rule was also a matter of order with emperors, consuls, senators and Roman governors.

The ancient world dealt clearly with the concept of order. Aristotle believed that the army illustrated the concept of order. However, in the ancient world were the seeds of modern thought that the universe was guided by chance as opposed to divine intervention by deities. Some of these thoughts were expressed by Lucretius who lived in the century before Christ and who proclaimed a Epicurean philosophy in his De Rerum natura which took the position that we lived in a material universe made up of particles or atoms which had existed from eternity. This universe was not affected by the Roman gods. In short, we lived in a material universe without the involvement of divine power. Others took an opposing view and believed that we lived in an ordered universe and there was a divine element involved in its origination.

As a general rule, order instead of chaos was considered to be a great good. For the Roman citizen, Roman law was also a great good, giving Roman citizens legal protections, including the right to appeal to Rome itself as Paul illustrated.

In short, recognition of temporal and spiritual authorities was a protection against the tyranny and destruction caused by chaos. Submission to authority was encouraged not only by the government but by Christ and the church as well. When Jesus was asked what soldiers should do he told them to be satisfied with their wages (Luke 3:14). Jesus told the tax collector to collect what was fair (Luke 3:12-13). Jesus showed himself obedient to his mother and father. Jesus centered much of his ministry seeking to understand the will of his father through prayer and being obedient to God the Father.

Jesus had a good understanding and appreciation of authority. See Matt. 8:5-13 (also Luke 7:1-10):

Now when Jesus had entered Capernaum, a centurion came to Him, pleading with Him, saying, "Lord, my servant is lying at home paralyzed, dreadfully tormented." and Jesus said to him, "I will come and heal him." The centurion answered and said, "Lord, I am not worthy that You should come under my roof. But only speak a word, and my servant will be healed. For I also a man under authority, having soldiers under me. And I say to this one, "Go", and he goes; and to my servant "Do this," and he does it."...Then Jesus said to the centurion, "Go your way; and as you have believed, so let it be done for you." And his servant was healed that same hour.

Jesus knew that he had authority from his Father to heal. Further, part of the result of authority is that when the word of authority is spoken there is obedience and submission. Jesus gave authority from God to his apostles and that authority including the ability to speak and have authority over disease and over the demonic. (See Matt. 3:14-15).

People recognized that Jesus had the authority of his Father. In Mark 1:27 it says, "And they were all amazed so that they questioned among themselves saying, "What is this? A new teaching with authority! He commands even the unclean spirits, and they obey him." People felt the authority of Jesus' teaching and they saw the authority of God working through him and through the healings and deliverance of those afflicted.

Jesus was also able to delegate the authority with which God had entrusted him. He delegated to his disciples authority over unclean spirits and to heal every disease and affliction. (See Matt. 10:1 and Luke 9:1).

Other verses relating to Jesus' authority over principalities, powers and spiritual forces include the following"

Eph. 1:20-21--...He raised Him from the dead and seated Him at His right hand in the heavenly places, far above all principality and power and might and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this age but also in that which is to come.

Col. 1:16—He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn over all creation. For by Him all things were created that are in heaven and that are on earth, visible and Invisible, whether thrones or dominions or principalities or powers. All things Were created through Him and for Him. And He is before all things, and in Him All things consist.

Col. 2:9-10—For in Him dwells all the fullness of the Godhead bodily; and you are

complete in Him, who is the head of all principality and power.

1 Pet. 3:22--...Jesus Christ, who has gone into heaven and is at the right hand of God, angels and authorities and powers having been made subject to Him.

Jesus told his disciples that all authority had been given to him in heaven and earth.

Luke 10:19—Behold I give you the authority to trample on serpents and scorpions, and over all the power of the enemy, and nothing shall by any means hurt you.

Matt. 28:19—And Jesus came and spoke to them, saying, “All authority has been given to me in heaven and on earth. Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations....”

In fact, Jesus even promised at Rev. 2:26 that those who followed him would have “authority over the nations.”

Jesus also had the authority to forgive sins. This authority he delegated to His church. Some examples of this would be:

Matt. 9:6 (The authority of Jesus)—But that you may know that the Son of Man has power on earth to forgive sins—then He said to the paralytic: “Arise, take up your bed, and go to your house.” And he arose and went to his house.

John 20:23—If you forgive the sins of any they are forgiven them; if you retain the sins of any, they are retained.

Matt. 16:19 (See also Matt. 18:18)—And I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven and whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven.

Jesus and his apostles encouraged obedience to the various authorities of the time. Here are a number of verses encouraging submission to various authorities.

a. Submission to Rulers and Governors

1 Pet. 2:13-14—Therefore submit yourselves to every ordinance of man for the Lord’s sake, whether to the king as supreme, or to governors, as to those who are sent by him for the punishment of evildoers and for the praise of those who do good.

1 Pet. 2:17—Honor all people. Love the brotherhood. Fear God. Honor the king.

Rom. 13:1-7—Let every soul be subject to the governing authorities. For there is no authority except from God, and the authorities that exist are appointed by God. Therefore, whoever resists the authority resists the ordinance of God, and those who resist will bring judgment on themselves. For rulers are not a terror to good

works, but to evil. Do you want to be unafraid of the authority? Do what is good, And you will have praise from the same. For he is God's minister to you for food. but if you do evil, be afraid; for he does not bear the sword in vain; for he is God's minister, an avenger to execute wrath on him who practices evil. Therefore you must be subject not only because of wrath but also for conscience sake. For because of this you also pay taxes, for they are God's ministers attending continually to this very thing. Render therefore to all their due: taxes to whom taxes are due, customs to whom customs, fear to whom fear, honor to whom honor.

John 19:11 (Jesus acknowledged that God had given Pilate authority over him)—Jesus answered, "You could have no power at all against Me unless it had been given to you from above.

Titus 3:1—Remind them to be subject to rulers and authorities....

b. Submission to leaders in the Church

Leadership in the church involves responsible, servant leadership by the elders and submission to that leadership by the members of the church. Elders are instructed as follows:

1 Pet. 2:4--Shepherd the flock of God which is among you, serving as overseers, not by compulsion but willingly, not for dishonest gain but eagerly; nor as being lords over those entrusted to you, but being examples to the flock.

1 Pet. 5:3—Not domineering over those in your charge, but being examples to the flock.

Heb. 13:17—Obey those who rule over you, and be submissive, for they watch out for your souls, as those who must give account.

c. Submission of Wives to Husbands

1 Pet. 3:1-6—Wives, likewise, be submissive to your own husbands, that even if some do not obey the word, they, without a word, may be won by the conduct of their wives, when they observe your chaste conduct accompanied by fear. Do not let your adornment be merely outward—arranging the hair, wearing gold, or putting on fine apparel—rather let it be the hidden person of the heart, with the incorruptible beauty of a gentle and quiet spirit, which is very precious in the sight of God. For in this manner, in former times, the holy women who trusted in God also adorned themselves, being submissive to their husbands, as Sarah obeyed Abraham, calling him lord, whose daughters you are if you do good and are not afraid with any terror.

1 Cor. 7:3-5—Let the husband render to his wife the affection due her, and likewise also the wife to her husband. The wife does not have authority over her own body, but the husband does. And likewise the husband does not have authority over his own body, but the wife does.

1 Cor. 11:3—But I want you to know that the head of every man is Christ, the head of every woman is man, and the head of Christ is God.

Eph. 5:23-24—For the husband is head of the wife, as also Christ is head of the church; and he is savior of the body. Therefore, just as the church is subject to Christ, so let the wives be to their own husbands in everything.

Col. 3:18—Wives, submit to your own husbands, as is fitting in the Lord.

Titus 2:5--...that they (the older women) admonish the younger women to love their husbands, to love their children, to be discreet, chaste, homemakers, good, obedient to their husbands that the word of God may not be blasphemed.

d. Husband's Responsibilities to Wives

1 Pet. 3:7—Husbands, likewise, dwell with them with understanding, giving honor to the wife, as to the weaker vessel, and as being heirs together of the grace of life, that your prayers may not be hindered.

1 Cor. 7:3-5—See Scripture in preceding section. In my opinion, this Scripture warns the Christian couple not to use sex as a “bargaining chip.” Instead there is a spirit of reciprocity and mutual respect.

Eph 5:25-33—Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ also loved the church and gave himself for her, that He might sanctify and cleanse her with the washing of water by the word, that He might present her to Himself a glorious church, not having spot or wrinkle or any such thing, but that she should be holy and without blemish. So husbands ought to love their own wives as their own bodies; he who loves his wife loves himself. For no one ever hated his own flesh, but nourishes and cherishes it, just as the Lord does the church. For we are members of His body, of His flesh and his bones. For this reason a man shall leave his father and his mother and be joined to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh. This is a great mystery, but I speak concerning Christ and the church. Nevertheless let each one of you in particular so love his own wife as himself, and the wife see that she respects her husband.

Col. 3:19—Husbands, love your wives and do not be bitter toward them.

1 Pet. 3:7—Husbands, dwell with them with understanding, giving honor to the wife, as to the weaker vessel, and as being heirs together of the grace of life, that your prayers may not be hindered.

d. Submission of Children to Parents.

Ephesians 6:1-4—Children, obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right. “Honor Your father and mother”, which is the first commandment with promise: “that it may be Well with you and you may live long on the earth.” And you fathers, do not provoke your children to wrath, but bring them up in the training and admonition of the Lord.

Col. 3:20-21—Children, obey your parents in all things, for this is well pleasing to the Lord. Fathers, do not provoke your children, lest they become discouraged.

e. Submission of Slaves to Masters

1 Pet 2: 18—21—Servants, be submissive to your masters with all fear, not only to the good and gentle, but also to the harsh. For this is commendable, if because of conscience toward God one endures grief, suffering wrongfully. For what credit is it if, when you are beaten for your faults, you take it patiently? But when you do good and suffer, if you take it patiently, this is commendable before God. For to this you were called, because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example that you should follow His steps....

Eph. 6:5-9—Bondservants, be obedient to those who are your masters according to the flesh, with fear and trembling, in sincerity of heart, as to Christ; not with eyeservice as men-pleasers, but as bondservants of Christ, doing the will of God from the heart, with goodwill doing service, as to the Lord, and not to men, knowing that whatever good anyone does, he will receive the same from the Lord, whether he is slave or free. And you masters, do the same things to them, giving up threatening, knowing that your own Master also is in heaven, and there is no partiality with Him.

Col. 3: 22-4:1—Bondservants, obey in all things your masters according to the flesh, not with eyeservice as men-pleasers, but in sincerity of heart, fearing God. And whatever you do, do it heartily, as to the Lord and not to men, knowing that from the Lord you will receive the reward of the inheritance; for you serve the Lord Christ. But he who does wrong will be repaid for what he has done, and there is no partiality. Masters, give your bondservants what is just and fair, knowing that you also have a Master in heaven.

f. Submission of younger to older

1 Pet. 5:5—Likewise you younger people, submit yourselves to your elders.

g. Submission of one believer to another

1 Pet. 5:5—Yes, all of you be submissive to one another, and be clothed with humility....

Eph. 5:21--...submitting to one another in the fear of God.

There is a reciprocity to submission as evidenced in the Scriptures above. Wives are to be submissive to husbands but husbands are to love their wives. Servants are to obey their masters but masters are to give up their threatening knowing there is impartiality with God. Members of the church are to obey their elders but elders are to be servants. Even political authorities have their limits. Children are to obey their parents, but fathers are not to exasperate their children. When the demands of those in

authority transgress the faith, like the apostles, we have to say that it is better to obey God than to obey man even man who has authority from God (Acts 5:29).

Those who had the “authority” had certain responsibilities to those who rendered the submission to the authority. Likewise, those who submitted to the authority had responsibilities as well such as to render service as unto God for example in the case of the employee and the bondservant. Submission to an authority was not dependent upon the justness of the authority. Likewise, those who received submission because of the authority which God had given them were not relieved of the commands of God regarding the use of that authority toward those for which they had responsibilities. In other words, the responsibilities of both those who were in authority and those submitting to authority were not dependent upon others but ran directly to the obedience to God. For instance, Peter made it clear that when a slave was punished unjustly accepted the unjust punishment, he or she did so as an act of worship to God. All of that being said there were limits. For example, when the apostles were beaten by the rulers of the Sanhedrin, they suffered the beating. However, when the authorities demanded that they speak no more of Jesus they did not comply and asked “Is it right that we obey you rather than God?” (Acts 5:27-29). Likewise, when Roman authorities demanded that Christians deny Christ, they refused to comply with the demands of the state. In other words, there are times in which righteous authorities are refused because of unrighteous demands. Becoming a Christian was not an abandonment of common sense.

The purposes of submission and the restoration of a divine order were two-fold. The first was to demonstrate the principles of the Kingdom of God to the unbeliever and to attract people into the Kingdom of God and the Church.

1 Pet: 2:15—For this is the will of God, that by doing good you may put to silence the ignorance of foolish men—as free, yet not using liberty as a cloak for vice, but as bondservants of God.

The second purpose was to provide a demonstration of divine order to the angelic authorities and the principalities and powers. Scripture indicates that it is through the church that the wisdom of God should become manifest to the principalities and powers.

Eph. 3:10-11--...to the intent that now the manifold wisdom of God might be made known by the church to the principalities and powers in the heavenly places....

Likewise, the submission of women resulted in angels being taught the value of submission.

1 Cor. 11:10-12—For this reason the woman ought to have a symbol of authority on her head, because of the angels. Nevertheless, neither is man independent of women, nor women independent of man, in the Lord. For as women came From man, even so man also comes through women, but all things are from God.

As usual, Paul keeps things in balance reminding both men and women that “all things are from God.” To the Hebrew and the Christian, rebellion was not just a thing on earth but there had been rebellion in the heavenly realm with one-third of the angels having followed Satan and rejected the commands of God. (Rev. 12:4). Rebellion occurred both in the heavenly places with the angels, principalities and

powers and the war of rebellion had continued on the earth through, among other things, a rejection of God's order in nature, in government, in the family and in the church. The rightful submission of men and women to the God-ordained authorities set above them was an object lesson to angels, principalities and powers that submission and voluntary compliance by believers illustrated that compliance was possible among principalities, angels and powers.

The obedience and submission of Christ to the Father fatally undercut the rebellion of the principalities and the powers. Eventually the principalities and powers and angelic authorities will voluntarily submit to God or they would be forced to submit to the power of God. The vast majority of submission including in armies is voluntary. That which is not voluntarily is ultimately dealt with by force. Likewise, the same is true in the divine order in the heavenly realms. One either complies and makes peace or there is eventually judgment. God is always full of grace. Just as man returns to the Kingdom through Jesus Christ and the confession of man's sin, I suspect the principalities and powers also can avail themselves of heaven's grace through submission and repentance.

EXHIBIT C
LOTTIE MOON



Lottie Moon was born to a rich tobacco plantation family in Virginia. She came from a large family consisting of five girls and two boys. Her family was Baptist and valued education. Lottie Moon's father died when she was 13 in a riverboat accident. Despite that the family was wealthy prior to the Civil War. The family encouraged education among all of the children both male and female. In fact one of Lottie's younger sisters, Orianna, obtained a medical degree and served as a doctor for the Confederate Army during the War between the States and was one of about 37 female doctors in the South. At 14, Lottie Moon was sent to Virginia Female Seminary (which was a High School) and later to Albemarle Female Institute where she earned the equivalent of a Masters of Arts degree. The University of Virginia at that time was an all-male institution and Albemarle was a female college which had a similar curriculum. In addition, Lottie was skilled at languages and had familiarity with Latin, Greek, Hebrew, French, Italian and Spanish.

In 1858, Lottie Moon was converted at revival led by John Broadus who would later go on to become one of the founders of Southern Baptist Theological Seminary in Louisville, Kentucky. After her graduation from Albemarle Female Institute Lottie Moon had hoped to go to China as a missionary but the SBC had discouraged single women as missionaries believing that men needed to do the work. Lottie Moon would later teach at a female academy at Danville, Kentucky and opened Cartersville Female Seminary with her friend Anna Safford in 1871.

In 1872, Lottie's younger sister, Edmona, went to China as the first single missionary after the Southern Baptist Convention had decided that it was acceptable to send out single female missionaries. Also, in 1872, Lottie's mother passed away after an illness. In 1873, Lottie Moon, who was 32, joined her sister in China as a missionary. Lottie's sister Edmona in 1877 would return home for health reasons after being a missionary in China for five years.

Lottie Moon began her ministry in China in Tungchow in Shandong Province by teaching as a school teacher in a girl's school opened by one of the missionary wives, Sallie Holmes. She would also go on visits to the countryside with the wives of missionaries who would teach and evangelize Chinese women. In 1873, when Lottie went to China she was mentored by two female missionaries. Lottie was 33 when she went to China. One of the missionaries was the wife of Dr. Tarleton Crawford, Martha. Martha Crawford was about 43 or ten years older than Lottie. Dr. and Mrs. Crawford were strong

proponents of getting to know the language and culture of China. The other missionary was Sallie Holmes. Sallie and her husband Landrum had gone to China as a young couple in 1859. In 1862, Landrum Holmes who was only 25 were killed by Taiping rebels. Sallie had previously lost a daughter and then found out that she was pregnant with a second child from Landrum shortly after his death. Sallie was about 33 when Lottie landed in China. Thus, in China at the missionary station were Dr. J.B. Hartwell who had returned from the U.S. having married his second wife Julie. In addition there was Dr. Tarleton and Martha Crawford, Sallie Holmes, Edmonia Moon and Lottie. Edmonia and Lottie were teachers. Apparently Edmonia had difficulty adjusting to the missionary life style. Lottie, however, learned the language, the customs and went with Martha Crawford and Sallie Holmes to many of the surrounding villages witnessing primarily to women and children.

In the first six months of 1876, Sallie Holmes had gone to 118 villages. She was accompanied by Lottie. On April 14, 1876, Lottie wrote to Henry Tupper of the Foreign Mission Board about her experience which involved not only "women doing women's work" but her preaching to men as well. She said the following:

I hope you won't think me desperately unfeminine, but I spoke to them all, men, women and children, pleading with them to turn from their idolatry to the true and living God. I should not have dared to remain silent with so many souls before me sunk in heathen darkness.

Lottie Moon had not gone to China just to be a woman doing woman's work or just being a teacher, she had gone to China to be a missionary to the masses and to carry out the great commission of Matthew 28:19-20. Lottie believed that God had clearly called her to China.

In 1881, Sallie Holmes would return to the U.S. due to health reasons involving both her and her son.

Lottie Moon quickly realized that her talent was in witnessing and sharing the Gospel. She became frustrated that her talents were generally confined to teaching a group of children. According to an article called "The Woman's Question Again" (1883) Lottie said:

Can we wonder at the mortal weariness and disgust, the sense of wasted powers and the conviction that her life is a failure, that comes over a woman when, instead of the ever broadening activities that she had planned, she finds herself tied down to the petty work of teaching a few girls?

On another occasion she asked to be moved from teaching to personal evangelism writing: Under no circumstances do I wish to continue in school work, but I long to go and talk to the thousands of women around me."

In 1885, Lottie moved from Tungchow where she kept her home to Pingtu which was in the interior of the Shandong Province and 125 miles from Tungchow. She was the only resident missionary there and pretty much taught and preached as she pleased working with native Christians and native pastors. Dr. and Mrs Crawford had returned to the U.S. for a period. In a letter dated July 17, 1885 to Henry A. Tupper, Lottie Moon pretty much revealed what her attitude toward the rights of women were. She wrote:

My letter thus far has been taken up with general mission matters. If you will kindly permit,

I should like to address a question on a subject which concerns me personally. Can you tell me—or rather will you tell me—if the China committee proposes to make any changes in the status of unmarried women of the missions? Here in Tungchow the ladies have always been admitted to mission meetings on equal terms with the gentlemen of the mission. For a long time, you know, the mission consisted of only Dr. & Mrs. Crawford & Mrs. Holmes. Then my sister came & these four made up the mission. Later, I joined it & the mission consisted of one man & four women. We met & and consulted always on equal terms. At one time, as you know, the mission was left entirely in the hands of women—Mrs. Holmes, Mrs. Crawford & myself....Our mission meetings are held in a private parlor. They are simply a company of men and women met together to consult about matters in which all are equally concerned. To exclude the married Ladies from these meetings might be unwise, but it could be deemed unjust as they would be represented by their husbands. To exclude the unmarried ladies, would be a most glaring piece of injustice, in my opinion. To such exclusion, I could never submit & obtain my self respect....If it indeed be their real purpose to deny the Ladies of this mission rights that never heretofore have been questioned, then, sorrowfully, but as a matter of self respect & duty there can be no course open to me but to sever my connection with the Board.

By 1887, of the eight missionaries who had come after Lottie, three had died, three had breakdowns and one resigned due to doctrine. Also, in 1877, Lottie published an article in the August issue of the Foreign Mission Journal proposing that there should be a female organization to support mission.

In 1888, the Baptist Woman's Missionary Union (WMU) was founded. The first Christmas Offering was collected and it was enough to send three missionaries to China. In 1889, Fannie Knight came as a missionary from the U. S. to Pingtu to assist Lottie Moon. However, by the early 1890's, the Crawfords had formed the Gospel Mission Association of North China. Eight of the 14 Baptist Missionaries had joined the Gospel Association which rejected direction of the Foreign Mission Board and which also rejected the establishment of schools instead concentrating upon the preaching of the Gospel to the Chinese. Financial support by the Gospel Mission was raised from individual churches. Fannie Knight after coming to China to assist Lottie Moon married William Duncan King a missionary associated with the Gospel Mission. On her wedding trip she caught small pox and died.

From 1892-93, Lottie was on furlough to the U.S. When Lottie returned to China, much of the Pingtu work had been turned over to others. From 1894 until her death in 2012, she worked out of her home in Tungchow. She managed six schools, helped train new missionaries and made numerous trips to the country side and to the interior.

During 1898, there were numerous natural disasters in North China including droughts and the flooding of the Yellow River which caused much misery.

During the Boxer Rebellion (1899-1901), Lottie and other missionaries left China. In 1899 a number of Christian missionaries and Chinese Christians were martyred by Boxers. From 1900 to 1901, Lottie spent time in Fukuoka, Japan.

In 1903-1904, she returned to U.S for rest and then returned to China.

In 1911, the Chinese Revolution began. Moon refused to leave China and at 71 volunteered to work with the Red Cross on relief efforts. By 1912, she returned home with a boil on her neck and refused to eat which ultimately lowered her weight to around 50 pounds. She was sent back to the U.S. by medical personnel with a nurse but died on December 24, 1912 aboard the ship while it was in the harbor of Kobe, Japan.

Lottie Moon was intelligent, strong-minded, and had a strong certitude of her calling to China. She was independent and believed that she needed to preach the Gospel to the lost. Lottie Moon did not see herself as a feminist but as a person called by God to share the Gospel of Jesus Christ. She was not a reformer but instead was a person who would use whatever tool was best to reach a person for Christ. Instead of seeking glory for her opening up Pingtu, she was quite happy to let male missionaries take over knowing that other Chinese of all sexes and ages needed the Gospel and happy to know that her reward and recognition would come in time.

Lottie Moon also knew that women could be leaders in sharing in the Gospel and that more women than men were willing to go to China and elsewhere. As a person who ministered the Gospel she believed that women who did the work should be treated equally with men who did the work. She stated: "What women have a right to demand is perfect equality."

Instead of just looking to churches to support mission work, she charted a course somewhere between the support of the Foreign Mission Board and the Cooperative Program on one side and the Gospel Workers Group established by Dr. Crawford which looked to direct church support without an intervening Board. Lottie Moon knew the heart of women. She knew that women had a heart for seeing the Gospel carried out throughout the world. Instead of appealing to the church or to men, she appealed directly to women who gave and, in fact, gave more generously than men toward the Gospel.

Some Sources for Further Study of Lottie Moon.

The study of the life of Lottie Moon is so instructive as we consider the role of women in missions. For further study I would recommend that my readers read some of the accounts by Regina D. Sullivan such as her article on Lottie Moon at <https://wrlrels.org/2020/09/18/lottie-moon/>. Also, one might see Sullivan, Regina D. 2010. "Myth, Memory, and the Making of Lottie Moon." Pgs. 11-41 in *Entering the Fray: Gender Politics and Culture in the New South*, edited by Jonathan Daniel Wells and Sheila R. Phipps. University of Missouri Press at Columbia, Mo.. One also might consult Regina Sullivan's book entitled *Lottie Moon: A Southern Baptist Missionary to China in History and Legend* published by the Louisiana State University Press in Baton Rouge (2011). Also there is *The Legacy of Lottie Moon* by Catherine B. Allen found at <http://www.internationalbulletin.org/issues/1993-04/1993-04-146-allen.pdf>. For those seeking a more devotional look at Lottie Moon I would recommend an article by David Schrock entitled "Lottie Moon: A Brief Biography" found at <http://cgbcbelton.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/09/lottie-moon1.pdf>

