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EDITORIAL STAFF
Editor: Tim Krueger
Graphic Designer: Mary Quint
Publisher/President: Mimi Haddad

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Mutuality (ISSN: 1533-2470) exists to make egalitarian theology accessible to the non-scholar and to explore its intersection with everyday life.
Trading Power for Oneness

Earlier this year, Australian ABC News journalist Julia Baird made waves when she published a story on domestic violence in Australian Christianity. Her story, “‘Submit to Your Husbands’: Women Told to Endure Domestic Violence in the Name of God,” cites research showing that Christian Protestant men who sporadically attend church are more likely than men of any other religious group (and more likely than secular men) to assault their wives.1

The flipside of this research is that Christian Protestant men who do attend church regularly are the least likely to commit domestic violence. What explains this phenomenon?

Here’s what I believe is happening. There is a view of “Christian marriage” shared by nominal and committed, church-going Christians alike. Call it what you will—“headship,” “complementarianism,” “patriarchy”—the idea is that God made men to have authority over their wives, and this is the basis of godly marriage.

This view is often used by nominally Christian men to justify abusing their wives. For those men who attend church regularly, patriarchal marriage is moderated by love that springs from knowledge of the gospel and commitment to Jesus. They retain the language of male headship, but because they try to imitate Christ, they don’t really look or act like patriarchs. That’s a step in the right direction, but we can do better.

Many will say the patriarchal structure isn’t the problem, it’s the corruption of those who abuse it. To be sure, there are many who hold a complementarian view and have happy, strong marriages. But is this what the Bible teaches? Is this how God intends marriage to work?

I don’t think so. We are not to apply patriarchy politely. We are to live under a different system, where neither husband nor wife exerts power over the other. Our God was not a “servant leader” but an actual servant. The difference is huge.

Imagine a king who chooses to live among his subjects. He works with them, eats with them, and shares conversation with them. But he can’t be one of them, because he has power over them, even if he uses it nicely. He can change his life—or theirs—on a whim, and they can’t. This power differential prevents true oneness between king and subject. The only way he can change this is to give up the crown. That’s what Jesus did by becoming human. And that is what Paul calls husbands to do in Ephesians 5.

Soft patriarchy makes men kings who play at being one with their subjects, but requires them to keep their crowns.

What happens when we make the exchange of power for oneness central to our marriages? We stop making the patriarchy of the ancient world—which the gospel opposes and undermines—essential to Christian living. Marriage becomes not about fitting into impossible-to-define “gender roles” but about unlocking the full human potential of husband and wife according to God’s gifting. We discover relationships built not on power, but on empowering. We get marriages characterized by co-leadership, mutual submission to one another, and joint submission to Christ.

We all need to champion this type of marriage. It’s not just our pastors that cast a vision of Christian marriage, but our blogs, our jokes, our music, our Bible studies, and so much more. We are all accountable.

Hopefully, this issue of Mutuality will be of some help in our effort. A magazine issue can hardly explore a topic like marriage in the depth that it deserves. But, you’ll find pieces that explore what this vision of marriage looks like in different contexts, along with wisdom to help us get there. We’re also reviewing four books, two on marriage, one on motherhood, and one for middle grade girls (and boys, too), celebrating heroic Bible women—something egalitarian parents will value!

In Christ,

Tim Krueger

As a Hispanic child, I saw my grandmother sew many things. She was a prolific seamstress with an eye for detail. I once asked her, “Wouldn’t it be easier if you just stacked all the multicolored fabric pieces and cut them all at once?” In my naïveté, I thought it would save time. “Absolutely not,” my grandmother told me, “each dress needs special attention. The designer wants us to follow the pattern.”

Hispanic marriage is all about tradition. Generation after generation, we honor the traditions passed down to us. To question them would be to dishonor our culture, our family, our identity. But what if a pattern is wrong? What if it’s not the pattern our designer wants us to follow?

To be honest, it took me years to discover what biblical marriage looked like in a Hispanic context. Early on, I realized that the patterns my family, ancestors, and many other Hispanics in my community followed were extremely harmful to women. Of course, ours is not the only patriarchal culture, but in my context, it was hard to find a biblical alternative.

I found little solace in Hispanic churches. Most promoted a hierarchical pattern that didn’t respect the beautiful image of God within women. Legalism is still prevalent in many Hispanic churches across denominations, and women are taught at an early age to be hyper-submissive to men.

The egalitarian movement called for mutual leadership in the home and church. But it was focused on white Americans—their culture, values, and priorities. For example, white women may fight to work outside the home, but that fight doesn’t help women of color. Because of economic inequality tied to racism, women of color in the US have always worked outside the home. We fight to get the same economic freedom white women already have! When I looked to egalitarianism for help on marriage, what I found was only about European-American marriage. I had to find my own way.

What does a biblical marriage pattern look like in a Hispanic context?
1. Reframe marriage around collaboration

As a Hispanic woman, I’ve observed that even Hispanics that don’t attend church know one thing about the Bible: headship. In other words, “the man is in charge.” This fits with machismo, a kind of hyper-patriarchy that infects many Hispanic families. And it is enforced through culture and expectations. Boys and men are told things like “Don’t let your wife push you around!” while girls are taught to be subservient, not to push back against anything men do or say. When a wife gets “out of hand,” her husband is expected to enforce his dominance, even abusively.

Can this be the Bible’s pattern or God’s design? Can abuse be acceptable to our designer? No!

The big myth about egalitarianism is that it’s about making men subservient and putting women in charge. But this is not true. It is all about collaboration. In the Bible, headship is all about sacrifice. It is about the husband giving up dominance in favor of collaboration. He is to lay down his own pride and desires. That doesn’t mean he is subservient, but neither is she. Women can speak for themselves and should not endure abuse. Biblical headship means husbands and wives submit to each other, and they work together as partners.

My husband and I got married young. We went to college together and took classes on social justice. We chose to break generational patterns that were abusive and sinful. We chose instead to base our relationship and family dynamics on the biblical idea of collaboration. I am a church planter, which means I am very busy. I don’t have time to do all the work around the house, so we share it. Ironing, vacuuming, taking the kids to school and picking them up—these are all tasks that we share. We taught our sons how to cook, clean, vacuum, and do anything else that was needed. My husband and kids did the grocery shopping. They learned that in our home, we all work together.

We established a pattern of joint decision-making and leadership. When our kids asked one of us for something, we’d respond with, “We’ll discuss it and get back to you.” When they came home spewing patriarchal ideas they learned, we’d challenge them to think critically about what they were saying. Years later, we still do.

2. Be ready to explain

When you are committed to mutuality, people notice. You need to be prepared to respond to a lot of different situations. People will ask questions, and you need to be prepared to answer them. Over the years, people have asked my husband “how could your marriage work? Your wife is a pastor! How can that be?” He simply responds that it works because we collaborate. We’re partners.

People will make assumptions that you need to correct. At my first church planting meeting, someone approached my husband and said, “Great to have you here, pastor” when I was standing right there. My husband said, “Oh, you think I’m the pastor? Why did you assume I was the pastor? I am not the pastor, my wife is, and she is a church planter. Let me introduce you to Pastor Gricel.”

Biblical headship means husbands and wives submit to each other, and they work together as partners.

Contextualizing Our Message

For our message to impact people, it needs to address the realities of their lives. Too often, we egalitarians focus only on white women’s concerns. We need to widen our lens. I ask my white sisters and brothers to start with these steps:

1. Become culturally literate. Recognize the ways that you speak out of your own culture and experience. Think about how your message might come across to someone with a different culture, or who experiences racial or economic injustices that you don’t.

2. Ask questions, don’t give answers. This is the best way to learn.

3. Do everything with a spirit of excellence. I often see mediocre efforts to be inclusive, and I see Hispanics paid less for the same work. This is offensive and disrespectful. Don’t take advantage of our generosity.

4. Don’t insist on control. A message contextualized for a culture other than yours will look different than yours. Don’t try to correct or fix the way we express the egalitarian message.
People used to pull my husband aside and tell him that he should be the pastor. That the only reason I was the pastor is because he was disobedient to his call, so I had to step in. But he’s very proud to say that I am the pastor, not him. Now, whenever I go to speak at a church, they finally know that I’m the pastor.

People will be surprised by what you do, but you can make an impact. I am smart, opinionated, and fearless. I have become very aware that when I say something that sounds remotely like a challenge to a man, it really surprises women around me. They shrink back and get bug-eyed, as if to say “What are you doing?!” At the same time, they gain courage by seeing me stand up for myself. They see that I reasoned with a man, and I didn’t get hurt. Next time, maybe they’ll be bold enough to speak up, too.

3. Be an advocate in your context

You may not be bold and vocal, and you might not be a leader. That’s okay; you can still share the biblical pattern of marriage in your own context. Before I found my voice, I was able to advocate through marriage counseling. When I counseled couples, I encouraged men to collaborate by reminding them things like, “These kids are both of yours, not just hers,” and “You may be tired, but so is your wife. You have to collaborate. You can mow the lawn, but you still need to work with her on things inside the house, too.” “And,” I reminded husbands, “If you really want to have sex with your wife, it would be to your advantage if she weren’t so tired!”

When men were hurting their wives, I’d ask, “Is your wife a daughter of the king? Is she made in God’s image?” They’d look confused. “When you lose your temper, who are you hurting? Not just her; you’re hurting God when you hurt his daughter!” Then they began to understand. I explained that men had rights and power, but so do women. It’s not about taking power for yourself; it’s about using your power to collaborate.

We can most effectively show people a better pattern for marriage when we do it in mutually respectful relationships.

New pattern, new fruit

Marriage always follows cultural patterns, and that’s okay! But we cannot blindly follow the patterns we have been given. We need to stop and ask the question, is this pattern healthy? Is it bearing good fruit?

According to Decent Work and Gender Equality, economic development in Latin America is stifled by “gender inequalities that are a direct consequence of traditional views on the place and role that women should occupy in society—views based on prejudice, discrimination and disregard for the progress the region has made and its effects on societies. Societies must set out to become more inclusive and egalitarian in order to overcome.”

When this is the fruit of our pattern, we need to make a change. We need to re-orient our pattern to mirror God’s design. We can honor our traditions, our culture, and our families, but cannot allow another generation to fall victim to patriarchy. We need to reframe marriage in our homes, in our churches, and in our communities.

I didn’t bring up feminism or egalitarianism by name. I talked about the concepts, and I explained how they are God’s pattern. I helped them see how this pattern improved life for everyone. You don’t have to know all the answers to be an advocate, you just need to have conversations. You can change lives!

4. Value relationships

When we choose a kind of marriage relationship that looks different from others in our churches or our extended family, it can strain relationships. People question us. They’ll say we’re disobeying God. We need to stay strong, but we also need to stay engaged with these people. It is easier to cut yourself off (and sometimes that is necessary for our own safety or health). But we need relationships with people that we disagree strongly with. We can say, “Let me show you how I see this issue,” but it has to be done with mutual respect. We also need to listen and respond to people, not just tell them why they are wrong.

Marriage always follows cultural patterns, and that’s okay! But we cannot blindly follow the patterns we have been given. We need to stop and ask the question, is this pattern healthy? Is it bearing good fruit?

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Living a Shared Spirituality:
What Jesus’ Parents Can Teach Us about Marriage

by Beulah Wood

Christians are used to hearing about Joseph and Mary, usually around Christmas. Then, they’re the supporting cast, and Jesus is the focus. They certainly don’t often come up in conversations about Christian marriage. Perhaps they should. If we pay attention, Joseph and Mary point us toward what makes a good marriage.

Humility
Mary and Joseph’s lives were turned upside-down by the news that Mary would give birth to the Messiah. While not wealthy, we can speculate that both came from respectable families in a world where honor was the currency of society.

The gospels don’t mention Mary’s parents’ names. We can guess, however, that she sprang from a respected family. She was related to Elizabeth, who was descended from the line of Abijah, of the tribe of Aaron (Luke 1:5, 36). More than that, the first opinion anybody in the Bible gave of her was “highly favored,” voiced by Gabriel. We call her Mary in English, but her Hebrew name was Miriam, named for Moses’ sister, who helped lead the Jews out of slavery in Egypt. Like her namesake, she was of humble origin yet hand-picked by God to change the world.

When God chose her to deliver the Messiah, her life changed. Mary did not live in a world where women dreamed of career success, but her dreams were no less shaken by her unexpected pregnancy! No respectable, peaceful life bringing honor to her family. Being pregnant and unmarried would shame her family and Joseph, perhaps the worst shame possible in her society! And being the mother later of a controversial prophet would not provide the honorable, peaceful family life she likely dreamed of. Yet, with humility, she accepted God’s call on her life.

Joseph was descended from King David and his name means “God will add/increase.” Ironically, Joseph is forever after known not by his ancestral line or by his father’s name. Instead, he is “Joseph, husband of Mary.” In most societies, including ancient Israel, women are known by their relationship with a father or husband. Men do not expect to be known by their relationship with their wife. Joseph accepted the possibility that he would be eclipsed in prominence by his family members. He accepted the less prominent part, and has been identified by his wife for 2,000 years. There is humility.

Joseph was helping his wife do work for God. Perhaps this was the attitude of other Bible husbands like Lappidoth husband of Deborah, Shallum husband of Huldah, and Aquila husband of Priscilla.

Agency in Decision-making
Agency is the capacity and acceptance of the capacity to have one’s own agenda and carry it out, rather than merely carry out the wishes of someone else. It includes the right to make decisions, alone or jointly, for oneself and for those in one’s care.

Did Mary have agency? Could she make her own decisions? Or did she rely entirely on her parents until she married Joseph and then rely on him or his parents?

Well, look what the angel Gabriel did. In Luke 1, Gabriel comes to Mary to announce God’s intention that she should give birth to the Messiah. This was a surprise in more than one respect. Most mothers and fathers then, and in many parts of the world today, would say, “I make the decisions for my daughter—definitely all the big ones.”

So, did Gabriel get it wrong? Was he confused? Should he have gone to Mary’s parents? Well, no. Surely he was under instruction from the king of heaven. There was no mistake. Mary was the one who must make the decisions for her family.

Joseph accepted the less prominent part, and has been identified by his wife for 2,000 years. There is humility. Joseph was helping his wife do work for God.
consent. God expected Mary to be able to respond to this major life-changing news. That is still true today—women have to think for themselves and give their own answers. Fathers or husbands cannot do their thinking for them.

Joseph must have looked at his fiancée and thought as he made his marriage vows, “This girl can think for herself. She can listen to God’s messenger and make a decision and carry it out. I respect that.” Perhaps he thought further, “I doubt if I’ll be making all the rules about our life. She has already chosen to accept this path for our life.” We can’t say what he thought, but it is significant that he allowed Mary’s actions to change his life, too. Just as God honored her agency by sending Gabriel to her, Joseph respected her agency by choosing to marry her.

And what about Joseph’s agency? In a traditional society parents make decisions for adult sons, too. They argue that they have more experience in decisions, and that sons must honor them by obeying, including over whom they marry. So here was that exact scene needing special wisdom. Joseph heard that Mary, whom he was to marry, and whom he had not yet ritually taken to his home, was already pregnant. Parents in such circumstances would say, “Don’t marry such a dreadful girl. Where is your honor? And you would shame us too. We can get someone much better for you.”

But Matthew’s gospel tells us, “He was a righteous man and did not want to expose her to public disgrace.” Righteous? To many families he would be righteous by NOT marrying Mary. He would be well within his legal rights to expose her, but he chose not to.

He had a deep consideration for the needs of a young woman. He trusted in God and in Mary’s honesty. He was prepared to be laughed at himself rather than hurt her. He chose instead to give her protection, shelter, the warmth of his home, and his love. He made a costly commitment to his wife.

So Joseph listened to the angel from God. His parents must have felt mortified. The angel gave Joseph the needed wisdom, and expected him to make his own decision, and he did. He married Mary. He too had agency and he too could make a big decision.

What would Mary have thought? Perhaps her heart said, “Phew! What an unbounded relief! I need someone to take care of me and to be a father to my child. Joseph is leaving his parents to join with me. He will not be controlled by his parents. That gives me confidence. He makes his own decisions. Good decisions that support his wife and family.”

Looking back, we can see a couple who could each look up to the other with great respect. As a couple, they exercised agency that was unexpected. They made their own decisions—decisions that their families would not have approved of. And, they respected each other’s agency to make their own choices. They trusted each other’s wise decisions. Their choices were guided by God and directed to honoring God’s purpose, and they benefited each other and their child. What a great start to a marriage.

**Spiritual Sensitivity**

Spirituality is another topic in which we may examine Mary and Joseph’s personal steps and relation to each other. Was Mary a
spiritually sensitive person? I think there is no doubt on this. She could probably already read, though most girls could not. She was able to sing Mary’s Song, the Magnificat, and record its words. She was familiar with and ideas on past and present economics and history of her nation. These suggest literacy and education. But there was more than education.

- She practiced worship: “My spirit rejoices in God my Savior…”
- She lived with humility: “the humble state of his servant…”
- She knew God’s work: “his mercy extends to those who fear him…”
- She cared about the poor: “he has filled the hungry with good things…”
- She knew her people’s spiritual history: “He has performed mighty deeds with his arm… He has helped his servant Israel…”

Joseph could have felt threatened by her spiritual maturity. Or, he could look to Mary with admiration. He could say, “Look, here is a girl who loves the honor of God, who observes God’s work around us locally and nationally. What a wonderful wife to walk through life with. We will seek and serve God together.” He chose to stay with her and honor her spirituality.

So what would be Mary’s view of Joseph? She too could hold her spouse in the highest regard. Why? There are not many men in the whole Bible who heard from God four times and obeyed God four times as Joseph did. He was most certainly spiritually sensitive.

Let’s detail the four times.

1. In a dream he recognized an angel from God with the message to marry Mary. When he woke he did what the angel commanded.
2. In another dream, he recognized the command to take Mary and Jesus to Egypt for safety. He did as he was told.
3. An angel of the Lord told him to take Jesus and Mary back to the land of Israel. He did it.
4. Yet again warned in a dream, he learned that they should not go to Jerusalem but to Nazareth. He obeyed.

There was something more. Joseph walked away from his business for the sake of his wife and child. Really? Yes. Think about his carpenter’s workshop in Nazareth—hammers, saws, chisels, planes, selected timber. He left that for two years. His wife and child and their shared work for God were more important than the task of making money. Perhaps he worked as a carpenter in Egypt, but his family life certainly cost him.

Mary could hug herself and think, “This is wonderful. God has given me a highly spiritual man. How he has blessed me. We are in this together, this listening for God and obeying. What spiritual oneness we will have in our life together.”

I’m delighted as I weigh up the things that spiritually and emotionally bind Mary and Joseph. From their example, we discover a model for both spouses to walk in our marriages: humility, agency in decision-making, and spirituality. There is marriage mutuality.

Beulah Wood BD, DMin was earlier a writer and lecturer in preaching and theology of family at the South Asia Institute of Advanced Christian Studies, Bangalore, India. She continues to write for India and serves as Program Leader for the Ethnic Ministry Leadership course at Carey Baptist College, Auckland, New Zealand.

Reflect With Us by H. Edgar Hix

Over Forty Years Together

We’ve had doubts, debates, disasters, and delights.

Sometimes, we haven’t liked each other.

Sometimes, we haven’t liked ourselves.

We’ve been unloving, unwise, unsure, but always unrelenting.

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In 2016, the conservative American media outlet, Christian Broadcasting Network published a piece in which Dr. Benjamin Keyes of Regent University (Virginia, USA) reported that, “Unfortunately, in Christian marriages we have a much greater frequency of domestic violence than we do in non-Christian homes.” That’s significant in a country where one in three women has been subjected to abuse by a partner or ex-partner.

For too many women, this isn’t a staggering statistic, it’s a daily reality.

Research shows that Christian men who sporadically attend church are more likely than any other religious group (or secular men) to assault their wives. Apparently men, especially those only nominally engaged with Christianity, are finding justification to abuse. They are not finding a message sufficiently forceful to change their behavior.

How is it that any man who walks through our church doors—whether once a year or once a day—can walk away believing that domestic violence is justified? Perhaps because precious little is being done to challenge it. A 2014 Sojourners survey revealed that only thirty-five percent of pastors have spoken more than once about domestic abuse.

This statistic is alarming, but must not blind us to this truth: all pastors teach their congregants about abuse one way or another. When we preach, lead Bible studies, or interact pastorally or socially with people, the language we use and the way we present topics will either reinforce or challenge an abuser’s narrative.

Given the prevalence of domestic violence, every pastor should assume they are preaching to women who have been subjected to abuse and to men who have perpetrated abuse. How should that change the messaging and culture of the church? The answer would be exhaustive. But as a start, here are five areas where popular teachings collude with abusive behaviors, and tips to reframe these issues to challenge abuse.

Gender Stereotyping and “Harmless” Jokes

Gender stereotyping and sexist jokes are often used to build rapport, either in personal conversations or during teaching. I recently attended a youth event where the speaker praised his “hot wife” and “beautiful daughters” and told us about the time he evangelized to a woman he described as a stripper. He made sure to let us know that, “I told myself to look at her face, not her chest.”

It can seem like harmless fun to joke about men being terrible at looking after children or women being bad drivers. But what are we telling the man in the room who shirks his parenting duties, driving his wife beyond the point of exhaustion, then shames her for being a bad mother if their children misbehave? What about the man who drives recklessly, endangering and frightening his family, but refuses to let his wife drive because women are “bad drivers?”

How can we do better:

Avoid these types of comments and jokes. Instead, make a joke that highlights the absurdity of a gender stereotype. Humor can be a good way to challenge a cultural norm without appearing confrontational.

Call out others when they make this type of comment or joke. You don’t need to be mean or self-righteous about it. Just make sure people understand that those comments aren’t welcomed in your church community and explain why.

Talk about this issue. In sermons, exhort your congregation not to engage in this behavior. In staff meetings and trainings, make it clear that this isn’t acceptable. When guest speakers come, ask them to refrain from these kinds of remarks.
The household codes in Ephesians 5 actually demanded that men lay down power and dominance over their wives in a way that was unheard of. The takeaway should be mutual submission and the laying down of power, not a call for men to be nicer patriarchs.

Headship and Submission

Many complementarians are clear that they are also seeking to address male violence towards women. I do not doubt that complementarian Christians can be pastorally sensitive to those who have been subjected to abuse, but can they address the root causes? I’m not so sure:

The most basic complementarian belief is that even though women and men have equal worth, God prescribes roles. In those roles, men lead and women submit. This is justified by poor teaching on headship and submission. Many pastors teach that this is the foundation of a healthy family.

Regardless of good intentions, this contributes to a view that men are superior to women. It is a pastoral imperative that any teaching on headship and submission assumes that some of the men present are abusing their wives. And that some of the women present are being subjected to abuse.

This ensures that we filter our teaching through a lens of safety and an intention of not colluding with abusers.

How we can do better:

Not only is gender-role theology harmful, it’s unfaithful to the Bible. Pastors need to do a better job with the biblical text.

A good exposition of the Bible’s words on headship and submission would make it clear that Paul calls for reciprocal submission. Point out that the household codes in Ephesians 5 actually demanded that men lay down power and dominance over their wives in a way that was unheard of.

The takeaway should be mutual submission and the laying down of power, not a call for men to be nicer patriarchs.

Every time you preach on headship and submission, use the opportunity to speak specifically about domestic violence. Call out ways these teachings have been manipulated to justify abuse. No one should hear about headship and submission without also hearing about mutual submission and co-leadership.

Forgiveness and repentance

Research has found that religious women are not less likely to be subjected to abuse, but they are likely to endure abuse for longer. Why? One reason is our focus on forgiveness.

Forgiveness is a dominant theme in Christianity, but we must be careful! Often, forgiveness is equated with reconciliation. Or, it is said to nullify the consequences of someone’s sin. This can be deeply harmful, because forgiveness does not fix everything. Forgiveness can only enter the picture when the one being abused is safe.

How we can do better:

When teaching on forgiveness, make it clear that forgiveness does not mean enduring further abuse. When Scripture talks of suffering, it is in the context of persecution for faith, not suffering through abuse.

Similarly, when we talk about repentance, we need to ensure that we are not colluding with the manipulative tears of an abuser. The person repenting has no right to demand forgiveness from those he has wronged. True repentance means an abusive man must lose the power he has over his wife. And she, in turn, must gain liberation and fullness of life.

Prayer

How we can do better:

When you teach about prayer, make it clear that God’s gift of free will makes prayer a partnership between the power of God and the power of human beings.

Don’t just teach it, do it. Encourage and help women get to a place of safety. Connect them with professionals who can respond effectively. Find trainings on responding to domestic violence and require your staff to attend. Connect with advocates and ask for advice on how to make your church safe for women who are abused; and then
follow their recommendations. Prayer is important, but needs to go hand-in-hand with tangible actions.

**Sex and Family**

In our eagerness to preserve sexual morality, we have painted a simplistic picture of sex, where morality is all about where it happens—outside of or within marriage. Sex before marriage is always bad, and sex within marriage as always good. What does this communicate to those who have been abused?

Those who have been subjected to abuse outside of marriage hear that they are tainted and have sinned, when in fact they have been sinned against. It fosters guilt, shame, and secrecy instead of safety, healing, and freedom.

Within marriage, the truth is that sex is not always bliss. Sex after marriage can be abusive, coercive, unsatisfying, and immoral. Rape can be committed within marriage. When subjected to abuse within marriage, women may believe something is wrong with them if sex is not perfect like it “should” be.

To make matters worse, we stigmatize single parents, divorce, and separation, assuming these conditions result from immorality. This creates pressure for women to marry and stay married to men who abuse them and their children.

**How we can do better:**

Teach more holistically about sex. It’s not just about whether you’re married or not. Talk to young people (and adults) about consent, coercion, and intimacy. Define rape, domestic violence, and healthy sexuality. Acknowledge that rape is usually perpetrated by boyfriends, husbands, and even church leaders. Talk about these issues in youth groups, premarital counseling, small groups, and Sunday gatherings.

When you preach or teach, present a true picture of sexual morality and immorality from Scripture. For instance, don’t teach that Bathsheba seduced David. It’s simply not true, and feeds assumptions about gender and sexuality. The truth is he saw (stalked?) her from his palace, used his power to coerce her into sex, then arranged for her husband to die in order save face. Call this out for the evil that it is. Challenge men to consider whether they are using their power to take advantage of women, and state unequivocally that it must stop.

Don’t make offhand comments lamenting divorce rates or the tragic state of single mothers. When you talk about these topics, do it with care. Be clear that there are very good—and moral—reasons for people to find themselves in such a state. Make sure your congregation learns to welcome and support people without judgment or suspicion.

The church has endless opportunities to influence how people form and maintain relationships, from preaching to parenting classes, teen relationship lessons, premarital counseling, marriage enrichment sessions, and more. Being sensitive to how our communications can either collude with or challenge abusers, and support or alienate those subjected to abuse, can only strengthen our ability to make a difference and ensure the gospel is good news for all people.

Natalie Collins is gender justice specialist and a speaker and trainer on issues of male violence against women and wider gender injustice. She trains individuals and organizations to respond to male violence against women through her consultancy, Spark, and The DAY Programme. Learn more about her work at www.nataliecollins.info.

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Naked is a marriage book thoroughly steeped in egalitarian theology and completely free from gender stereotypes and tired "male headship" language. Tim and Anne Evans bring decades of counseling and ministry experience to their work, and the result is an extremely helpful and approachable guide for married couples.

This book is presented in three parts, the first of which presents a healthy theology of sex and counsels the reader through deconstructing any unhealthy views of sex they may have learned throughout their life, whether from church, family, or culture.

Part two of Naked helps reconstruct the reader’s views of sex by addressing sensitive topics that desperately need to be addressed. The authors do not shy away from many complex and controversial topics in this book, and although this may make some readers uncomfortable at times, each one is intentionally thought out and approached with grace.

Part three helps the reader take practical steps toward building greater intimacy in their marriage. This section brings hope, empowerment, and guidance to the reader as they begin to apply this knowledge to their everyday life.

Naked makes readers feel as though they are sitting down to coffee with the authors. Personal stories from the authors help to make the material accessible and relatable. I especially appreciate the care taken in including things not normally found in marriage books, like the assertion that marriage is not the goal of the Christian life, and that the church is responsible for many of our misunderstandings about sex.

I believe this book would be helpful for any couple wishing to grow in sexual intimacy or who simply want to better understand the role sex plays in their marriage. Naked comes with a companion journal, making it useful for engaged couples wanting to have a healthy view of sex before entering into marriage. Naked is a book I can confidently recommend to others, knowing that it will help them develop a healthy and egalitarian view of sex and intimacy.

Kate Wallace Nunneley is co-founder of The Junia Project and associate pastor at Wellspring Free Methodist Church in Bakersfield, CA. A committed Christian and feminist, Kate enjoys writing and speaking on the intersection of politics, religion, and gender. Her favorite theologian is Gilbert Bilezikian, and she holds a master of science from London School of Economics and a bachelor of arts from Azusa Pacific University. Kate is currently pursuing her master of divinity at Azusa Pacific Seminary.

Making Marriage Beautiful

reviewed by Amy R. Buckley

A few months ago, an acquaintance confided that her marriage is in trouble. She asked about egalitarian marriage resources, and I enthusiastically recommended Dorothy Greco’s new book, Making Marriage Beautiful.

The book’s eleven chapters survey a range of topics, from managing expectations to navigating in-laws, gender roles, communication, conflict, abuse, addiction, community (outside of marriage) and healthy response to external challenges and crises.

Drawing upon twenty-five years of marriage to her husband Christopher, Greco offers full disclosure of the struggles, failures, successes, and transformation they have seen. With refreshing self-awareness and humor, Greco serves less as an instructor and more as a fellow traveler. Gary Chapman explains this in the book’s forward: “In Making Marriage Beautiful, Dorothy Greco vulnerably shares the journey she and her husband have traveled from brokenness to beauty.”

A variety of readers will find helpful wisdom in Greco’s work. Those considering engagement will find a realistic view of what a healthy marriage requires. Couples at all stages of relationship—whether newlyweds or those facing rough patches—will find a wealth of suggestions and encouragement. Those in mature stages of marriage will find resources for cultivating continued depth and growth. Greco shares stories of multiethnic couples, highlighting the unique challenges of marriage in different cultures and in inter-cultural marriage. Those looking for a book to study as a couple or small group will benefit from the discussion questions at the end of each chapter.
Like any marriage book should, Greco’s work deals with expectations, communication, and conflict.

Greco challenges men and women to “ferret out unhelpful expectations” at the heart of disappointment. She writes, “What if rather than blaming each other for our disappointments, we confessed our failures and owned our areas of weakness? What if we looked under the disappointments to discern if they revealed any egocentric expectations, disordered attachments, or misplaced hope?” (p. 79). Instead of letting go of expectations, she encourages us to shift from blame to self-awareness. Greco reveals the painful process she went through of learning to let go of an unrealistic expectation harming her marriage. She models the difficult and messy process of “holy resignation.” As we live and move and have our being in Jesus, it’s possible to love our spouse without demanding change.

Greco urges couples to deal squarely with anger. She encourages us to give up toxic behaviors that harm a relationship (defensiveness, moralizing, manipulating, withdrawing, and lashing out). An emotionally healthy practice of anger requires keeping reactions in check as we balance self-control with self-expression. Greco explains how to change this dynamic, allowing us to appreciate each other more fully and give of ourselves more freely.

To those wrestling to forgive a spouse, Greco offers healthy perspectives of confession and forgiveness—what they are and aren’t. She reminds us the stakes are high when we fail to confess our sins or forgive one another. She encourages us to look to the One who brings us together and remember that Jesus makes us one. Only in that place will we see the goodness God is able to call out on the other side of suffering.

On the topic of communication, Greco reminds us of the profound human need for meaningful connection. She urges us not to allow technology (cell phones, Skype, email, etc.) to encroach on couples’ time alone. Setting aside distractions opens the way for deepening relational and sexual intimacy. “Good listeners,” she writes, “make better lovers.” Couples will benefit from practical suggestions for building a deeper, stronger relationship.

More than a few marriage books fall short in their treatment (or lack thereof) of gender stereotyping, addiction, and abuse. Greco provides a much-needed correction. Greco unpacks cultural stereotypes and expectations that society and faith communities so often place on men and women. At the same time, she acknowledges that sex-related variables often play into marriage dynamics—for better or for worse. She shares how she and Christopher learned to embrace their unique designs rather than suffering shame for failing to conform to pink or blue expectations. Rather than buying into simplistic gender roles, Greco encourages couples to navigate the mysterious waters as different genders and unique people. She urges readers to consider how gender expectations may be harming their marriages.

For spouses navigating the thorny ground of addictions, Greco explains the source of disordered attachments and addictions that so often devastate marriages. Vulnerably, she and Christopher share the ups and downs of their journey to freedom. To those who feel isolated, ashamed, and hopeless, they extend wise encouragement without sugar coating the process. Change is possible as we lean into the One who lived and died and rose again. No matter how discouraging or hopeless our circumstances, no matter the condition of our relationship, Jesus is with us, ready to make all things new.

Far from giving tidy answers, Greco addresses the tragic issue of intimate partner abuse and violence. She reminds us that safety is tantamount. Jesus lived and died and rose again for all things to be new; but enduring abuse is never part of God’s plan. Knowing that issues of power and control drive abuse and violence, Greco wisely points victims to professional abuse counselors.

Throughout her work, Greco reminds us of the importance of choosing joy, and the beauty of journeying that road together in the One who makes marriage beautiful.

Amy R. Buckley is a writer, speaker, and life coach. She has published articles in a variety of publications, and contributed to Dating During the Apocalypse, and Other Conversations On God, Sex, and Life (Cru Press); Overcomer: Breaking Down the Walls of Shame and Rebuilding Your Soul (Zondervan); and Strengthening Families and Ending Abuse, Churches and Their Leaders Look to the Future (Wipf and Stock). Read more at www.amyrbuckley.com.
When I was a little girl, I loved acting out Bible stories with my mom, especially the one about Mary Magdalene meeting the Risen Lord. I would be Mary, kneeling in front of the old Franklin stove that passed for the garden tomb, my shoulders heaving with imagined sobs. My mother would be Jesus. We’d run through the dialogue, and when my mother said “Mary,” I’d gasp and throw my chubby arms around her legs. It was a fun way to pass a winter afternoon, but it also brought up questions I wouldn’t have thought of if I hadn’t immersed myself so fully in the story. Why didn’t Mary recognize Jesus? Was she blind? Did he look different, and if so, why? Was Jesus a person, or a ghost?

It wasn’t until years later that I realized how unusual my experience was—that many children have never even heard the stories of biblical women such as Deborah, Hannah, and Dorcas, much less been encouraged to put themselves in their shoes and imagine what their experiences must have been like, or how their stories are relevant to the lives of girls and boys today. Which is why I’m so grateful that Caryn Rivadeneira has stepped in to fill the gap with *Grit and Grace*, an engaging middle-grade book retelling the adventures of seventeen biblical women.

*Rivadeneira does not sugarcoat or shrink back from the difficult realities of her subjects’ lives. Esther is not portrayed as a beauty queen, but as a girl who was taken from the protection of her loving home. Leah discusses the awkwardness of her family situation, and Mary talks about how hard the flight to Egypt was. Rahab explains that she “never wanted to be a ‘harlot,’ as many called me. . . but the money I sent (home) ensured that my little sisters would never end up like me” (p. 35). Rivadeneira’s frank storytelling is not troubling or traumatic, but it is far more truthful than many retellings aimed at children, or even adults. The damaging effects of patriarchy are addressed in an age-appropriate way, without reducing the women to victims who lacked agency. They are portrayed as spirited women who lived full lives in a very different society; women who girls and boys nowadays should be able to relate to on a deep level.

Each story in *Grit and Grace* includes a reference pointing readers to the biblical account; the character’s approximate age (if known) and the era in which she lived; “fast facts” deepening the reader’s understanding of the story; questions to ponder; and a prayer prompt. The questions are particularly good, relating the stories to the readers’ own lives and inviting them to reflect honestly on the hard issues the story brings up, without fear of giving the “wrong” answer. Abram and Sarai’s treatment of Hagar, Rahab’s lie, and Hannah’s decision to leave Samuel at the temple are all on the table for discussion.

*Grit and Grace* is an empowering, thought-provoking, and eminently readable book that will help late elementary to middle school children get a grander sense of how God worked through women and girls in biblical times, and how he wants to work through all his people today. It would make a great gift for girls graduating out of their church’s children’s ministry, or for any child who enjoys reading middle grade books about real-life circumstances. My only complaint is that this book hasn’t been around longer! It has been sorely needed.
“The purpose of the stories about biblical mothers falls on literary and socially deaf ears unless they mean something to twenty-first-century mothers,” Stephanie Buckhanon Crowder writes in chapter ten of her book, When Momma Speaks: The Bible and Motherhood from A Womanist Perspective. This is the essence of Crowder’s mission: to forge a story connection between biblical mothers of color and modern African American mothers.

Crowder’s womanist reading and interpretation of Scripture uniquely centers women and mothers of color. In centering their stories, Crowder challenges a narrow biblical lens and encourages Christians to widen their knowledge of one another as well as their view of God.

As a Native American woman, I especially appreciate how When Momma Speaks subverts more common biblical interpretations to apply the lens of a mother of color to historical Bible stories. Though many of the book’s themes are specific to African American mothers, I found myself drawing many thematic parallels to Native American mothers. Native American women fight similar battles from the economic and social margins for our place in American society, and to make our womanhood and motherhood visible in a mainstream narrative that too often erases (undermines, excludes) both.

The experiences of African American and Native American women are different in many ways. However, we both fight to care for our children and we both struggle to make a way in an America that marginalizes us. Native and African American women are united in their struggle from the margins. Still, each people’s struggle is unique and each culture has something unique and vital to say about God.

In When Momma Speaks, Crowder argues that the maternal struggle imaged in biblical stories is much the same for mothers of color today. Mothers did and still do struggle to be godly. They do what is necessary to secure for their children the kingdom of God—even if their struggles don’t secure them their own place in society. Mothers have always had to know when to speak up and when to be silent in fighting patriarchy.

Crowder compares and contrasts the experiences of Bible mothers like Mary and Elizabeth, Bathsheba, Hagar, and others with African American mothers today, tracing the evolution of motherhood culture in African American communities post-slavery. She uses the historical abuse of African American women before and after slavery in the US as a frame to understand the abuse and use of biblical women.

Crowder emphasizes that though society has often abandoned women and social norms have restrained them, God has not and does not. In the stories told and re-told in this book, it is clear that while patriarchal systems disrespect the poor, often marginalized women of the Bible, God sees and knows them. They are not alone in their struggle—and this is the cry of many African American women. Crowder, for example, is seen and known by God in her homelessness, and in every situation she encounters that appeared hopeless. So it is with many women of color who, at the end of their rope, still cling to a God who sees them in their distress and will not abandon them.

The chapter on Mary and Elizabeth particularly resonated with me because their relationship images a connection between women of privilege and women experiencing poverty. We see through their story that women should take care of each other. Elizabeth takes Mary, the mother of Jesus, into her home and cares for her. “Those with power and prestige still need to advocate for others on the margins.” This stretches beyond the sisterhoods of women of color. Just as I must use the privilege I have in certain contexts to advocate for my African American sisters, so must non-Native women intentionally amplify the voices of women of color. Crowder reminds us of our responsibility to community in the kingdom of God, as we work to be the best mothers we can be to our children. Her lesson transcends race and culture and reaches to the very heart of who we are as people of God.

When Momma Speaks advocates for a view of motherhood absent from our Bible studies and pulpits. Crowder encourages readers to connect the stories of modern women of color to the biblical stories of women who fought fiercely for their families and their faith. She believes that this story link will revolutionize how we see and treat modern mothers of color. We will learn to lean into their stories, and regard their testimonies as sacred and uniquely crafted by God. And practically, a profound respect for mothers of color will yield stronger support systems and fuller communities in the church.

May we be a faith community that learns from those on the margins, from the mothers of color we have ignored for far too long.

Kaitlin Curtice is a Native American Christian author, speaker and worship leader. As an enrolled member of the Potawatomi Citizen Band and someone who has grown up in the Christian faith, Kaitlin writes on the intersection of Native American spirituality, mystic faith in everyday life, and the church. She is an author with Paraclete Press and her recently released book is Glory Happening: Finding the Divine in Everyday Places. She is a contributor to Sojourners, and you can also find her work on Patheos Progressive Christian.
CBE’s Fiscal Year 2017 Financial Report

Thanks to the generosity and prayerful support from the CBE community, CBE’s 2017 fiscal year (April 1, 2016–March 31, 2017) was one of tremendous impact. We published and distributed thousands of resources, expanded national and international outreach, and cultivated an even stronger biblical challenge to patriarchy. CBE also exceeded our financial goals in FY2017, thanks to an ever-growing community that is passionate about our mission. Here are some highlights. Find the full report online at cbe.today/fy2017.

In Fiscal Year 2017, CBE...

Spread the good news

• Nearly 6,300 books and journals were printed and distributed in Haiti and throughout southern and eastern Africa.
• Mutuality earned two awards from the Evangelical Press Association.
• CBE’s South Africa conference engaged more than 3,500 Christians from across Africa.

Engaged the debate

• At the Evangelical Theological Society’s 2016 meeting, CBE scholars led the way in confronting a subordinationist view of the Trinity, which claims the Son is eternally subordinate to the Father. Some complementarians use this view to justify gender hierarchy. Fierce opposition led subordinationists to retract some aspects of their view.
• Dr. Mimi Haddad spoke at churches, seminaries, and events all over the world, from California to Australia.

Compared to 2015

• Total revenue is up 10%
• Website traffic is up 31%
• Readership of CBE’s blog is up 53%

You are changing more lives each year through your generous partnership with CBE. Thank you for your faithful commitment to our ministry.

—Mimi Haddad

Find the full report at cbe.today/fy2017.
This July, over 200 Christians gathered in Orlando for CBE’s 2017 international conference, “Mutual by Design.” It was a time of powerful learning, healing, and networking. Here are a few of the highlights.

What attendees are saying

“Open, intelligent, and dynamic speakers. Liberating! Informative! Phenomenal and Spirit-led!”

“One of the most biblically sound, well-researched conferences I have ever attended—encouraging and freeing in every way.”

“A truly international, multi-racial gathering around advancing gender equality / God’s kingdom in our world.

“An organization of men and women from all denominations and education bringing restoration to women and men everywhere.”

“I’d been told that egalitarians are making their own rules for women in the church. Boy, was I surprised by the biblical scholars.”

Catch all the highlights

Conference attendees live-tweeted the conference. Head over to Twitter and check out #CBE17 to see their highlights.

Or, watch or listen to the entire conference yourself!

Find video of every plenary and audio of every workshop at cbe.today/cbe17.
Nurturing Scholarship

Each conference, CBE invites the winners of its student paper competition to present their work. This year, we were pleased to have all three winners present their work.

- Abby Dolan presented “Imagining a Feminine God: A Look at Gendered Imagery in the Bible”
- Haley Gabrielle presented “Κεφαλη as Fountainhead in 1 Corinthians 11:3”
- Nikki Holland presented “Philemon in Light of Galatians 3:28”

Congratulations to our winners! Watch for their papers in upcoming issues of Priscilla Papers.

Thank you for your part in making the Orlando conference a success! And please join us in August, 2018 in Finland, where gender hierarchy threatens the small but faithful evangelical community.

Tavataan Suomessa! (See you in Finland!)

2018 CBE International Conference
Helsinki, Finland | August 3–4, 2018
The Power of (More Than) Two

Dave and Bethy were complete strangers when they said “I do” in 1998. Having never met before, they promised to love one another until separated by death. Thus far, they’ve been successful! Now the parents of four, the couple has decided renew their vows after learning that Dave has inoperable cancer. According to Bethy and Dave, “our great love story” did not begin because of physical attraction. Instead, their decision to marry was based on their trust in a group of devoted friends.¹

What began as a joke tested an ancient practice—the power of community to identify compatibility. Dave’s friends ran a series of newspaper ads announcing his eligibility. A surprising number of women agreed to be surveyed and interviewed. Because Bethy demonstrated the strongest commitment to grow their relationship, she was selected as the most suitable spouse, and the couple agreed to marry. While some called their public wedding a “spectacle,” Dave and Bethy believe their marriage has been nothing short of “spectacular.” Though viewed by Western critics today as foolish, arranged marriages were the foundation of ancient family and political life. Many cultures continue the practice today.

I have several dear friends in India whose spouses were identified by their families and communities. As Christians, their parents invited church leaders to assist in finding godly spouses for them. And, their marriages are happy and their lives are a blessing to many. In my own culture, my father often introduced me to “good” Christian Lebanese families with, coincidently, sons about my age. Once I realized his purposes, I quickly redirected the conversation to my immediate plans to travel and complete graduate school. Though proud of his independent and aspiring daughter, my father feared that by making choices independent of a loving community, I would become isolated and vulnerable. We now realize how harmful isolation is not only to individuals but also to married couples.

For more than thirty years, marriage researchers at Prepare-Enrich have shown that couples without family or community support have less stable marriages. And according to health researchers, people without close social networks are 30% more likely to die at an earlier age. Embedded in cultures like my father’s is an awareness that communities, especially communities of faith, provide an essential nurture apart from which families, marriages, and faith itself fail to flourish.

Whether married or single, Christian faith is a social faith. It knits everyone into communities for support and service. In as much as each believer is united to Christ, the head of the church, we are also united to the members of Christ’s body, the church. Our union with Christ and the church creates a network for human flourishing, because each member of Christ’s body is gifted with abilities necessary for the thriving of others regardless of gender. The giving and receiving of spiritual gifts within the family of God is essential in strengthening giver and receiver alike. For this reason, “alone” is not only the most terrifying word in any language, but was also the only “not good” in a perfect world (Gen. 2:18).

Without Eve, Adam was busy naming and ruling over the animals, but his aloneness persisted, because among them, no suitable helper was found. His strong rescue came from the woman, an arranged marriage orchestrated by our triune God. She alone could end Adam’s aloneness, and he recognized his true partner immediately. With the first human words in Scripture, Adam sang, “She bone of my bone and flesh of my flesh” (Gen. 2:23). Created in God’s image, two are always greater than the sum of their parts. As Christ said, “Where two or three gather in my name, there am I with them” (Matt. 18:20). Adam and Eve were God’s holy alliance. Together they formed the first faith community, and jointly they governed the earth. And, this, God said was very good.

Ever since, marriages and communities are intended as places of knowing and being known as we give and receive God’s gifts in another. Is arranged marriage the solution to alone-ness? Absolutely not! But, it can demonstrate the power of authentic community to know, honor, and cherish us enough to recognize a compatible spouse.

Lives flourish in serving others, but grow weak in isolation because humans were not made for themselves alone. Dave and Bethy were brave enough to risk a commitment beside a loving community of friends. It is indeed very good that Christ called us to community, because when two or more are gathered, God’s presence and power does more than we dream or imagine possible.

Praise

- Our Orlando conference was a great success! We saw tremendous healing, and egalitarians from around the world built coalitions and found inspiration for greater advocacy in their own circles. Read more on pp. 20–21.
- We’re eagerly anticipating the release of our new book on marriage, Mutual by Design, in just a couple months! Read more on p. 11.
- We are wrapping up a major transition to a new database system. It has been a mammoth effort, but the end is in sight. The change means we can do more with our resources.

Prayer

- We’re already planning for our 2018 conference in Helsinki. Pray especially for our Finland partners as they put together the event.
- Pray for our presence at the Evangelical Theological Society’s annual meeting. As always, egalitarians will present ground-breaking research and we will reach out to scholars, especially women.
- Pray for CBE’s presence at a partner conference in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania, as well as partnership development in Uganda this September.

CBE INTERNATIONAL

Mission Statement
CBE International (CBE) exists to promote biblical justice and community by educating Christians that the Bible calls women and men to share authority equally in service and leadership in the home, church, and world.

Statement of Faith
- We believe in one God, creator and sustainer of the universe, eternally existing as three persons in equal power and glory.
- We believe in the full deity and the full humanity of Jesus Christ.
- We believe that eternal salvation and restored relationships are only possible through faith in Jesus Christ who died for us, rose from the dead, and is coming again. This salvation is offered to all people.
- We believe the Holy Spirit equips us for service and sanctifies us from sin.
- We believe the Bible is the inspired word of God, is reliable, and is the final authority for faith and practice.
- We believe that women and men are equally created in God’s image and given equal authority and stewardship of God’s creation.
- We believe that men and women are equally responsible for and distorted by sin, resulting in shattered relationships with God, self, and others.

Core Values
- Scripture is our authoritative guide for faith, life, and practice.
- Patriarchy (male dominance) is not a biblical ideal but a result of sin.
- Patriarchy is an abuse of power, taking from females what God has given them: their dignity, and freedom, their leadership, and often their very lives.
- While the Bible reflects patriarchal culture, the Bible does not teach patriarchy in human relationships.
- Christ’s redemptive work frees all people from patriarchy, calling women and men to share authority equally in service and leadership.
- God’s design for relationships includes faithful marriage between a man and a woman, celibate singleness and mutual submission in Christian community.
- The unrestricted use of women’s gifts is integral to the work of the Holy Spirit and essential for the advancement of the gospel in the world.
- Followers of Christ are to oppose injustice and patriarchal teachings and practices that marginalize and abuse females and males.

To learn more about CBE’s values, history, and ministry, visit cbe.today/info.

CBE’S YEAR OF JUBILEE
To celebrate 30 years of ministry, CBE is pleased to offer the benefits of an individual membership to the public at no cost in 2017! We have made available, for free, every Mutuality article ever published. In addition, find the full archive of CBE’s academic journal, Priscilla Papers, and hundreds of book reviews and recordings of lectures given by world-renowned scholars like N.T. Wright, Gordon Fee, and more!

Find it all at cbeinternational.org!

ORGANIZATIONAL MEMBERSHIP
CBE memberships are available to organizations, and include copies of CBE publications, discounts to CBE conferences, discounted advertising and sponsorship opportunities with CBE, and more.

Visit cbe.today/orgmembers to learn more.

CBE SUBSCRIPTIONS
Print subscriptions to Mutuality and Priscilla Papers are available to libraries and individuals.

Visit cbe.today/subscriptions to learn more.

GET CONNECTED WITH CBE
Connect with CBE online to learn more about us, enjoy the resources we offer, and take part in our ministry.

- Visit our website, cbeinternational.org, to find over a thousand resources—articles, book reviews, and video and audio recordings.
- Follow our blog, Arise (cbe.today/blog).
- Follow us on Twitter @CBEInt (twitter.com/cbeint).
- Find us on Facebook (facebook.com/cbeint).
Naked
Reclaiming Sexual Intimacy in Marriage
Tim + Anne Evans

*Naked: Reclaiming Sexual Intimacy in Marriage* challenges husbands and wives to advance in intimacy with God and their spouse. Utilizing a sound biblical basis and real-life stories, Tim + Anne Evans help couples discover how to step into their true identities and advance in living out what it means for a husband and wife to “become one.” Also available is the *Naked Companion Journal* to help couples process the chapter content of the book.

Grit and Grace
Heroic Women of the Bible
Caryn Rivadeneira

*Grit and Grace* connects preteen girls with seventeen women of the Bible. This book is for girls who long to know where they fit in God’s kingdom, who want to know they are made for more than the frilly and frivolous, and that they can make a difference in the world around them. Through stories, reflection questions, and action ideas, the book helps readers become the gutsy, grace-filled girls God made them to be.

When Momma Speaks
The Bible and Motherhood from a Womanist Perspective
Stephanie Buckhanon Crowder

After providing a brief history of womanist biblical interpretation, Crowder shows how the stories of several biblical mothers can be powerful sources for critical reflection, identification, and empowerment. Crowder also explores historical understandings of motherhood in the African American community and how these help to inform present-day perspectives. Chapters include questions for discussion.

Making Marriage Beautiful
Lifelong Love, Joy, and Intimacy Start with You
Dorothy Littell Greco

Because a wedding joins together two imperfect people, all couples experience disappointment, conflict, and pain. How husbands and wives respond to these challenges determines the kind of people they will become and the kind of marriage they will have. Rather than offering clichés and formulas, Greco relies on candor, humor, and real life stories to bring encouragement and wisdom to all couples, regardless of whether they have been married four weeks or forty years.