

Book Review: *Christian Standard Bible* Thomas R. Schreiner, David Allen, et al., eds. (Holman Bible Publishers, 2017)

Reviewed by JEFF MILLER

The *Christian Standard Bible* (CSB) is a revision of the *Holman Christian Standard Bible* (HCSB). The CSB was published in March 2017 by Holman Bible Publishers, which is affiliated with the Southern Baptist Convention.

This review does not pretend to be comprehensive. A full review would need to consider a broad variety of factors and features, from the translation's manuscript base to the maps at the end of the finished product. Instead, this review is limited to three matters that may be of heightened interest to evangelical egalitarians. First, the gender makeup of the translation team. Second, the translation philosophy regarding gender language. Third, several test cases. More about these and other features of the CSB can be learned at www.CSBible.com.

The HCSB involved 102 translators, eleven of whom are women. The group is largely, but not entirely, complementarian. The CSB revision is the work of the twenty-one members of the CSB Translation and Review Team. One member of this team

is a woman—Dorian G. Coover-Cox, associate professor of Old Testament Studies at Dallas Theological Seminary.

A statement about the CSB's approach to gender language is available at CSBible.com. It states a tendency toward retaining “a traditional approach to translating gender language.” It also notes, however, avoidance of “being unnecessarily specific in passages where the original context did not exclude females.” For example, “brother(s) and/or sister(s),” instead of simply “brother(s),” occurs approximately 175 times in the CSB, but never in the HCSB. There is also some progress in preferring “person/people” over “man/men.”

The following list of test-cases, though brief, gives a sense of the CSB's treatment of passages which are often consulted when studying women in Christian leadership. The table gives the reading of the CSB and, for the sake of comparison, the 2011 *New International Version*. Many of these test-cases include footnotes, which would be too cumbersome to reproduce here.

	CSB	NIV 2011
Gen 1:26–27	Then God said, “Let us make man in our image, according to our likeness. They will rule the fish of the sea, the birds of the sky, the livestock, the whole earth, and the creatures that crawl on the earth.” ²⁷ So God created man in his own image; he created him in the image of God; he created them male and female.	Then God said, “Let us make mankind in our image, in our likeness, so that they may rule over the fish in the sea and the birds in the sky, over the livestock and all the wild animals, and over all the creatures that move along the ground.” ²⁷ So God created mankind in his own image, in the image of God he created them; male and female he created them.
Gen 2:18 (cf. v. 20)	Then the LORD God said, “It is not good for the man to be alone. I will make a helper corresponding to him.”	The LORD God said, “It is not good for the man to be alone. I will make a helper suitable for him.”
Ps 68:11	The Lord gave the command; a great company of women brought the good news . . .	The Lord announces the word, and the women who proclaim it are a mighty throng . . .
Rom 16:1	I commend to you our sister Phoebe, who is a servant of the church in Cenchreae.	I commend to you our sister Phoebe, a deacon of the church in Cenchreae.
Rom 16:7	Greet Andronicus and Junia, my fellow Jews and fellow prisoners. They are noteworthy in the eyes of the apostles, and they were also in Christ before me.	Greet Andronicus and Junia, my fellow Jews who have been in prison with me. They are outstanding among the apostles, and they were in Christ before I was.
1 Cor 11:10	This is why a woman should have a symbol of authority on her head, because of the angels.	It is for this reason that a woman ought to have authority over her own head, because of the angels.
1 Cor 14:33–36	. . . since God is not a God of disorder but of peace. As in all the churches of the saints, ³⁴ the women should be silent in the churches, for they are not permitted to speak, but are to submit themselves, as the law also says. ³⁵ If they want to learn something, let them ask their own husbands at home since it is disgraceful for a woman to speak in the church. ³⁶ Or did the word of God originate from you, or did it come to you only?	For God is not a God of disorder but of peace—as in all the congregations of the Lord's people. ³⁴ Women should remain silent in the churches. They are not allowed to speak, but must be in submission, as the law says. ³⁵ If they want to inquire about something, they should ask their own husbands at home; for it is disgraceful for a woman to speak in the church. ³⁶ Or did the word of God originate with you? Or are you the only people it has reached?
1 Tim 2:11–12	A woman is to learn quietly with full submission. ¹² I do not allow a woman to teach or to have authority over a man; instead, she is to remain quiet.	A woman should learn in quietness and full submission. ¹² I do not permit a woman to teach or to assume authority over a man; she must be quiet.

1 Tim 3:1-2	This saying is trustworthy: “If anyone aspires to be an overseer, he desires a noble work.” ² An overseer, therefore, must be above reproach, the husband of one wife . . .	Here is a trustworthy saying: Whoever aspires to be an overseer desires a noble task. ² Now the overseer is to be above reproach, faithful to his wife . . .
1 Tim 3:11-12	¹¹ Wives, too, must be worthy of respect, not slanderers, self-controlled, faithful in everything. ¹² Deacons are to be husbands of one wife, managing their children and their own households competently.	In the same way, the women are to be worthy of respect, not malicious talkers but temperate and trustworthy in everything. ¹² A deacon must be faithful to his wife and must manage his children and his household well.
Eph 2:15b	. . . so that he might create in himself one new man from the two, resulting in peace.	His purpose was to create in himself one new humanity out of the two, thus making peace . . .
Eph 5:21-24	. . . submitting to one another in the fear of Christ. Wives and Husbands ²² Wives, submit to your husbands as to the Lord, ²³ because the husband is the head of the wife as Christ is the head of the church. He is the Savior of the body. ²⁴ Now as the church submits to Christ, so also wives are to submit to their husbands in everything.	Instructions for Christian Households ²¹ Submit to one another out of reverence for Christ. ²² Wives, submit yourselves to your own husbands as you do to the Lord. ²³ For the husband is the head of the wife as Christ is the head of the church, his body, of which he is the Savior. ²⁴ Now as the church submits to Christ, so also wives should submit to their husbands in everything.

In conclusion, the CSB makes some improvements over its ancestor, the HCSB (and over the English Standard Version as well), in its translation of gender language. In contrast, the various texts which tend to form and bolster a person’s view of women in Christian leadership tend strongly toward complementarian views. Evangelical egalitarians will thus continue to prefer translations such as the NRSV, NLT, TNIV, NIV 2011, and CEB.

JEFF MILLER is editor of *Priscilla Papers* and teaches biblical studies at Milligan College in eastern Tennessee. He holds a PhD and an MDiv. He has attended several CBE conferences, including the July 2017 conference in Orlando, Florida. He writes for *Arise* as a member of CBE’s blog team. Miller has published articles in *Priscilla Papers*, *Mutuality*, *Bible Translator*, *Christian Standard*, *Leaven*, *Restoration Quarterly*, and *Stone-Campbell Journal*. He has been a youth minister and, more recently, a worship minister.

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Taylor Kropelin graduated from North Central University in Minneapolis with a degree in pastoral studies. She interned early this year, and now works for CBE full time.

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Jessi Jordan (pictured) joined CBE for the summer. She’s working on her MDiv at Yale Divinity School.

Suzanne Gradin is working with CBE part-time through the summer and fall remotely from Colorado Springs, where she is earning her MDiv at Fuller Theological Seminary.



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