A report on a round-the-world year of "learning by doing," from two dedicated members and supporters of CBE, both students at Fuller Theological Seminary.

We give special thanks for the encouragement and prayer support from those back home--a support that has uplifted us during moments of frustration and potentially devastating mishaps.

In Calcutta alone, both of us suffered from acute amoebic dysentery and twinges of homesickness. Bill's passport, airline tickets, and traveler's checks were stolen during a violent rush while boarding a train. (Where we reported this incident, the police officer asked whether it was "just violent" or "truly violent, with cuts and bruises." Oh, Calcutta!)

Upon arrival, we naively believed our travel guide book which claimed an over-abundance of accommodations for travelers to Calcutta. But as late as 11 p.m., after checking dozens of full hotels, we began to face the prospect of joining the thousands who sleep on the pavement. However, in all these experiences God brought salvation--and taught a few lessons! Our passport was restored, a hotel found, medicine procured, and even new-found friends helped ease homesickness. We felt your support during these times.

A typical day during our four weeks in Calcutta began by rolling out of bed at 5 a.m. During our twenty minute daily walk to "Mother Teresa's House," we waded through the garbage and human feces scattered on the streets, stepping around the dozens of street sleepers lining the way. This area of town is predominantly Muslim, so as we walked we heard the eerie chant of their first morning prayer (one of five daily prayers) being broadcast by loudspeaker throughout the neighborhood.

Upon arrival at the Missionaries of Charity center, we were greeted at the door by a smiling sister clad in a white sari trimmed in blue. We had expected the morning mass to be a tranquil, quiet time. Instead, the sisters start each day in meditation requiring exceptional concentration, because a full row of windows deliberately open their chapel to an orchestra of "music" from the street below. Honking, muffler-less trucks, rickshaw bells, children playing, shrill police whistles, cows lowing as they pull carts--these and other noises are the background for the morning prayers and worship. But by this method Mother Teresa teaches her staff (and us too) that real love for God must be lived out in love for those around us.

And so, over the sounds of the street, the sisters sing in sweet a capella unison of God's compassion for a hurting world. We find we now miss those strangely "quiet" moments of being filled with joy, a necessary preparation for looking into poverty's ugly face day after day.

Following prayers and worship, at 7 a.m. we joined two other volunteers who had been developing a relationship with seven street children. We provided the children's breakfast, probably their only healthy meal all day because for them, like many others, "home" consists of two mats and a cot placed on a busy street corner.

We struggled personally with how really to help people without simply adding to the dehumanizing message that they are incapable of caring for their own needs. In our four weeks with these children, another personal struggle was realizing that many other people had even more severe needs. Once, while walking with the children down a busy street, a woman thrust her crying baby onto Bill's chest, screaming in Bengali at the top of her lungs. As we walked on, we heard a mocking laughter following us which seemed to say, "If you really want to help us, don't simply offer band-aids."

Moral dilemmas continued throughout the day as we boarded the tram to our volunteer job sites - J. J. to an orphanage and Bill to a home for the mentally
disabled. "Shishu Bhavan" is a Missionaries of Charity care facility for children whose parents are unable to provide due to illness or economic setbacks. J.J. found herself bonding with one child especially. Little Rajia was four years old, but looked only two due to severe malnutrition and tuberculosis. Her full recovery looked doubtful, which only stirred up more love for her within J.J.'s heart. Soon, however, the sisters discovered J.J.'s administrative skills and had her doing office work most of the time. This gave her the privilege of working more closely with the sisters.

Bill's normal duties included bathing bodies, shaving faces, clipping fingernails, cutting hair, washing dishes, feeding mouths, and the like. It sounds mundane, but he had his "moments." One boy's skin was so caked with filth that it took four days of scrubbing before he could be called clean! The brutality of street survival had drained him of life and hope - his body emaciated, with claw-like fingernails, out-of-control bowel movements (making those baths a challenge), and nearly total unresponsiveness. How this boy had survived this long was hard to determine, but he was judged to be about fifteen years old. Out of the ninety male patients, Bill took special notice of this boy, mostly trying to communicate through touch Jesus' love for this sad result of the blunt end of poverty's brutal stick.

Some afternoons and evenings we visited families and new friends in Calcutta, with one middle class Christian family revealing Calcutta's more developed side. Our memories also include one street family, hovering over a daughter who was busily studying mathematics. The father looked up with a smile that seemed to say, "There is hope for the future in our daughter." We also remember a young widow with a ten-month-old son, living on the street just outside our guest house. Instead of giving cash to beggars, due to potential abuses we continued with her our usual practice of giving food and our friendship. She showed appreciation by giving J.J. four glass bracelets. Her gesture reminded us that the greatest gift we could give people was dignity and value, as we related to them as friends and equals.

When we went to bed at night, tired from the incessant noise and feeling our lungs heavy with smog, so many emotions surfaced in our minds. Given the complexity of our surroundings, our inadequacies were most evident. Were we doing any good at all? Yet Mother Teresa's words encouraged us: even though ours was just a small drop in the ocean, without that drop the ocean would be diminished.

The past few months have included many other experiences, including visiting a Nepalese jungle preserve and sleeping in an authentic mud and thatched-roof hut. We also had the opportunity for eight days of hiking in Nepal's Himalayas, refreshed as we marveled at their beauty.

In Thailand, ministry opportunities included using hoe and sickle to clear an overgrown field for an upcoming evangelistic meeting, and joining a Bible study in a slum.

In Malaysia, we shared our faith one afternoon with a traditional Muslim family.

In Sri Lanka, we led seminars and a chapel service at Lanka Bible College. Especially there, we sensed God's answer to your prayers. Although there had been reports of violence and killings just weeks before our eleven-day visit, ours was the quietest period the area had experienced in months. This brief visit was truly a highlight for us, as we saw many fruitful results of Lanka Bible College's ministry of training men and women for leadership in the churches of Sri Lanka. Through the efforts of these Christians, many are turning to the Gospel instead of placing false hope in violence, Hindu gods, or "lord" Buddha to solve the many problems facing their country.

We know we will miss the Asian hospitality and the stimulation of such diverse and lively places, but we anticipate new experiences as we fly on to Africa. We thank you for your prayers as we pass the midpoint of our trip.

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From our mailbox

"I manage my own business, in which I work as contract seminar leader for various management companies around the country, sometimes designing and delivering my own seminars as well. These seminars deal with managerial issues, current business trends in relation to the labor force, and motivational topics. I love my work, but some day would like to be speaking on topics nearer to my heart - namely, women's issues. That is the reason for CBE, and CBE has been a great source of encouragement to me as I have endeavored to find how I can fit my talents into today's Church."

"I am interested in biblical equality for a number of reasons. My experience of being in ministry in India, and frustrations with the lack of a defined role, pushed me to question my understanding of women in ministry. Subsequent seminary studies took me through the difficult and prolonged experience of questioning and reformulation of my convictions and understanding of Scripture in regard to women - not only women's roles in ministry, but the whole larger question of life as a woman. This period of study, combined with my life experience as a woman, opened doors for me to come to a conviction of the truth of biblical equality. May the Lord bless you!"
Toward an Egalitarian Hermeneutic of Faith
by Catherine Clark Kroeger, Ph. D.

My first introduction to the rudiments of a theological education came during the closing days of World War II as I sat upon the rocks of a remote island in the Lake of Bays in Canada. Our instructor was Cornelius Van Till of Westminster Theological Seminary. Inter Varsity Christian Fellowship had introduced a one month lay training institute to prepare Christian college students to deal with the attacks upon the Christian faith which were our daily lot in the secular classroom.

Van Till taught us that the Bible, if it was truly the Word of God, would hold up to intense scrutiny; that we could dissect it, shake it in a test-tube, grind it fine, and analyze it carefully. If we found apparent contradictions, this was an invitation, not to discard the Bible, but to study further.

I believe that we need to come to the Bible with just such a faith when we deal with the hard issues - not only those of doctrine but also those of Christian behavior. If we can develop a hermeneutic of faith which will apply to a better understanding of gender roles in the economy of God, perhaps the same methodology can serve us in circumstances which the church of Jesus Christ cannot now fully envision. The twenty-first century will surely bring theological debates of a nature different from any we have known, but the same Lord can guide us into all truth through the Word of God which shall not pass away.

In every age there are those who come to the Word of God with new questions. They wrestle with the topic until at last the Holy Spirit gives light, and then they go on to new questions. I think especially of those early men and women of God who debated the nature of Jesus Christ. Sincere people were able to point to one set of Scriptures; and others, equally dedicated to knowing the mind of God, would come to another conclusion, also with the use of Scripture. The struggle to understand the truth of the Word took centuries to be resolved; and at last the Empress Pulcheria, with Eutychians and Nestorians snapping at her heels, summoned four hundred bishops to Chalcedon; and there was hammered out a declaration of Jesus Christ as One Person in Two Natures, united unconfusedly, unchangeably, indivisibly, inseparably.

There have been other debates which have taken an enormous amount of time and effort: what is the Word of God? What is the nature of man? What is the basis for our salvation, and so forth. Each is an urgent and legitimate question, one with which the Church of Jesus Christ must tussle. In our own day, one of these legitimate questions concerns the biblical role and status of women. Some point to Genesis 3:20 and to the restrictive statements of the Apostle Paul and lay out a carefully circumscribed area of women's activities in church, home, and society. Others lay hold of Galatians 3:28 and claim the traditions of Deborah, Miriam, and Hulda, and of the women who first went at Christ's command to herald to the men their Resurrected Lord. The issue is far from resolved and calls for commitments of which I would like to speak.

Studies about women and the Bible have moved beyond an analysis of individual texts or groups of texts, to the development of a feminist hermeneutic. Elizabeth Schüssler Fiorenza, appalled by the injustices perpetrated upon women in the name of Scripture, declares that feminists must develop a hermeneutic of suspicion. She insists that all Scripture cannot be proclaimed as the Word of God because some of it is oppressive. Hence the need for a hermeneutic of suspicion. Hers is not the only feminist hermeneutic. Letty Russell, Phyllis Trible and others have developed their own; but evangelicals have been very slow to formulate a strategy for interpreting the Word of God as it applies to women.

Of course I have considered this the work of theologians, but perhaps a few suggestions would not be amiss. Let me begin by defining the word feminist in a positive sense. In its initial dictionary meaning, it means a person who believes in the equality of men and women. Certainly many people are redefining the term with additions to which most evangelicals would not give assent; but the original sense is similar to the truth expressed in Galatians 3:28, that in Jesus Christ there is neither male nor female, bond nor free, Jew nor Greek.

The Problem of Integration
How shall we integrate the entire message of the Bible and apply it to our daily lives in church, home and society? I believe that we must work with a hermeneutic of faith. We must say at the outset that evangelicals have been slower to formulate a feminist hermeneutic because we find it far harder than others. We come to Scripture and declare it to be the living Word of God, our only infallible rule of faith and practise. We are caught between the apparent contradictions with regard to women in the Bible, and our
belief that it is all truly God's message to us. We are not dealing simply with a collection of ancient texts. This is the Word of God, given as light for our minds, cleansing for our souls, and nourishment for our spirits. We believe that in the Bible God has truly spoken to us. If it appears oppressive, contradictory, and unjust, then there are questions which need to be asked, alternatives which need to be pursued; but it is still the Word of God, still to be heeded as the words of life. David said, "Righteous art thou, O Lord, and right are thy judgments. Thou has appointed thy testimonies in righteousness and in all faithfulness." (Ps. 119: 137-138) We cannot abandon our belief that the Bible is indeed a message and not just a muddle. We do not denigrate Paul or his theology - rather we must say that Paul deserves to be studied.

Here is where faith comes in. We believe that the Bible may contain paradoxes, perplexities, and problems but not outright contradictions. If God gave us a message, it is one which may be believed and acted upon, one upon which we may stake our very lives. And so we must travel with the faith that there is a resolution for this issue, even if it is not immediately apparent. We need to obey the command to compare Scripture with Scripture. No less a fundamentalist than the late L.E. Maxwell, president of Prairie Bible Institute, declared that there were over a hundred passages in the Bible which affirmed women in roles of leadership, and three which appeared to oppose it.

The Weapons and Tools of Faith

What, then, are we to do? Is not our God a God of justice and love, and did not Jesus say that he came to preach liberty to those who were oppressed? First, I suggest that we resort to the weapon of prayer, that we spread out our perplexities before God and ask for the wisdom which is promised to any who will ask. We believe that the Holy Spirit is the one who gave us the Scriptures and that the Holy Spirit is our foremost teacher in understanding them.

A hermeneutic of faith also asks for commitment. Let us approach the Word of God with silence and submission. This phrase "silence and submission" is a formula used in the ancient Near East meaning readiness to hear the will of God and to obey it. God asks of us receptivity to heed and to obey. We must be willing to be changed by what we read. Now this does not mean that we will approach the Bible with no preconceived notions. All of us bring our prejudices with us. It is important, though, to be honest about this. It is much better to admit to ourselves and others that we have certain view-points and to understand that we have held these presuppositions as we read. We need to ask, have we read our own convictions into the text? Have we been fair to other view-points? Then we must be ready to alter our perspectives in accordance with light from the Word.

The Great Commandment

I believe that our commitment as we read may well take the form of the great commandment, "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart and mind and strength and thy neighbour as thyself." If we love God with all our heart, we will love all that Scripture says about Him. We will even love the metaphors of God as mother. God promised "Like as one whom his mother comforteth, so will I comfort thee." (Isaiah 66:13) The book of Job speaks of the "womb of God" (38:29); and Isaiah spoke for God when he wrote, "The Lord goes forth and will shout aloud like a mighty man of war, . . . I will gasp and pant like a woman in travail." (42:13-14) Jesus said that he would have gathered Jerusalem to his breast as a mother bird her brood. (Matthew 23: 37)

If we are faithful to the Word of God, it is our duty to share all of the revealed nature of God; and we cannot obscure this aspect. Indeed an understanding of God as Mother can be an important evangelistic tool. I recall an old alcoholic Dane whom I was seeking to lead to the grace which he could find in Jesus Christ; and suddenly he burst out, "If God is like a Fadder, den I don't vant him!" It was essential for him to know that God is also revealed as Mother. This insight has great importance in helping women to understand that they too are made in God's image. Genesis 5:2 says, "Male and female created he them, and he blessed them and named them Man when they were created."

We must be mindful, however, that the Bible commands us to not to image God as either male or female (Deuteronomy 4:16) - our love must be for a God who is above and beyond human sexuality.

If we love God with all our hearts as we read the Word, we will love the way that Jesus treated women. He received Mary as a student who had chosen the better part which should not be taken away. He told Martha that he was the Resurrection and the Life and prompted her response that He was indeed the Christ, the One who was to come. He affirmed the faith of a Syro-Phoenician woman whose tenacity of trust brought the healing of her daughter. He revealed to a sinful woman at a well that He was the Messiah and sent her forth to bring a whole village to hear His message. As the Samaritans streamed forth to meet him, Jesus told his disciples "Here the saying holds true, 'One sows and another reaps.' I sent you to reap that for which you did not labor; others have labored, and you have entered into their labor." (John 4:37-38) Jesus rejected the double standard when he demanded that the one without sin be the first to cast a stone at the woman taken in adultery; and he repudiated the menstrual taboo
when he required the woman with an issue of blood who had touched him give public testimony of her healing. He hailed the widow who gave God everything that she had and he dared to loose the bonds of a daughter of Abraham on the Sabbath before a hostile crowd. At the Garden Tomb, he waited until John and Peter had left so that Mary Magdalen might be the first to bring the news of her risen Lord. Hebrew law maintained that women could not be used as witnesses, yet Jesus expressly sent them forth to tell his brethren that he was alive and would meet them in Galilee. (Mt. 28:10) When the disciples on the way to Emmaus expressed their disbelief of the woman's story, he cried, "O fools and slow of heart! Ought you not to have believed that all the prophets have said!" (Luke 24:25) Yes, our love for Jesus must include a love for his treatment of women as revealed in the Scriptures.

Loving God with our Minds
But the Bible also commands us to love God with all our minds. We must at this point get out our scholarly tools and get to work. We need to work through all of the passages carefully. Could we be mistaken about Deborah, the prophet, judge and general? Do we understand what it was that Jesus commanded the women to do on Easter morning? Why does Micah say "Have I not sent Moses and Aaron and Miriam before thee to lead thee?" (6:4) Against these must be balanced the difficult Pauline passages - as well as all the exegetical points - in I Cor. 11:3-14; 14:34-35; and I Tim. 2:11-15.

I am aware that there are also passages with problems in Isaiah and in the imprecatory psalms and in the opening chapters of Genesis, to name just a few. The women's issue is certainly not the only tough issue. It would be quite easy to give up and walk away, rather smug in our belief that the larger set of passages are quite direct, whereas the passages apparently representing an alternative point of view are plagued with problems. But they are still the Word of God, still God's message to us; and we cannot walk away from them. We cannot deny the difficulties or ignore them. Job said, "Though he slay me, yet will I trust Him." (13:15) The Psalmist said, "All thy commandments are true." (Ps. 119:151) We believe that there is a resolution to the difficulties if we search for it with faith. Jesus said, "Seek, and ye shall find." Part of our faith is that, like wrestling Jacob, we do not let go until we have reached a satisfactory conclusion.

As we begin, we need to examine the textual tradition. Is it reliable? I Corinthians 14:34-35 occurs at two separate points in some of the early texts. This raises a question as to whether it might not originally have been a gloss which slipped into the text.

Themandate occurs in all versions of I Corinthians 14, however, and appears to be an authentic part of the epistle.

Next we should ask, "What does the text say?" Here a knowledge of the biblical languages is absolutely critical. Too often we leave a genuine mastery of the Bible in its original tongues to a rarefied and elitist group. We need instead a far stronger and more widespread competence in Greek, Hebrew, and other related languages. In each new generation, we must return to the texts to grapple with new situations which have arisen in our contemporary society. New questions must be posed of the old Scriptures.

When it really matters, we must get back to the fundamental text rather than putting ourselves at the mercy of translators. For example, in Romans 16:7 Junia is called a noteworthy apostle. (The same Greek term for "noteworthy" occurs also at Matthew 27:16) Most translators change the feminine name to "Junias" - a name which is absolutely unknown in any inscription, literary or legal document, or coin, whereas the feminine form "Junia" is perfectly common. Some translators have ventured "Junius" or "Junianus", neither of which is allowable by the alpha ending in the text. One can only acknowledge that learned gentlemen have inserted into the rendering of this passage their own preconceived notions.

We must also be wary lest we be influenced by the unwarranted additions which some translators insert into the text. Most of the older versions at least italicized the words which had been added, so that one could be aware of the insertions; but modern versions and paraphrases often have no such italics to help the English reader discern what actually does appear in the text. A famous case in point is I Cor. 11:10, which literally translated, says that a woman ought to have power over her own head. It is almost impossible to find a version which gives this rendition. Archbishop Moulton declared this verse to be one of the most difficult in the entire New Testament. Katherine Bushnell noted that anyone with a single year of Greek ought to be able to handle it adequately. The language was perfectly straightforward but the meaning unacceptable to most translators.

Considerations of Language
Next comes the matter of language. Is there more than one meaning for some of the words employed in the passage? If there are other established meanings for a given term, what sense would their utilization give to the passage? The verb hupotasso, for instance has a number of meanings, as even the most conservative biblical dictionary will admit. They will carefully point out, however, that when applied to women, the verb means that they should obey their husbands. The word "silence" has at least
has at least five different meanings in the New Testament in particular and in Greek religion as a whole. Do we give any indication of this in the passages dealing with women?

Recently there has been much controversy over *kephale*, the word for head. Despite abundant examples in ancient literature, traditionalists deny that *kephale* has in the Greek the value of origin or source. Yet the ancients believed that human sperm was generated in the head. It passed down the spinal chord and passed on to bring new life into the world. Artemidorus of Daldis wrote that just as the father is the source of life for the son, so the head is the source of life for the body. Sometimes the statue of a bearded head was set at the source of a river, for the rest of the body flowed forth from the head. To bring this concept of headship to passages such as Ephesians 5 and 1 Cor. 11 brings a very different understanding to the relationship between husband and wife.

Another critical term is *laelio*, used in 1 Cor. 14:34-35 as an activity prohibited to women. The directives of the First Epistle to the Corinthians state that women might pray and prophesy with their heads covered, (11:5,13) and all might prophesy provided they took turns and did it in an orderly fashion. (14:26,31). These mandates become coherent if we understand *laelio* as referring to disruptive noise. The word means to vocalize, as well as to speak. Plutarch wrote that dogs and apes could *laelio*, but they could not speak rationally; and Athenaeus preserved a charming verse about a fish who spoke a lot (*laelio*) but didn’t say anything. In 1 Cor. 14:9,11, 27, and 28 *laelio* clearly refers to an utterance which does not convey meaning to its hearers. I suggest that women are asked to refrain both from irrelevant chatter during the service and from the ritual cries which they gave at ceremonial occasions from the time of Homer to the present day. A plaque excavated from a temple halfway up the Acrocorinth is specifically dedicated to just these cries of women and bears evidence that the phenomenon was alive and well at Corinth.

Another prime example is 1 Tim 2:12, where a verb occurs which is used nowhere else in the entire New Testament. The problem is vexed because in a case where a word occurs but once, the dictionary often simply follows the translator and declares that it has such-and-such a value in New Testament Greek. *Authentiko*, the verb in question, is defined in New Testament dictionaries as meaning to usurp authority or to dominate, although other Greek authors used the term to imply other values such as to kill someone, to begin something or be responsible for the initiation of something, to lay claim to property as being one’s own, to claim to be the author of something and so forth. To translate that one verb differently changes the sense of the entire passage. This passage which causes women so much perplexity can be rendered in a variety of ways. Why do we not explore the possibilities?

**Considerations of Grammar and Context**

Then there is the matter of grammar. Is there an unexpected construction which might give another interpretation? 1 Tim. 2:12 can perhaps be construed as an indirect statement with a redundant negative so that the emphasis is upon what women are forbidden to teach rather than upon their teaching or administrative function. The grammar of Romans 16:2 may be understood to say that Phoebe was an overseer who had been ordained by Paul himself. The very same construction is used to say that Paul was made or ordained a minister (Ephesians 3:7; Colossians 1:23,25). Why, then, are we so reluctant to give the same rendering when it refers to a woman rather than a man?

Equally important is an understanding of the context of a given passage. This is especially true of the problems in Pauline writings. We need first to see Paul as one trained at the feet of Gamaliel in rabbinic tradition. As such, he was fully aware of the consequences of a Jewish woman removing her veil in a public gathering. But Paul was also a Roman citizen who was at home in the Graeco-Roman world. He alone of the apostles appears to have been comfortable in dealing with non-Judaized gentiles.

If we would understand the rationale of this missionary to the gentiles, we must understand the worship practises of heathen women; for they differed extensively from those of men. We must also recognize that Paul had been born at Tarsus and retained a deep commitment to proclaiming the Gospel in his native Asia Minor. His missionary travels took him deep into the heart of Anatolia, to an intimate knowledge of those forms of religion which were practised there, especially by women. 1 Tim. 2:11-15, addressed to Ephesus on the west coast of Asia Minor, may be understood as a response to these Anatolian traditions.

**Loving with our Strength**

If our love of God demands hard mental effort, let us not forget also to love God with all our strength. It is our responsibility to exercise the most serious scholarly endeavor of which we are capable. This means a thorough knowledge of the exegesis of other scholars, including those with whom we disagree. Lamentably, evangelical scholarship has not always been of a level of excellence that earned the respect of non-evangelicals. Too often we tend to slough off when the going gets tough. Let us acknowledge that we are called to a long-term effort. If we believe that there are solutions to our perplexi-
ties, let us commit ourselves to finding them. We cannot claim to have all the answers, but we can profess a faith that they are there if we continue to seek them.

Loving God with all one’s mind requires time and energy and effort. There is a great deal of heavy spade work to be done, and there are no short-cuts. This means gaining a mastery of materials which we may find repulsive - fertility cults of women, pagan rites, and impure literature. Worse yet, the path is often wearsome and tedious. Blessedly, God is our strength and can do for us what we cannot do for ourselves.

If we are to love with all our strength, we must have the courage to refute those interpretations which do violence to the Word of God or to the people of God. For instance, we must speak out against those who justify the abuse of women by the citing of Scripture, we must be very clear that the Bible forbids roles of leadership to those who strike another (I Timothy 3:3; Titus 1:7). Whether the weak are wronged by those from liberal or conservative camps, we must offer a refutation based on biblical principles.

The Transforming Power of God’s Word
The second part of the Great Commandment bids us love our neighbour as ourselves. We love because Scripture has convinced us that all are made by God in God’s own image, and that Jesus Christ came to redeem all. Surely this means treating all human beings with respect and seeking to bring each one to her or his highest potential. Gender, social condition, and racial considerations are all swept away by Galatians 3:28. The Great Commandment calls us both to respect the insights of other Christians and yet to bear to needy people our distinctive message. The Bible calls us to manifest the love of Christ in every dimension of life.

If the Bible calls us, it also transforms us. We believe that the Word of God is alive and powerful and capable of making us new. As we see the light of God’s Word fall upon others, our attitudes toward them change. God’s Word teaches us to look at people in new ways.

Once we have seen the poor, the homeless, the afflicted, the fatherless, and the stranger within our gates in the light of their true worth as revealed in God’s Word - we can no longer continue in our old heedless patterns, nor will mere patronization suffice. Our hermeneutic of faith demands transformed behaviour by the power of the Holy Spirit.

“I am thy servant; give me understanding that I may know thy testimonies! Redeem me from man’s oppression, that I may keep thy precepts.” (Psalm 119: 125, 134.)

Welcome to Trish!

Trish Baker, our new executive director is a human dynamo! In a remarkably short time, she has transformed our office into an extremely efficient and attractive place. She came on board with CBE just as we were beginning to get a flood of inquiries and responses to our ads in Christianity Today, Leadership, and Today’s Christian Woman. In most cases, a reply goes out the very day on which the request was received. This has taken a lot of engineering. Undismayed, she has also ploughed into printing, mailings, IRS reporting, and other baffling operations.

Trish comes to us with eighteen years of office administration and management - we can’t believe how effortless she makes the most arduous chores seem! Blessedly, she has had considerable computer experience and seems to know how to get all kinds of gadgets to work. She is truly a God-send!

Trish, a deeply committed Christian, confesses, "I feel my strong point is organization and motivating and teaching people. I feel responsible for my work and take pride in a job well done."

One of her references says, "I have seen her pull together a pretty raggle-taggle group of people, all moving in different directions, and to make a very efficient and organized working unit. She seems to be well organized, reliable, and indeed, seems to know what needs to be done even before I have said anything to her. Another great plus - she is extremely personable, friendly and diplomatic; she seems always to have the right personal touch for the job at hand."

Our financial management now lies in the capable hands of Joanne Carlson, who also works for the Billy Graham office and is a real pro at non-profit organizations. Many of you have received letters from Susan, our secretary, and are well acquainted with her, at least by correspondence. Chapters are getting to know our long-term volunteer, Ruth Bolyard. This involves a significant amount of time as we now have chapters in Wilmore, Kentucky, Chicago, Denver, Southern California, Pittsburgh, and the Twin Cities - with several more in a formulative stage.

Another important member of our staff is Charlene Rogness, who sends out the books and reprints which you request. Right now her ministry is especially important because so many people are asking for more material about biblical equality. Many of you tell us that many of the books which we carry are simply not obtainable at run-of-the-mill Christian book stores. We are frequently told that we have the best and most extensive materials on biblical equality of any organization. Pray that God will meet our need for more funding for pertinent literature.
"The Desires of Thine Heart"
by Evelyn Bence

A MEDITATION FOR SINGLES...

When a junior in college, I was given a pink Helen Steiner Rice birthday card by a grandmotherly woman who watched me open the envelope and read the rhymed sentiment. The now long-forgotten exact wording was clearly inspired by a portion of Psalm 37 that refers to God giving a heart its desires.

I looked up from the card to thank the giver for her thoughtfulness and saw the word "husband" written, as clear as this type, across her beaming face.

I flushed with embarrassment. Desire for a soul-mate was something I felt all too keenly, but something I talked about with only a few close friends. Although I looked for him, the man of my dreams had not ridden - on a horse or in a sports car - over the horizon. For my emotional survival, desire was, then and for several years, something to repress.

Seven years later, I was again taken by surprise at how Psalm 37 slipped into a nonexistent conversation - a married person's counsel or comfort to me, a single woman approaching thirty.

It was my sister's wedding. She was much older than I, and her marriage was no cause for tears. I knew that and had intended to celebrate wholeheartedly. Yet I, the maid of honor, sobbed throughout the benediction and the recession. I saw my unidentified heartache to its conclusion in a secluded Sunday school room, and within two minutes of my silent escape from the embryonic receiving line, one of my brothers found me. I said nothing to him; he quoted the promise to me, as if it were the clamp that would close my gaping wound. Again, a married person's presumption flooded me with embarrassment.

Desire. Most single women don't talk of it because they sense the truth in what Elizabeth Forsythe Hailey stated in A Women of Independent Means: "Nothing frightens people more than undisguised need." And the intensity of our need tends to frighten even ourselves. Not all the time, surely, but too often when we allow ourselves to be alone, we feel empty, as if some part of us were missing. As a recent book title queries, "Why Do I Feel Like Nothing When I Don't Have a Man?"

In writing about deprivation in his book Creative Suffering, Paul Tournier says, "I think first of all those unmarried women who have confided in me....They are deprived of physical love, but even more - even if they have a lover - they lack the sharing of the whole of life, the 'togetherness' which women (he suggests) need more than men."

In young women the need is not necessarily perceived in the present tense. Many do not want to marry now, but, assuredly, eventually. (I have met several Christian women who say that they, when younger, didn't particularly want to marry; their left finger is now encircled with gold.) And the need is not perceived as being predominantly or necessarily genital, as a man's need may be, but emotional - a need for permanence, affection, security, for a home defined by a relationship.

In her book In a Different Voice, Carol Gilligan asks that psychologists acknowledge the reality that "women's development points to a different history of human attachment [than man's]." She explains further, "Illuminating life as a web rather than a succession of relationships, women portray autonomy rather than attachment as the illusory and dangerous quest." And Jean Baker Miller, in Toward a New Psychology of Women claims that a woman's very "sense of self becomes very organized around being able to make, and then to maintain, affiliations and relationships."

Exactly what do we single women do with this desire, which tends to drag behind it an iron ball of guilt? After all, don't our Bibles and our enlightened minds tell us we're supposed to be content? And what seems more antithetical to contentment than wanting something we don't have?

As with most unmet needs, most of us tackle desire with some combination of prayer and active pursuit of satisfaction - some combination of faith and work.

The problems of pursuing a husband could fill a whole book, but can be quickly summarized by acknowledging that the final remedial decision traditionally is a woman's only in negative terms. She may decide whom she will turn down, not whom she will forthrightly ask. Even MS. magazine acknowledged the problem and that its solution is beyond our reach. In an article entitled "The Choices that Brought Me Here" (Nov., 1984) Amanda Spake wrote: "Even if women can learn to savor the power of female pursuit, can men?...Unfortunately, it's a dilemma that women, no matter how assertive or understanding we become, can do little to resolve." Although a woman may, by work, find a mate, he, not she, is the earthly being most in control of the marriage proposition.

So, some say, why work when you can
pray? The Lord surely will provide or at least take away the emptiness, fill the void.

The void.
Which void?
A person’s need for communion with God has been referred to as a God-shaped void. Whether that vacuum, which God can and does fill, be expressed in terms of our hearts, souls, or minds, it is distinctly different from our mate-shaped voids. Even before the Fall, when God apparently walked with Adam daily, God acknowledged that human void which He couldn’t or chose not to fill: Adam needed Eve, who, once created, needed Adam, and her need was more intense or at least different from Adam’s. Genesis 3:16 describes a “curse” of need, not physical, it seems, but emotional. “Your desire will be for your husband,” translates King James. Other versions replace desire with yearning (JB) or with be eager for (NEB).

As a result of the Fall, a basis exists for our want. And, more, a basis exists for our powerlessness in pursuit: the next phrase, describing a man’s power over a woman (“and he shall rule over thee”), may be more a statement of a natural effect of the desire (even politically, a nonplaining party wields power over a more vulnerable, needy one) than a second and separate burden.

In his book Beyond Sex Roles, Gilbert Bilezikian offers an explanation of the Genesis 3 verse: “[The woman’s] desire will be for her husband, so as to perpetuate the intimacy that had characterized their relationship in paradise lost. But her nostalgia for the relation of love and mutuality that existed between them before the Fall, when they both desired each other, will not be reciprocated by her husband.”

The void.
Which void?
This often seems magnified in single women, who have more to desire - not only the attentions of a mate but his very presence.
Although the “curse” of desire stands alongside its counterparts, the labors of childbirth and the toil of making a living that have always made life less than idyllic, it is fundamentally different from them in that it is emotional more than physical. Its mental, and therefore not touchable or boxable, nature can cause the crippling and unnecessary fall, like down a flight of stairs: guilt.

We are told that we are supposed to be content, that Jesus is supposed to satisfy. But why do we expect him to cancel one effect of Eve’s sin and not the others? I have heard of one woman who prayed away the pain of childbirth - surely a miracle and surely miracles happen. But I’ve never heard of a mother who carried guilt for the pain she bore in her bearing or who measured the severity of that pain against her spiritual depravity.

As long as we equate every twinge of emotional pain with spiritual weakness, we’re in for a long battle with self-condemnation.

Many women grow tired in their attempts to convince themselves that Jesus is all they need. They speak in tones similar to my toddler nephew when he was terrified. In Lady MacBeth fashion, he too vehemently declared, repeatedly, “It’s all right. It’s all right,” convincing no one but himself that he wasn’t afraid.

Although there is truth in the claim that the closer we walk with God, the more His peace calms our psyches, there simply will be nights when a spiritual presence doesn’t seem loving enough, personal enough, physical enough.

The void.
Which void?
Lest we despair of hope, let’s take a closer look - a personal inventory of our discontent. Only recently did I personalize the existence of two separate vacuums. Once discovered, the difference seemed so obvious to me, but I quickly saw why the two had for so long been indistinguishable from each other.

My “revelation” came while reading a Graham Greene novel, The End of the Affair, in which a dramatic conversion changes a woman’s outlook on life. She walks into a church one day and sees a crucifix: “And of course on the altar there was a body too - such a familiar body, more familiar than Maurice’s, that it had never struck me before as a body with all the parts of a body, even the parts the loincloth concealed.” Further on she reflects, “So today I looked at that material body on that material cross, and I wondered, how could the world have nailed a vapour there?”

How, indeed?
Our salvation, our Savior, is male. Some choose to debate God’s gender, but not Jesus’, and from our earliest exposure to Christianity we hear of him meeting our needs in language identical to that of a husband meeting those of a wife. Besides the biblical allusion of the church as Christ’s future bride, we sing, “Fill Me Now,” “I Surrender All,” “He Tells Me I Am His own,” “Jesus, Lover of My Soul.”

More than a man, who identifies neither with a lover being addressed as he, nor with sex in terms of being filled or entered, a woman easily confuses the desire for a lover of her soul with the desire for a physical lover. The language in no way helps her distinguish between the lacks or between the two sources of relief, and, therefore, the two will never be separated as easily, as obviously, as egg yolks from egg whites.
Our minds, our personalities, function on many levels. None of us lives above the temptation to ask of one another what we should ask of God - or maybe I am mistaken to label such as sin, for on one plane we are called to be Christ's to each other. Nevertheless, only as we give that God-void to the One who is able to satisfy its emptiness, allowing Him to give us His fullness, are we able to take strides toward facing rather than denying or tiptoeing around the desire He cannot in bodily presence ease. (It takes strong faith - or imagination - to visualize Him sitting across the dinner table.)

Defining the source of discontent and then casting off unnecessary guilt may be emotional equivalents of a pregnant woman's breathing exercises; it's the fighting against legitimate pain that makes it worse, the embracing of it that mysteriously breaks its controlling power over us and makes us more conscious of God's spiritual and sustaining presence.

Like death, which is the ultimate curse, a woman's desire has no spiritual or eternal sting, but like death, the living out of the process can be - most likely will be - painful. Jesus' death and resurrection will ultimately vanquish the effects of the Fall, but with few promises for the here and now that can't be boiled down to: His grace is sufficient, and His presence, though not physical, is constant.

Evelyn Bence is a freelance writer and editor living in Arlington, Virginia. This article first appeared in the August, 1986 Reformed Journal and is reprinted by permission of the author.

On The Road:
What it's like for Children

by Donno Fujimoto

I stood behind some trees the school bus braked to a stop on our country road. The driver paused and glanced down my driveway, then closed the doors and started the bus down the hill. I watched until the bus was out of sight, then stepped from the protective trees, my senses alive with excitement. *I wasn't going to school this year!* I was 14 years old and about to begin a big adventure.

Dad had already taken me to Indiana University to register for eighth grade correspondence courses in English, algebra, and history. Mom was packing the last of what clothes and personal items she thought we'd need for the trip.

My father was an evangelist and my mother, sister and I were going to join him in his full-time ministry. It wasn't long before we were on the road. For me that road stretched over four years of time; I lost track of the number of miles and faces.

My father had been doing this kind of work off and on since he was 14 himself. After my three brothers left for college, it seemed natural for him to work us into his ministry instead of leaving us at home.

One consideration was the special situation with my mother and sister. My sister had contracted a serious illness at the age of two which had left her with mental and physical handicaps. My mother, who had cataracts and could not drive, would have been left isolated in the country unable to go into town for errands or medical care. So Dad decided that we should go with him. We bought a white motor home with a blue stripe on its side, closed up the log cabin, and left.

My father was a songwriter as well as a preacher. Many of the churches we went to were small out of the way places. We did a variety of programs: revival meetings for one or two weeks, holding services every night; morning and evening Sunday services; Vacation Bible School; concerts; summer camps; and even tent meetings.

Usually Mom and I would sing a trio with Dad and then he would preach a sermon, and we would sing a closing song. Most of the songs we sang were ones he had written. Both of my parents played piano, so we always had accompaniment.

We would stay here for a few weeks and then for a few months, based on how many meetings we could schedule. For example, we were in the habit of...
going to the San Diego area every January to sing in area Christian and Missionary Alliance churches during their annual missionary conventions.

The missionaries stayed in the area going from one church to the next to speak. We followed them and added music to the missions services. This sharpened the childhood interest I had in missions and undoubtedly accounts to some extent for why I am now living in Japan.

My responsibilities were several. I would set up the sound system and test it before the service, and be responsible to fix it if it broke down during meetings. It was a simple set-up and I enjoyed working with it. I sang in the trio and, as time went by, in an increasing number of solos. I was asked to give my personal testimony, do puppetry, teach Sunday School and do counseling.

People assumed that I had a great deal of wisdom because I was in ministry, so peers came to me with all kinds of problems. I had little idea of what to say to them, so I prayed a lot while they poured out their hearts, and then I responded with Biblical principles; hoping I would say something to help them. In a Nazarene church in Oklahoma I was even asked to lead the evening service. I studied very hard, sweating and praying as I did so. I had someone open in prayer, then I led in song and followed this with a Bible lesson. It was fairly informal, and I remember a question and answer time at the end where an adult posed one of those "stumper" questions to me. I was completely at a loss and upset about what to do. Another gracious member proceeded to answer the question for me, much to my relief.

I had an ear for detail, and would find little mistakes in my father's sermons, like a misquoted Scripture passage. He liked my telling him what errors I heard, so this became my regular duty. (It took me years to outgrow this habit when listening to sermons!) He also enjoyed sharing insights from New Testament Greek with me. In later years, I studied Greek in both college and seminary.

We recorded a number of albums and tapes, most of them at the Little Nashville Studio near our home in Indiana. I was featured with the trio on one record, and later had my own solo cassette, which I paid for out of earnings made from a little art project I had done. Another responsibility I had in conjunction with this was selling records, tapes, and sheet music.

One of my favorite activities during those years was being on local radio and television stations. I enjoyed the excitement of live broadcasts very much. I liked performing for the camera or microphone, and being interviewed. It was fun to see and hear myself on tape, too.

It was far from a glamorous life, however. Sharing a motor home with three other people did not afford us much space or privacy. In a way our lives were not our own. As long as our electric cord was plugged into a church building, we were part of its staff. We made visitations to the sick, stayed up late praying and counseling, went to sunrise services, and anything else the church could think of for us to do. Even though we may have looked poised at each meeting, we were often tired. I was tired of wearing the same outfits every week—color coordinated to match those of my parents, and tired of having no permanent home.

Loneliness was often my companion. Although I cultivated a close relationship with my parents, the only friends my own age that I could stay in touch with were two girls who faithfully corresponded with me for all of those years and beyond. They kept up with my hundreds of changes of address and gave a thread of continuity to my life.

However, I was a very sensitive girl, and it hurt me to always be saying goodbye. So I developed certain defenses against the hurt. I learned how to make quick, shallow friendships to sustain me for a week or two, but inside, I kept my distance. I would prepare myself for farewells at least a week in advance so that when they came, I would show no emotion. Because it meant an end to the responsibility of relationships, I began to like good-byes better than hello's. I made a point of not knowing our schedule because it was unbearable for me to think of all those people I would meet and then leave. In fact, I got in the habit of not remembering names and faces.

Once a boy whose church I had sung at was at a later rally where my parents and I were singing. He thought I was being a snob by not coming over and talking with him when I had intentionally forgotten him so that I could deal instead with the people I was "ministering to" that particular week.

At 16 I wrote, "Everywhere and nowhere I meet everyone and know no one; I'm in a crowd of people alone! But Jesus is with me, everywhere and always. If it weren't for Him I would die inside; lose hope for life and eternity." It is true that my aloneness forced me into greater reliance on Christ and His Word. Still, once a year I would collapse physically and emotionally for about one week.

After my first year of correspondence courses, my parents decided that it was too difficult for me to keep up school by mail, so I was effectively truant for the following three. To keep me thinking, Dad required that I keep a journal of my travels. I loved learning, so I read volumes of books that I found in people's home and church libraries. Even though I
passed the graduation equivalency exam with flying colors when I was 17, missing all those years of school proved to be a real handicap to me later. I had to learn to type while I was a freshman in college; I didn't drive until I was 21.

I still feel some of the gaps in knowledge that should have been filled at that time. More keenly felt was the social loss. College became to me what high school is to many: a place to find personal identity and learn to relate to one's peer group. I don't feel that I really caught up until my last year of graduate school—or perhaps until 3 years after that.

Two things from that era of my life deeply impressed me: the opportunity to see much of the vast continent of North America, and many of the dear Christians I met and remember warmly.

We traveled across perhaps twenty states as well as four Canadian provinces. I saw mountains, rivers, plains, and natural wonders including Old Faithful; monuments such as Mount Rushmore. Suddenly, history and geography took on new meaning for me—I had seen the sites where significant events had taken place. I met all kinds of people—from Indians to immigrants—in many walks of life.

I saw numerous American sub cultures, including Amish and Hutterite communities. I had the opportunity to talk to many learned and traveled people. Best of all were the particularly warm and caring Christians we met along the way. In a small church in Bly, Oregon a family promised to pray for me every Monday. As far as I know they still are.

Near San Diego live a couple of silver-haired saints who let us park near their home between meetings in the area, and treated us like members of their family. There are many others who contributed to our ministry with their support and prayers.

From my perspective, over ten years later, I can see some of the pro's and con's of involving children in ministry. Here are my thoughts:

Parents should seriously consider the balance between ministry and parenting in their lives. During those years, my needs and feelings were often unnoticed because my parents were busy in the ministry. They focused on the needs of others, leaving me to rely on myself.

Fortunately, I took it all in the spirit of "sacrificing for Jesus," but I believe that Scripture points out the heavy responsibility which parents have to look after their family's needs as a primary goal. I think that people with a heart for reaching out to others need to develop a plan for how to meet their children's needs as well as carry out ministry before they make long term commitments to either. Otherwise, one or the other may suffer unnecessarily: the children or the ministry. Kids in ministry need the same kind of fun, support, affection and approval as any other child--there are no super-Christians. Unfortunately, they are often seen as "having it all together" and are the examples other parents hold up to their children, saying, "Why can't you be godly like so-and-so's kids?" This is unfair pressure. Also, sometimes church leaders praise people who have left dark, sinful lives to come to Christ, while failing to praise the quiet, steady Christian walk of someone who has known the Lord since preschool.

In either case, the Christian teen needs people whom s/he can confide in, pray with, and be loved by for just being themselves. Otherwise, the teen may grow adept at displaying a happy Christian mask, fearing to be honest lest s/he be accused of failure or weakness. This is a real block to Christian growth and maturity.

It may often be assumed that because a person has known the Lord since near infancy and has grown up in the church that s/he understands spiritual disciplines and basic doctrinal teachings. This is a false assumption.

Discipleship is as essential for the Christian youth as it is for someone newly saved as an adult. The disciplines of Bible reading, prayer, praise, personal holiness, and others need to be explained and modeled for young people. They will not just absorb skills from the environment. They may not always grasp terms and concepts being tossed around freely in Christianese conversations.

If positions of authority (such as teaching a Sunday school class, camp counselor, etc.) are given to a youth s/he is likely to run into situations s/he doesn't know how to handle. Discipling should come before responsibility is given.

Parents and mentors need to teach practical skills to children along with ideals so that they can put feet to their goals.

How can you tithe if you don't know how to make a budget or write a check? How can you pursue a career as a doctor in order to become a medical missionary unless you know what and where to study? How can you seek a mate if the only examples you have are romantic anecdotes and Grace Livingston Hill novels?

Finally, ministry experience is good for kids—but they need to see beyond "glamour" and understand "servanthood".

As I recounted, our work was not full of glamour, but it had small elements of fame. I could present a prefabricated picture of myself for a week at a time, but I was not accountable or vulnerable to any body of believers. I had an inflated view of my musical abilities because I had no basis for comparison.

People were always praising me; I had no idea of how life existed on the other side of the pulpit. I could pray the right prayers, quote the right verses,
offer the right counsel, but I had no practical basis, no personal confidence on which to base these things. It took years of humbling, prayer, delving deeply into Scripture, and finally baring myself to a Bible study group (with which I maintain close ties) in order for me to begin to understand my proper position in relationship to God, His Church and the world.

It is often not the one who is up front, but the man sitting in the sound booth, the junior higher in the nursery, or the woman cleaning the church after everyone else is gone who are closer to the mark of who Christ desires us to be. I wish I had understood that ten years ago.

Book Review

Building Your Family to Last by Kari Torjesen Malcolm. (Downers Grove: InterVarsity Press, 1987.)

The secret of building families to last is found in Kari’s emphasis on parents modeling the Christian life before their children. If the mother and father— who are responsible before God for what happens in the home—are not walking with God, and not walking in harmony with each other before God, how can they become models to their children? Hence this modeling has to start with choosing a life partner with the same foundation in life and faith and loving obedience to Jesus Christ.

Then, when the children come, the modeling continues with parents who practice the disciplines of private prayer, Bible study, public worship, special retreats to listen to God, and celebrations of thanksgiving for God’s goodness to us.

It is in the home—rather than in the church where they may spend only two or three hours a week—that children become Jesus’ disciples.

Kari illustrates this modeling process both from her own childhood with missionary parents in China, and from her years in the Philippines where she and Bob raised their children. From experience she sees that modeling can’t take place if children and parents are not united in spirit and in goals.

Family togetherness has to be intentional. It will not just happen. This means having meals together, with devotions at breakfast and prayer and a Bible story at night.

It means family outings each week, as well as vacations, to enjoy each other’s presence and have open dialogue between parents and children about life’s joys and sorrows.

As children grow up today in a world of turmoil and cruelty, they will soon realize that love reigns in the security of the home. The enemy is without for these children, while for those who live with parents who fight, the enemy is within.

Another form of the enemy within is the loneliness experienced by children who spend hours at home without their parents. Children are the victims who pay the price for the life-style that demands that both mother and father have to work full-time to pay for it.

The final challenge of Kari’s book is to carry both the modeling process and family togetherness into the area of ministry. She illustrates this challenge from her own experience with her children when she was a missionary in the Philippines. But the same principles she discovered can also apply to work in one’s own home, church or community. Whether parents are in a professional or volunteer ministry, that ministry can become a threat to the children if they are not included. Anything that takes parents away becomes an enemy.

On the other hand, the home-centered ministry (with needy families or groups like foreign students coming to our homes) offers a wonderful opportunity for the whole family to be involved. Here we will not only reach others with the Good News, but we will model a life-style of concern for those beyond the four walls of our home.

In the process, we will discover that our children will be the best missionaries “for of such is the kingdom of heaven.”

The Husband of one Wife?

There is considerable debate as to how we should understand the command that a bishop, elder, or deacon should be the husband of one wife. (I Timothy 2:2,12. Titus 1:6) Sometimes these verses are used to argue that only men may be deacons, elders, or bishops because only men have wives. Actually, women enrolled in the order of widows were required to have (or have had) only one husband. (I Timothy 5:9).

Sometimes inscriptions described a Roman woman as “univir” - having had but one husband. This was an honorific title and implied special virtue in an age when multiple marriages were all too common. Bruce Fleming recently called to our attention that this commendation appears on both pagan and Jewish tomb-stones, whether the dead individual had been a man or a woman.
The expression indicated a dedication to one's spouse. For more information and bibliography, we refer our readers to a commentary on 1 Timothy 3:2 in *Traduction Oecuménique de la Bible*, édition intégrale, Nouveau Testament, Les Éditions Cerf, 29 Bd Latour-Maubourg, Paris VII, 1981, p. 646, n. a. from which we quote:

Mais on peut aussi entendre les expressions *mari d'une seule femme ou femme d'un seul mari* (cf. 1 Tim. 5:9), expressions que l'on rencontre dans les inscriptions juives et patéennes, dans le sens d'un amour conjugal particulièrement fervent.

None would question that the New Testament enjoins single-hearted commitment of husband and wife to one another. Nevertheless, another facet of Jewish family life may have been addressed in the scriptural command that men in leadership should have only one wife.

The recent publication of documents discovered in a cave about five and a half kilometers from the Dead Sea has demonstrated that polygamy was far more common in Jewish families than had been previously supposed.

Along with many household items and about twenty skeletons, a cache of letters and legal documents lay in a cave known as the Cave of Letters. The dead individuals had apparently taken refuge there during the Bar Kochba Rebellion and had brought with them important possessions.

In the case of one woman, Babatha, this included a collection of thirty-five carefully preserved legal documents dating from AD 95/94 to 132. They had been bound together according to subject and stashed in a leather bag, which was then placed, along with a considerable amount of valuable flax thread, in an old water skin and hidden under a pile of rocks.

Although Babatha was probably only about thirty years of age, her life had been a stormy one which can be charted by marriage deeds, law-suits, sales contracts and so forth. She was married at an early age and bore her husband a son. She was then widowed while the child was still very young.

Even though Babatha now possessed considerable property, her second marriage was far less advantageous. The new husband, Joseph, already had a living wife from whom he was not divorced. After his death, a property dispute erupted between the two widows; and the legal proceedings still survive. As the women address each other, the dead man is twice called "my and your late husband" (#26). Napthali Lewis writes:

In any case, Babatha's second marriage sheds a bright new light upon the extent to which

polygamy was practised by the Jews of the tannaitic period. The prevailing view among the scholars who have studied the question is that long before AD 393, when the Emperor Theodosius I legalized polygamy among the Jews living in the Roman Empire, Jewish life had become essentially monogamous, the luxury of the polygamous state being confined to exceptional situations or circumstances. . . That bigamy was a continuing practice is also attested by the fact that the author of the Damascus document denounced it as a violation of the injunction of Leviticus 18:18. [Damascus Document IV, 1.21, cf. C. Rabin *The Zadokite Documents* (Oxford, 1954) pp. 16-17.]


The case of Babatha, however, demonstrates that the practice was by no means limited to the aristocracy, and polygamy would certainly have been unacceptable for men who were Christian leaders.

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**Theosebeia, a priestly colleague of Gregory of Nyssa**

The one hundred and ninety-seventh letter of Gregory of Nazianzus, addressed to Gregory of Nyssa, contains a message of consolation over the death of Theosebeia, who has apparently been his colleague in the Gospel ministry. *Theosebian, ten ontos hieran kai hieros swuogen kai homotimon kai ton megalon mysterion axian. (Literally, "Theosebeia, actually the priestess and colleague of a priest and equally honored and equally worthy of the Great Sacraments.")"

Some scholars have maintained that she was Gregory's consort rather than his colleague, but Gregory belonged to a coterie that eschewed marriage and espoused celibacy.

William Moore both translated and commented on the Greek phrase quoted above:

"Theosebeia, the fairest, the most lustrous even amidst such beauty of the adelphoi; Theosebeia, the true priestess, the yokefellow (suzagon) and the equal of a priest." J. P. Rupp has well pointed out that the expression "yoke fellow" (suzagon),
which has been insisted on as meaning "wife" may, especially in the language of Gregory Nazianzen, be equivalent to adelphos. He sees in this Theosebia "a sister of the Cappadocian brothers."


Nevertheless the series in which this comment (Ante-Nicene Fathers) occurs provides a quite different translation of the letter by Gregory. The pertinent part reads:

I had started partly for the sake of seeing you after so long, and partly that I might admire your patience and philosophy (for I had heard of it) at the departure of your holy and blessed sister, as a good and perfect man, a minister of God, who knows better than any the things both of God and man; and who regards as a very light thing that which to others would be most heavy, namely to have lived with such a soul, and to send her away and store her up in the safe garner, like a shock of the threshing-floor gathered in due season, to use the words of Holy Scripture; and that in such time that she, having tasted the joys of life, escaped its sorrows through the shortness of her life; and before she had to wear mourning for you, was honored by you with that fair funeral honour which is due to such as she. I too, believe me, long to depart, if not as you do, where were much to say, yet only less than you. But what must we feel in presence of a long prevailing law of God which has now taken my Theosebia (for I call her mine because she lived a godly life; for spiritual kindred is better than bodily), Theosebia, the glory of the church, the adornment of Christ, the helper of our generation, the hope of woman; Theosebia, the most beautiful and glorious among all the beauty of the Brethren, Theosebia, truly sacred, truly consort of a

priest, and of equal honor and worthy of the Great Sacraments, Theosebia, whom all future time shall receive, resting on immortal pillars, that is, on the souls of all who have known her now, and of all who shall be hereafter. And do not wonder that I often invoke her name. For I rejoice even in the remembrance of the blessed one. Let this, in a few words, be her epitaph from me, and my word of condolence for you, though you yourself are quite able to console others in this way through your philosophy in all things. Ante-Nicene Fathers VII p. 462.

A Response to the Statement on Men, Women, and Biblical Equality

The CBE-sponsored statement on Men, Women, and Equality appeared in the April 9 issue of Christianity Today. A small coupon in the lower right hand corner invited people to write us for more information. So far we have had over two hundred responses. Many simply send in the coupon with the names and addresses; but a significant number take the trouble to write us a note. Here is a sample:

April 10, 1990

Dear Reader,

Yesterday as I was persuading the latest copy of Christianity Today, I discovered a two-page ad about equality. Naturally, this being Christianity Today, I was expecting to see some "traditional" folk attempting to do the impossible: placing equality within the context of a male hierarchy. I was about to keep on browsing; but then I realized my first assumption was inaccurate. Was I pleasantly surprised! No, simply

Membership Application Form

Christians for Biblical Equality
7433 Borman Avenue East
Inver Grove Heights, MN 55076
Phone: (612) 451-1609

Enclosed is my yearly membership fee (check one):
Membership includes subscription to Priscilla Papers
$10 for individual
$15 for couple or those sharing newsletter
$5 for student/low income/senior

Name ____________________________ Address ____________________________

City ____________________________ State ___________ Zip ______________________

Phone ( ) _____________________ Church Denomination _______________________

Check here if you are enclosing $10 for Priscilla Papers only and do not want at this time to be a member.
astonished. As I read and reread your ad, I realized that I would be hard pressed to write a better statement on the subject of Men, Women, and Biblical Equality. In my opinion, you have hit a home run! Congratulations! Your ad extended an offer for further information, and I would like that information. As a pastor of a fundamental chain-of-command congregational mentality, your organization came to me as an oasis in the desert. Truly, the Spirit is alive and moving. My prayer is for your organization to continue to be bold in your mission. Perhaps with groups like yours, the "gentile" style of male dominated leadership can be put to rest in the 90's. Churches, the Kingdom of God, and the world will be better off.
Again I await your information. Blessings to your group.

Assistant editor needed for Evangelicals for Social Action and Just Life.
Must have skills in editing, writing, and typing and be in agreement with the goals and vision of ESA and Just Life. Graphic design skills and desktop publishing experience a plus. Experience preferred. Women and minorities encouraged to apply. Salary based on need; generous benefits. Send résumé, cover letter, and writing/editing samples to Kathleen Hayes, Evangelicals for Social Action, 10 Lancaster Avenue, Philadelphia, PA 19151 (215-645-9390). Position begins August 1.

Please remember to send mail to our new address. Even though we are still using up some of our materials that have the old address on them, it makes matters much less confusing to have all of our mail come to the same place. Our new address is:

Christians for Biblical Equality
7433 Borman Avenue East
Inver Grove Heights, Minnesota 55076
Phone (612) 451-1609

We love to hear from you. When you tell us about your hopes and fears, triumphs and defeats, it makes our job worthwhile. Please keep those cards and letters coming! We want you to know that we pray for you when you give us specific prayer requests. We wish that we could have a regular prayer letter and wonder if someone might be willing to produce one for us. We need so very much to pray for one another and to grow together in faith.

Christians for Biblical Equality
7433 Borman Avenue East
Inver Grove Heights, MN, 55076

ADDRESS CORRECTION REQUESTED
RETURN POSTAGE GUARANTEED