

A BOOK REPORT

“WHY CAN’T WOMEN DO THAT/*BREAKING DOWN THE REASONS CHURCHES PUT MEN IN CHARGE*”

December 26, 2023

TITLE OF BOOK: “Why Can’t Women Do That/*Breaking Down The Reasons Why Churches Put Men In Charge*”

AUTHORS: Phillip B. Payne and Vince Huffaker (Payne holds a PhD in New Testament from University of Cambridge and taught New Testament in colleges of the University of Cambridge, Trinity Evangelical Divinity School, Gordon-Cornwell Theological Seminary, Bethel Seminary and Fuller Seminary Northwest, and has numerous publications. Huffaker holds a PhD in Manufacturing Engineering from Boston University and is employed in Software Development. and has been involved with Christians for Biblical Equality (CBE) for over 20 years.)

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FIRST IMPRESSIONS

I, your Reviewer, have in a previous Report disclosed my bias, and it is appropriate that I disclose it again here. A large driver for that bias has been this book. I am strongly biased towards the position that men and women who are fully qualified by training, experiences, God’s Calling, God’s Gifting, and competency to occupy any office, position or role in Christian Ministry should not only be allowed, but should be encouraged to fill those offices, positions and roles, including the positions of Senior Pastor, and the role of Preaching/Teaching, publicly, from the pulpit. In this book, the Authors make a very strong case, and in my judgment, a veritably indisputable case for this position. They make this case in a clear, highly readable manner, dealing with, and refuting every argument that men are somehow better leaders than are women, and that men are Scripturally Appointed to Lead and Preach, with women being Scripturally Barred from Publicly Teaching/Preaching and from having Authority Over a Man. The Authors take apart, and at least in my view refute, every argument for the superiority of leadership abilities in men versus women, the superiority of men’s intelligence versus women, and the ostensibly Biblically based positions that certain Scriptural Passages or Pericopes, particularly those in the various Epistles (and particularly I Corinthians 7, 1 Corinthians 8-10, 1 Corinthians 11, 1 Corinthians 14:34-35, Ephesians 5:21-33, Colossians 3:18-4:1, 1 and 2 Timothy, Titus, and 1 Peter 3:1-7) set forth either instructions from God or Commandments from God (given through the Epistle’s author) and establish a timeless Godly Truth or Principle that Husbands should have the leadership and final say in the home, that women must submit to their husbands in all matters, that women should be silent in church, and that women cannot “Teach” (which has been interpreted to mean “Preach”) in Church or to occupy any position whereby a women is vested with “authority over a man”, including the position of a Church Elder.

The Authors demonstrate that each of these arguments for male superiority, or for the barring of women from certain roles is based on either a wrongful translation by the Biblical Translators (particularly those of the NIV) of the applicable Scriptural Passages, or a wrongful application of such Passages. Candidly, one of the things about the Authors’ conclusions and arguments which I find to be most troubling is their findings that the Biblical Translators have, for some reason, completely missed the boat in their translations to English of some key Greek Words or Phrases in the relevant Scriptural Passages, and that such wrongful translations of the Greek to English have led to some of the strongest arguments for the

purported superiority of men over women or for the barring of women from occupying certain positions, or performing certain roles in Christian Ministry. The Authors' findings in these respects make me again mindful of just how dependent we, every day, ordinary Bible readers are on the work of those translators who gave us the English Language Version of the Bibles which we read and which we use for Biblical Study. If the Authors are correct, and I have no reason to doubt their conclusions, we would not have many of the arguments over the proper roles for women in Christian Ministry which we have today. The Authors are not alone in their findings about the improper conversions of Greek to English, and in some cases Hebrew to English. A number of other authors and researchers have reached similar conclusions, as outlined in some other Reports which I have delivered.

So, in summary by Initial Impressions of this Book are highly favorable. As one who holds to the position of complete mutuality of properly trained, called, gifted, experienced and competent men and women in every role, position and capacity of Christian Ministry, I am strongly comforted by this book in any way, violate God's Scripture. Such comfort is appreciated because none of my personal feelings or those of any other individual can trump Scripture. If Scripture truly stands for the position that women must submit to men in the marriage and home, and that women cannot occupy certain positions or roles in Christian Ministry, then, obviously, Scripture Rules over any such feelings. Thankfully, I am again profoundly convinced by the work of these Authors that such a position is not Biblical, that it is contrary to the Bible, and that it is damaging to the advancement and spread of the Gospel.

WHAT ARE THE AUTHORS TRYING TO DO WITH WHAT THEY ARE SAYING

Ok, let's try to outline or summarize What the Authors are Saying. What Are Their Arguments? Let's try to Outline those Arguments in somewhat summary form, as follows:

- 1) **WOMEN ARE THE EQUAL OF MEN IN ALL QUALITIES AND ABILITIES OF LEADERSHIP, BUT SCRIPTURE RULES OVER CULTURE:** It is more than painfully obvious from societal and cultural changes, from objective scientific testing, and from empirical observation that women are as intelligent as men and that they are as capable as are men in assuming executive positions and leadership positions in the largest of corporations and most important public and private institutions. Women are serving as presidents of some of the world's most prestigious universities and colleges. They are increasingly populating the professions of law and medicine. They are serving as judges, justices and even as chief justice of some of the nation's highest courts. So, to argue that women cannot lead as well as men is to argue against almost everything that our minds and eyes tell us. However, all of this being true if Scripture tells us that God desires and intends that men lead, and that women must submit to male leadership and that only men should fulfill certain roles in Christian Ministry, then Scripture obviously governs. The Question then is whether or not Scripture in fact leads to these conclusions about God's desires and intentions. Our Authors argue, on a Scriptural passage by passage basis, that Scripture, properly translated, understood and applied does not lead to the conclusions for which it is often argued, that being that men, as opposed to women are to lead, that men are to have the role of leader in the marriage and home, and that women are to rather passively submit to their husbands, and that women may not serve in certain roles or capacities in Christian Congregations, particularly those of preaching, in public, from the pulpit and Senior Pastor, and some would argue, the capacities of Church Elder or Board member.

- 2) (NOTE: From this point forward, when the Authors refer to and state their positions as to the various relevant Scriptural Passages and Pericopes, I am not going to set those passages and pericopes forth, at least not completely. I, your Reviewer, will leave it to you, the Reader, to consult your own Bibles in order to fully read the relevant passages. However, suffice it to say that the Authors are particularly critical of some of the English language meanings given to Greek and Hebrew words and texts by the translators for the NIV.)
- 3) SLIPPERY SLOPE: The Authors note that, many Christians and Christian congregations fear that if a congregation allows a woman to occupy the roles of Preacher and Pastor, then that congregation might well find itself on a “slippery slope”, leading it to all kinds of sexual sins. The Authors poo poo this argument, arguing that every issue should be decided, on its own, by itself, and that most of the issues for which the slippery slope generated by allowing women to occupy certain roles in the ministry have nothing to do with the issues relating to the proper roles of women in the home and church. Furthermore, the Authors argue that we should not, in making decisions about Christian issues, be paralyzed by fear, but rather that we should seek the guidance of God in dealing with each such issue, which should stand or fall on its own Biblically driven merits or lack thereof.
- 4) BREAKING WITH TRADITION: It is argued that, since equality of men and women in most roles is now the obvious cultural fact, Christians must resist the culture and must stand fast on the Church Traditions, which have been in place since ancient times. Well, the Authors point out that if we were hidebound by “tradition”, Christianity which is a total break from Jewish “tradition” might never have come about. Furthermore, as the Authors point out, the Reformation represented a substantial break from previously existing Tradition, and represented a host of new ideas about the Gospel and following Christ. Tradition in many denominations and congregations supported slavery. The Authors argue that the problem with being hidebound restricted by Tradition is that Tradition is always changing, and has always been in a constant state of change as knowledgeable Church Leaders and Theologians engaged in a careful examination and analysis of Scripture, together with other sources of God’s revelation, have advocated for a change in long standing traditions. To allow tradition to govern over proper Biblical interpretation and application is, by definition, non-Biblical.
- 5) MODERN CHRISTIAN HISTORY REGARDING MEN AND WOMEN: Huge shifts occurred in American Society and American Christianity in the late 1800s and early 1900s. This shift favored an emphasis on the Holy Spirit, personal experience with the Spirit, personal conversion and salvation over intellectual learning. The Fundamentalists arose, arguing for a fear that “Liberal Christianity” was taking people away from the Fundamentals of the Christian Faith and Gospel. While, in the dominant white American culture, women had been relegated to the role of what I would call “housewife” and protector of the “family morality”, by the early twentieth century women had begun to expand their influence beyond the home and into positions of public influence. Evangelical Christians found themselves in a box. They began to try to find ways to more properly advance the message of the gospel, considering the changing cultures in which they found themselves, while, at the same time, having great fears about allowing any adaptation to the culture’s causing a loss of the fundamentals of the faith. Some theologians and ministry leaders determined that preservation of the fundamentals of the faith required that ministry leaders and pastors receive a proper education, and that only those who were properly educated and learned should be allowed

to fill certain ministry positions or to preach or teach. Whereas, previously, evangelists who expressed great faith and personal Spiritual experiences, including a number of prominent women, were recognized preachers and teachers, it was believed that only properly educated persons should be allowed to perform the roles which they had previously performed with success. Seminaries and similar institutions were formed, but they predominantly excluded women from their student bodies. It became less and less acceptable for those who had only moderate or no theological training to preach from the pulpit or to hold senior church positions. So, women were, by virtue of a lack of theological education, excluded from these roles. But this tide also began to shift. Evangelicals, like Liberals, came to the belief and position that the Genesis creation accounts, properly understood, clearly indicate that men and women were created equal and that women are of “equal worth and value”, and that certain passages in the Bible indicate that women should be allowed to play some limited leadership roles in the public sphere. It was believed that this position accurately reflected the account of Creation, where male and female were created in God’s image, but that this “equal in worth or value” position conflicted with certain Bible verses, the Author’s position as to which will be discussed below. Two Schools of Thought arose as to how to deal with this perceived conflict between the Biblical Creation Account (i.e. men and women were equally created in God’s image) and other Bible verses. One such School of thought (which we would call the “complementarian” position) held and today holds that “Church Tradition previously made women subordinate to men because.....God (by certain Scripture)...assigned men and women **different roles...**” (emphasis added), even though the Bible never mentions anything about “roles”. The Second such School of Thought (which we would refer to as the “Egalitarian” position), was and is based on an examination of Scripture which led those of that School of Thought, to conclude that God has consistently, throughout the Biblical Story, used women in roles of leadership, and that, “...when read in context, restrictions on women were intended to be temporary and applied to certain specific church situations”. The Authors strongly occupy this Second School of Thought, and argue for it in this book, starting with the fact that the Bible teaches that God has often used women in a position of leadership, leading men, and then moving on to the examination of those texts which are held to “be of temporary import” based on the given culture or situation of a given church.

- 6) THE BIBLE IS, AMONG OTHER THINGS, HISTORY, BUT IT IS ALSO A SOURCE OF INSPIRATION AND REVELATION AND WE MUST SEPARATE “GOD’S DESIRES FOR HOW WE SHOULD LIVE” FROM “WHAT GOD HAS ALLOWED TO HAPPEN” (OR, AS WE MIGHT PUT IT, WE HAVE TO DISCERN WHAT IS “NORMATIVE” OR “PRESCRIPTIVE” FROM WHAT IS MERELY “DESCRIPTIVE”, DESCRIBING WHAT WAS GOING ON-IN THE AUTHOR’S WORDS, “WHAT GOD ALLOWED TO HAPPEN”: So, the Authors argue that while the History part of the Bible shows that leadership was predominantly (but certainly not exclusively) male, we must separate the Biblical History of What God Allowed to Happen, from statements of God’s desires for How We Should Live. We must also seek to separate Biblical instructions which were intended to be “temporary” in nature, from those which were intended to be of “permanent” effect.
- 7) OLD TESTAMENT PASSAGES: While arguments are made that God created man first, and that woman came second, and that men are, therefore, superior to women, in fact the Genesis Creation Accounts establish that both men and women, male and female, were created in God’s Image and equally occupy that position. Nothing in the Creation Accounts can arguably

- stand for the proposition that God created men in some position of superiority over women. While arguments are also made that the Serpent (i.e. the Devil) deceived the woman and that this indicates that women are more readily deceived than men, the Genesis Accounts of the Fall establish that either Adam, the man, was present when the Serpent spoke to Eve (and that he was equally deceived) or, worse yet, that he was not so present but simply accepted the fruit from Eve and ate it in direct disobedience of God's Commands. Either way, Adam, the man, comes across in the Accounts of the Fall, as being at least as much in the wrong as does Eve, and really as being even more in the wrong than does Eve. So, arguments relying on the Accounts of the Fall to show that men are somehow superior to women must fail. Moving along in the Old Testament, we find the story of a woman, Deborah, who occupied a position of courageous leadership, including leadership over a man, apparently including her husband, and a military leader, Barak. God clearly allowed Deborah to occupy this position of leadership as one of early Israel's Judges. Proverbs 31, An Excellent Wife, hardly depicts the Excellent Wife as a shy, submissive, retiring house wife, but rather depicts her as a strong leader in the home and of her family, as an excellent merchant and business person, as a manufacturer of fabrics, as a wise and kind teacher, and as one "who watches over the affairs of her household" tirelessly. Does this Proverb stand for the proposition that women should be in full submission to men in affairs of the marriage, family and household? Clearly Not! Queen Esther, the Queen of Sheba, and the Queen of Chaldea are depicted in the Bible as occupying positions of leadership, and, sometimes, as performing heroic deeds at the possible expense of their own lives. Additionally, Biblical priests consulted the prophetess, Huldah on finding the lost book of the Law, and they accepted her word as being divinely revealed (see 2 Kings 22:14-23:2, 2 Chronicles 34:22) and "the obedience of Israel's male leadership to God's word, spoken through her sparked what is probably the greatest revival in Israel's history". "The Old Testament Prophets revealed God's intentions for a greater prophetic role for women. See the statement of Moses in Numbers 11:27-29 where it was stated "I wish all of the Lord's people were prophets, and that the Lord would put his Spirit on them", and the statement of Joel in Joel 2:28-30 where God said, through Joel, that "I will pour out my spirit on all people (and) your sons and daughters will all prophecy... ." This statement was quoted by Peter at the Pentecost event (Acts 2:14-21). Quite the contrary to excluding women from leadership over men, God appointed women to both secular and sacred leadership positions.
- 8) JESUS'S TREATMENT OF WOMEN: In Matthew 12:50 Jesus said that "whoever does the will of my Father in heaven is my brother, sister and mother", affirming Jesus's regard for the positions of women. All of Jesus's words and actions "...left us an example to treat women as equals of men...". While, in judicial matters, women's rights were widely limited, such as those regarding adultery and divorce (Jewish men could divorce their wives with a simple certificate of divorce, but women could not divorce their husbands), Jesus taught His disciples to regard men and women as equals in matters of divorce. See Mark 10:11-12. This was a highly controversial teaching, which even the disciples found hard to accept. While women were generally thought of as being intellectually inferior to men, and were not permitted to sit at the feet of a Rabbi and learn, Jesus defied these conventional thoughts by his teachings of the Samaritan Woman (John 4:10-26), and Martha (sitting at the feet of, and listening to Jesus) (Luke 8:1-3). Jesus selected a woman, Mary Magdalene (the testimony of women not being generally viewed as credible) to announce his Resurrection and coming Ascension to the

- Father. (John 20:14-18) Yes Jesus did choose only men to be among his 12 apostles, but that was likely done in order to avoid scandal (i.e. 12 males closely associating with females, travelling with them, sharing sleeping arrangements with them, etc.) and in order to symbolize the “new Israel”, with the appointment of 12 men paralleling the twelve sons of Jacob/Israel, “...reinforcing the symbolism of the church as the New Israel”. (Matthew 10:28; Luke 22:30; Revelation 21:12-14). Furthermore, since the New Testament indicates that there were more Apostles than those of the original twelve, Paul’s calling Junia “outstanding among the apostles” is significant. (See Romans 16:7).
- 9) 1 CORINTHIANS 7/QUALITY OF HUSBANDS AND WIVES: 1 Corinthians 7, Paul’s longest and most detailed statement of marriage, is stunning in its affirmation of equal opportunities, rights and responsibilities for each of a husband and wife. “Throughout this chapter, Paul addresses men and women as equals—again and again balancing his wording perfectly to emphasize this equality” with respect to issues of marital intimacy, divorce and remarriage, and issues dealing with the motivations of men and women to marry. No hierarchy within the marriage is spoken of, nor does Paul give either spouse “...the final word or veto power”.
- 10) 1 CORINTHIANS 11/HEAD COVERINGS FOR MEN AND WOMEN: Here our Authors reach the same conclusion as has been reached by other authors (See Kirk R. MacGregor, *Bibliotheca Sacra* 168, April-June 2009, 201-16, “*Is 1 Corinthians 11:2-16 A Prohibition of Homosexuality?*”) to the effect that Paul is not speaking here of “head coverings” such as hats, scarves, etc. but rather, when he refers to “head coverings” he is speaking of hair, since, in Corinth, a woman with her hair down openly indicated to others that she was sexually available thereby bringing dishonor upon herself and her husband, and a man, by having long hair, openly indicated to others that he was available for homosexual relations. Therefore, Paul stated to the Corinthians that a woman should not appear in church with her hair down (advertising sexual availability) and that a man should not appear with long hair (indicating homosexual availability). However, significantly, at least in my view, the Authors conclude that Paul’s admonitions to the Corinthians as to hair and head coverings were specific to the church in Corinth and not to other churches. Here, the Authors criticize, as they oftentimes do elsewhere in this book, the wordings or translations given to Paul’s Greek Words by the NIV English language Bible. (Note: I am not a Greek Expert, and frankly have no abilities to translate Ancient Koine Greek to English, but if the Authors are correct in their criticisms here and elsewhere of the NIV interpretations, then I am bothered, greatly bothered because I and many others use the NIV Bible, and I and those others rely on the NIV interpretations, and if those are so wrong, as the Authors state, then we are being sorely misled). In the NIV version of 1 Corinthians 11:13-16 Paul purportedly says “If anyone wants to be contentious about this, **we have no other practice—nor do the churches of God**”. The Authors contend that Greek language dictionaries make it clear that this wording is wrong, and that the wording in the KJV is correct, and that this section of the passages should properly read “...**we have no such custom—nor do the churches of God**”. Why is this significant? It is significant because Paul is clearly stating here (if the Authors are correct) that these admonitions to the Corinthians about heads, head coverings, etc. **are situational, applying to the situation of the culture, society and church in Corinth, and not elsewhere**. While the Authors do not so state, in the judgment of your Reviewer such a conclusion demonstrates that we Bible readers must read most epistles, particularly those directed to a given congregation (such as the Corinthians)

with a view towards trying to understand whether the Epistle was directed to a given SITUATION, and was intended to deal with that SITUATION, and not to have general application to all churches. The Authors also address the very controversial passage: *“But I want you to realize that the **head** of every man is Christ, and the **head** of every woman is man, and the head of Christ is God* (1 Corinthians 11:3) This passage, which is highly controversial, has generated lots of argument, and has been used to argue that men, as the head of women, are to have authority over women, and that men, who have Christ as their head, are somehow more Christlike than women. The problem: the word “**head**” here does not mean a physical head, or authority. The Authors, looking to other passages where the Greek word for head is used, come to the conclusion that “head” here means “source” and not authority. The “source of man is Christ, and the source of women is man (since the first woman did, in fact, come from man) and the source of Christ is God. So the relevant passage does not speak of some Biblically ordained hierarchy of men over women, but rather speaks of the fact that both men and women have Christ as their ultimate source.

- 11) I CORINTHIANS 12/SPIRITUAL GIFTS: The passages of this Chapter, which speak of the various spiritual gifts, such as apostles, prophets, teachers, miracles, gifts of healing and helping and different kinds of tongues, indicate that these various gifts are different and somehow distinguishable one from the other (e.g. prophecy is not the same as teaching, with the most controversial gift being “teaching” the controversy being whether women can “teach” or most certainly whether women can “teach” men in conformity with the admonitions of 1 Tim. 2:12). Furthermore, no distinction is made between men and women with respect to the conferring of these Spiritual Gifts by the Holy Spirit. Equality of men and women in the conferring of these Gifts seems to be in place.
- 12) 1 CORINTHIANS 14-34-35: DID PAUL WRITE, “WOMEN MUST BE SILENT IN THE CHURCHES?” Now the Authors step into an area of high controversy. 1 Corinthians 14:34-35, as it appears in the NIV Bible and other Bibles has been quoted as *“Women must remain silent in the churches. They are not allowed to speak, but must be in submission, as the law says. If they want to inquire about something, they should ask their own husbands at home; for it is disgraceful for a woman to speak in church”*. The Authors note that this passage has puzzled scholars for decades since it seems to contradict numerous other passages, including those of 1 Corinthians. It is additionally noted that Paul commissioned a woman, Phoebe, to carry and present, and likely read and discuss in the Roman house churches, his very important epistle to the Romans. (See Romans 16). Additionally, at the conclusion of Romans, Paul names as worthy of praise and respect 10 Christian workers, of whom were women. Furthermore, in this highly unusual passage of 1 Corinthians, Paul refers to the subjection of women “as the law says”, whereas Paul has, throughout his ministry, never relied in his preaching or teaching on “the law” and teaches much that is contrary to “the law”. So, how can this highly peculiar passage be dealt with? Some churches just disregard it, viewing it as some kind of an aberrational outlier. Some conclude that it was culturally situational, addressed only to a situation in the church at Corinth. Others argue, as does Kirk R. MacGregor in his Article, *“1 Corinthians 14:33b-38 as a Pauline Quotation-Refutation Device”*, CBEinternational.org, PriscillaPapers/Voll. 32, No. 1/Winter 2018, pps 23-28, that Paul, as a rhetorical, refutation device, simply sets forth here in these passages (i.e. 1 Corinthians 14:34-35) that which was stated to him, Paul, in a letter from the Corinthians to Paul (note that there were a number of

letters back and forth and we don't have all of them), and then he, Paul, in subsequent passages refutes these quoted statements from the Corinthians when he starts out in 1 Corinthians 14:36-38 by (according to Dr. MacGregor) by admonishing the Corinthians with the statement: "Did the Word of God originate with you...". Our Authors do not follow any of these approaches, and, particularly argue that Dr. MacGregor is wrong. They argue, by way of a highly detailed, extensively set forth argument that these passages simply do not belong in the Bible; and that they never appeared in Paul's original letter, but rather were inserted later, by some scribe, likely from some marginal comment made by some other scribe which appeared after verse 33. So, the Authors conclude that the provisions that women should not speak in church but should remain silent, SHOULD NOT BE IN THE BIBLE. Regardless, whether the Reader accepts the approaches of some churches, as described above, or Dr. MacGregor's Quotation/Refutation Device argument described above, or the Authors' conclusion that the controversial texts were never in Paul's letter and should not even be in the Bible, the purported admonitions of 1 Corinthians 14:34-35 against women speaking in church are, by and large, just put aside.

- 13) GALATIANS 3:28: MAN AND WOMAN, ONE IN CHRIST: Galatians 2:4-14 explains that Jews in Galatia were pressuring gentile Christians with arguments that, in order to be redeemed they had to conform with the Law, in addition to accepting Christ's gift of redemption. Even Peter was refusing to eat with Gentiles. Paul rebuked these Jews and Peter with his statement in Galatians 3:28 that "There is neither Jew nor Gentile, neither slave nor free, nor is there male and female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus". The Authors conclude that, better translated, this passage makes a single point that in Christ "there is no Jew-Greek division, no slave-free division and no male-female division". They further argue that these "non-divisions did not just apply with respect to matters of redemption, meaning who can be saved, but rather applied with respect to day to day living in this world. So our Authors conclude that Galatians 3:28 stands for the proposition that in matters of redemption and in matters of this world, there is no division between males and females, and that in Christ, they are equals.
- 14) EPHESIANS 5:21-33: HUSBAND AND WIFE MUTUAL SUBMISSION: Our Authors argue that these passages, properly translated and interpreted clearly stand for the propositions that husbands and wives are to mutually submit to each other. While it is argued that, while the first paragraph of these passages stands for the proposition of mutual submission, the second paragraph stands for the proposition that wives must submit themselves to their husbands, as they do to the Lord. However, carefully and properly read in context, this second paragraph stands for a proposition that was hugely radical in the then existing Greco Roman Culture, which was that wives were to submit to their husbands, and husbands were to submit to their wives, even to the point of death. In other words, these passages stand for the proposition that wives are to submit to their husbands in everything, and husbands are to submit to their wives in everything, a very scary proposition, particularly in the then existing culture in which husbands were to dominate. Nothing less than the total mutual submission required by the "one-flesh" status of married persons is required of husbands and wives, with neither dominating but both mutually submitting to the other.
- 15) COLOSSIANS 3:18-4:1: SUBMISSION REVISED: in Colossians 3:18-4:1 Paul states, among other things (in remarks similar to Ephesians) as follows: "Wives, submit yourselves to your husbands, as is fitting in the Lord. Husbands, love your wives and do not be harsh with them."

This verse seems to require submission by wives to husbands. However, our Authors argue that in most every other instance where the Bible calls for wives to submit to their husbands, it either calls for (1) mutual submission, as in 1 Corinthians 7, Ephesians 5 and 1 Peter 3, or (2) it explains that the reason for wives to submit to their husbands is to fit into the surrounding culture in order to not interfere with the spreading of the gospel. The Authors go on to note that neither reason appears here. That said, going into Colossians 3, the Authors note that it also talks about slaves when Paul states that “here there is no Gentile or Jew, circumcised or uncircumcised, barbarian, Scythian, slave or free, but Christ is all and is in all”. (Col. 3:1). A few verses later Paul advises slaves to obey their earthly masters in everything and to do it with sincerity of heart and reverence for the Lord. (Col. 3:22) The Authors conclude that Paul, in order to facilitate the spread of the gospel, had to be sensitive to his environment and the culture of his audience, and that, in Colossians Paul was addressing the patriarchal and slave ownership rules of the time, which such rules required submission by wives and slaves. However, the Authors note that, in Colossians, when it is read in its entirety, without picking it apart phrase by phrase and concentrating solely on one or two phrases, Paul instructs the Colossians to exert their leadership or dominant roles (i.e. husbands vs. wives, masters vs. slaves) with deference and love and consideration for those who, pursuant to the rules of the then existing culture, were to be submissive to them. Therefore, here, in Colossians, the Authors urge that we must discern history from revelation of God’s desires for how we should live. They conclude that we have to be mindful of the fact that the Bible sometimes speaks of “what God allowed to happen, and not what God desires for how we should live”. As we might put it, we must discern “what is merely descriptive of what was going on from what is normative or prescriptive for Christian living”. It is further noted that the epistles were written and spoken in the “already but not yet times”, those times between the initiation or inauguration of God’s Kingdom by Christ, and the consummation of that Kingdom at the eschaton. So, with respect to Colossians it is the Author’s position that Paul was speaking in a manner sensitive to the culture of the Colossians in order to not interfere with the spread of the gospel, but that he was doing so in a manner calculated to soften that culture.

- 16) 1 TIMOTHY 2: A WOMAN ASSUMING AUTHORITY TO TEACH A MAN: Finally, we reach those parts of Paul’s epistles which appear to speak in the bluntest of fashions, and which are always relied upon as providing Scriptural (meaning Godly) instructions that a women cannot preach from the pulpit (as this represented “teaching”) and cannot exercise “authority” over a man. The Authors’ reasoning and arguments with respect to 1 Timothy are not, in substance, much different than the arguments asserted by John Dickson in *“Hearing her Voice, A Biblical Invitation For A Woman To Preach”* (Zondervan 2012), or Walter L. Leifeld in *“Women and the Nature of Ministry”* (JETS, March 1987,PPs 49-61). However, the arguments and positions of our Authors are more clearly stated than those of such other authors and, unlike such other authors our Authors conclude that women are not Scripturally barred by 1 Timothy, or any other parts of Scripture, from serving as Senior Pastor or in any other position of Christian Ministry, simply because they are women and not men. Since the passages of 1 Timothy are so often cited, and are of such importance to the positions that are so strongly held with respect to the roles of women in Christian ministry, I, your Reviewer, will seek to outline here the arguments and conclusions of our Authors. Such outline is as follows:

- a. Paul helped start the church in Ephesus (Acts 18-20), the church which is being led by Timothy, and the problems with which Paul addresses Timothy in 1 Timothy.
- b. When Paul left Ephesus, he warned the elders of the church that savage wolves of false teachers would descend upon them and seek to draw the disciples away from the true Gospel. (Acts 20:29-31).
- c. Sure enough the church in Ephesus began to experience false teachers, a condition against which Paul constantly spoke in 1 Timothy and some of his other epistles. Some of these false teachers were “willfully blasphemous” and some spoke blasphemy out of ignorance, a condition which Paul found to be excusable and correctable since he, Paul, had been a complete false teacher before his personal encounter with Christ. He had been previously ignorant, but had been taught and learned the truth.
- d. In much of 1 Timothy which follows 1 Timothy 1:18-20 wherein Paul spoke harshly of two who were engaged in “willing blasphemy”, Hymenaeus and Alexander, Paul speaks to Timothy about individuals who were “misinformed teachers”. These were women who had been deceived by blasphemous teachers and were involved in continuous false teachings. Our Authors cite numerous passages of 1 Timothy in support of this proposition.
- e. From Acts 19 we learn that Ephesus was the center of the worship of the Greek goddess Artemis, the goddess of fertility. The leaders of the cult of Artemis were predominantly women. The people of this cult were lured by promises of fertility, sexuality and protection during pregnancy. It makes sense that women, who led this cult of Artemis, would come to the Christian church in Ephesus with the expectation that they could lead. Some of them sought to assert themselves as leaders. They sought to accrue unto themselves “authority” which had not been given to them.
- f. Priscilla and her husband, Aquilla, had been with Paul in Corinth and worked with him there, and were involved (meaning that Priscilla, a woman, was, likely like Phoebe in Romans, teaching a man) in teaching Apollos, a learned man, “the way of God more adequately” than had been previously known by Apollos. (See Acts 18:1-3, 18:18-19, and a8:24-26) So, since Priscilla is, contrary to Greek custom, mentioned in Acts before her husband it is reasonable to believe that she did at least some of the Biblical teaching of Apollos, a “man with thorough knowledge of the Scriptures”. Priscilla accompanied Paul to Ephesus (Acts 18:18-19). Priscilla was in Ephesus with both Paul and Timothy. She, who had already been recognized by Paul as a “teacher” of the ways of God, would have been a resource for Timothy in Ephesus.
- g. Beginning with 1 Timothy 2:11 Paul addresses the fundamental problem of women teaching or speaking in church who are not properly trained in the gospel, stating that they should learn “in quietness and full submission”. The Authors find it to be significant that the Greek verb for “learn” used here is a “command”, meaning that Timothy is commanded by Paul that these women must learn. Paul is not just giving advice, but is commanding Timothy that the women who had been teaching falsehoods must learn the correct gospel. This is the only command given by Paul in 1 Timothy. Why were men not also commanded to learn? Because, in the Jewish culture, from whence Paul came, men could learn from Rabbis, but women could not do so. It was also true in the then existing Greco-Roman culture, that the ability of

women to learn was severely restricted. There was no then existing convention regarding how women should be taught.

- h. So, the Authors finally come to the most controversial text, 1 Timothy 2:12, *“I do not permit a woman to **teach** or to assume **authority over a man**; she must be quiet”*. (emphasis added). Analyzing this verse, the Authors reach a number of conclusions. First, they find that the Greek verb in the phrase “I do not permit” is a present active indicative verb in the Greek, so that the better translation is “I am not permitting”, which implies a temporary, not permanent state of affairs. Second, the word “permit” itself is never used in the Bible as a universal command, but indicates temporary permission (citing various passages). Third, the word translated *“to assume authority”* is *“authentein”*, a word which is not used anywhere else in the Bible, but which the Authors conclude (as did Walter L. Leifeld in his JETS Article cited above) meant “assuming authority by one’s own initiative” or the aggregating to oneself authority which was not properly given. Fourth, the two verbs here, *“to teach”* and *“to assume authority”* are joined together by a Greek conjunction, *oude*, meaning that Paul is not talking about two separate issues, but one single issue. He is prohibiting, again on a temporary basis, unlearned women to assume authority, not properly given to them but personally aggregated to themselves by themselves to teach. They may not assume authority to teach, with the only actual command given to Timothy by Paul in 1 Timothy being that these women must learn.
 - i. Addressing the issue as to why Paul only referred to a woman teaching a man, the Authors note that, in the then existing culture Timothy would have had no access to the private discussions among women. Therefore, Paul was referring, not to private discussions but to the public teaching in a public church service.
 - j. In dealing with Paul’s references to the Genesis Accounts of the Fall in 1 Timothy 2:13-15, wherein Paul seems to state that the woman, Eve, and not the man, Adam was the one deceived and that the man, Adam was formed first, our Authors refute the conclusion that these passages of 1 Timothy can properly lead to the conclusion that women should not teach because they are more easily deceived than men. I have outlined the Authors’ positions with respect to the Genesis accounts of the Fall above in Section 7 of this Review. They repeat those positions here, such being that Adam either heard the statements of the Serpent, or that he did not hear those statements but still ate the forbidden fruit, indicating that Adam’s fault was at least on a par with Eve’s fault. With respect to the woman’s being saved by childbearing (Tim. 2:15) the words for “through childbearing”, should, according to the Authors, have been properly translated as “through childbirth” or through “the childbirth”, with the child referred to being the “the seed of the woman..” referred to in the Genesis accounts of the Fall, that being Christ. So, women are saved, just like men, *“if they continue in faith, love and holiness”*.
- 17) 1 TIMOTHY 3:1-7, OVERSEER QUALIFICATIONS, AND 1 TIMOTHY 3:8-14, DEACON QUALIFICATIONS, AND TITUS: Suffice it to say that since our Authors note that it was customary in the use of the Greek language to use the male pronouns when referring to a group of both males and females, and the language of these passages use the male pronouns to refer to the qualifications for elder, deacon and overseer, they find nothing in these

passages which would stand for the proposition that Scripture requires that elders (with that term referring to spiritual maturity and not to age or gender), overseers or deacons must be male, or that women cannot serve in these capacities.

- 18) 1 PETER 3:1-7: HUSBAND-WIFE MUTUAL SUBMISSION AND THE WIFE AS WEAKER: The Authors note that in this epistle Peter is writing to those exiles who are living among non-Christians, and subject to the authority of non-Christians in order to encourage them during their times of suffering. Peter knows that life is difficult for these people, but that they have no alternative and are stuck in their present situations. The best he can do is to encourage them to stay strong in the faith and to lead exemplary lives, which might enable them to win over nonbelievers. However, while doing so, they must submit to whatever authority they find themselves under. So, when he, Peter, instructs wives to *“submit yourselves to your own husbands so that, if any of them do not believe the word they might be won over without words by the behavior of their wives...”* in 1 Peter 3:1-6, he wants the wives to submit to their husbands in order to try to win the husbands over to Christ, even in their weaker social standing. He wants wives to courageously identify with their Lord Jesus Christ, despite the social expectations that wives must adopt the religious beliefs of their husbands.

I must apologize for the length of this outline of our Authors’ book. I have prepared this outline as much for my personal benefit as for the benefit of the Reader. However, and while I suppose that reasonable minds can reach differing conclusions about the effects of Scriptural passages as to which language translation issues exist, and which are not particularly easy to interpret, the Authors have, by their very careful treatment of each Scriptural passage which reflects on the issues relating to the roles of wives vs. husbands, the roles of wives in the family, and the roles of women in ministry, and particularly in those roles from which women have traditionally been excluded, led me to conclude that I am justified, by careful Scriptural analysis, in my strong bias that the exclusion of a woman from Christian education, or from any role in Christian ministry for which she is called by God, and for which she is fully qualified by training, Spiritual Gifting and competency is an action which is not Biblical, and is an action which interferes with the advancement of the Gospel. I appreciate the Reader’s bearing with me.

FINAL THOUGHTS

I, your Reviewer, believe that this Book should be carefully reviewed, studied and discussed within any Christian Congregation which is confronted with, or struggling with any doubts about whether or not Scripture (meaning God’s Revelation through Scripture) contains any prohibition against a woman’s serving in any role in the ministry of that Congregation, particularly the roles of preaching from the pulpit and any role of Pastor, including Senior Pastor.

HOW TO READ THIS BOOK

While the Authors have done a wonderful job of setting forth their arguments and positions in clear, readable and non-contentious fashion, a proper use of this book requires that it be thoroughly read and studied. I wish that I could state otherwise, and state that there is some simple, easy, quick way to read this book. There quite simply isn’t. The purveyors of the positions that husbands should be the leader in

their home and should have the final say so on family issues, and that women are Biblically barred from occupying certain positions and roles in Christian Ministry rely on a number of Biblical texts which they claim support these positions. If one wants to understand their positions, and the texts which purportedly support those positions, and be able to critically analyze such positions by Biblical analysis, then the step by step, Biblical passage by Biblical passage approach used by the Authors of this book must be performed. You cannot do this book justice without carefully reading it, re-reading it, and studying it and, probably, performing your own side by side reading of Scripture.

IS THIS BOOK SUITABLE FOR THE TEI LIBRARY AND FOR USE IN CLASSES OF TEI/ECLI?

Absolutely! I think that this book would present very interesting case study material in a hermeneutics class. We there urge that critical thinking is essential, and we urge the use of our basic hermeneutical rules. The Authors of this book do an excellent job of providing instructions on the use of the methods of careful hermeneutical analysis (including their comments about what they find to be incorrect language translations) in the study of the Biblical texts relating to the roles of women. So, this book should be in the TEI library and in the library of any Christian Study Center, and should be used in those classes where its use is appropriate.

Thank you, Dear Reader, for your perseverance in reading this extended Review.