

PRISCILLA

VOLUME 17, NUMBER 2

SPRING 2003



Papers

“PRISCILLA AND AQUILA
INSTRUCTED APOLLOS MORE
PERFECTLY IN THE WAY OF THE LORD”
(ACTS 18)

In This Issue

- 3 **MELCHIZEDEK AND THE UNIVERSALITY OF THE GOSPEL**
Catherine Clark Kroeger
- 5 **THE ISSUE I CAN'T EVADE**
Gilbert Bilezikian
- 7 **A WOMAN'S WORK**
Brenda Griffin Warren
- 12 **TRACING THE TRAJECTORY OF THE SPIRIT**
Glen G. Scorgie
- 23 **A FEMALE APOSTLE**
Dennis J. Preato
- 25 **FEMALE SUBORDINATION: CHALLENGE 7**
Gilbert Bilezikian
- 26 **BOOK REVIEW**
**THE TRINITY AND SUBORDINATIONISM: THE DOCTRINE OF GOD AND THE
CONTEMPORARY GENDER DEBATE**
Kim A. Pettit, reviewer



Egalitarian scholarship is burgeoning at an incredible rate. What is even more remarkable is that this scholarship is coming from almost every corner of the church. Even critics of the egalitarian position note this phenomenon. Thomas R. Schreiner writes this in the *Journal for Biblical Manhood and Womanhood*: "Sometimes I wonder if egalitarians hope to triumph in the debate on the role of women by publishing book after book on the subject. Each work propounds a new thesis that explains why the traditional interpretation is flawed. Complementarians could easily give in from sheer exhaustion, thinking that so many books written by such a diversity of authors could scarcely be wrong."

As Schreiner astutely notes, Christians from diverse traditions are embracing the egalitarian cause and coming to the same conclusion. Is this not the definition of a reformist movement? Historians suggest that the church is always reforming itself. That is, the church is always returning to its foundational core and biblical moorings to inform its teachings on life and faith. One mark of reformist movements is that though Christians differ on any number of other issues, they stand united to promote a common cause.

Perhaps this explains why there are more than ninety different denominations represented in CBE's membership. Christians are seeing the Spirit anew in the biblical text, just as they did during the Protestant Reformation and the abolitionist movement. What a privilege to be part of God's reforming work on the matter of gender. For further evidence of God's renewing activity in the church you will want to see page 22 which features CBE's Orlando Conference, August 8-10. Orlando will become the epicenter of biblical equality this summer as Christians from around the globe gather to study and celebrate the priesthood of all believers. For more information and to register for this conference, visit CBE's Web site at www.cbeinternational.org

With great honor I introduce the articles in this issue of PRISCILLA PAPERS, where we observe our reformist movement gaining momentum. Catherine Clark Kroeger, CBE President Emerita, has written the lead article entitled

"Melchizedek and the Universality of the Gospel." Because of Dr. Kroeger's background in the Classics, she brings powerful insight and a new perspective to the Book of Hebrews.

Brenda Warren's "A Woman's Work" offers a decisive response to those who claim that only men exhibit leadership in the Old Testament. Consider giving your pastor or denominational leader a copy of this important article. Brenda's extensive research will enrich and inform the serious Bible scholar.

We welcome back Glen Scorgie to the pages of PRISCILLA PAPERS. His paper "Tracing the Trajectory of the Spirit: Egalitarian Hermeneutics and Biblical Inerrancy," which was read at the 2002 Annual Meeting of the Evangelical Theological Society, explores a method of distinguishing "the overall direction the Holy Spirit is taking the church as he unfolds God's will in a progressive way." His article will inspire and inform the way we read the Bible.

Gilbert Bilezikian offers a piece that begins with a satirical note when he claims he is a defender of male headship. Those of you unfamiliar with Dr. Bilezikian will quickly learn he is no proponent of female subordination. The article offers a clever means of garnering attention to this important matter.

We also consider a question scholars have debated for centuries: Was Junia a female apostle? For a well researched response to this question, refer to Dennis J. Preato's article entitled, "A Female Apostle: Was Junia a Man or a Woman?" Preato's work is also available on CBE's Web site.

And finally, CBE is now 15 years old. Will you join me in wishing CBE a happy birthday? If you would like to give CBE a birthday present, consider making a contribution towards CBE's endowment project. For more details see page 26.

I thank each of our authors and invite our readers to join CBE in Orlando this summer.

— Mimi Haddad, President of CBE



President/Publisher	MIMI HADDAD
Editor	CAROL R. THIESSEN
Editorial Assistant	VICTORIA PETERSON-HILLEQUE
Editorial/Design Consultant	LISA ANN COCKREL
Proofreader	MARTY WHITE
Editor Emerita	GRETCHEN GAEBELEIN HULL
President Emerita	CATHERINE CLARK KROEGER



Consulting Theologians: W. WARD GASQUE, STANLEY J. GRENZ, DOUGLAS GROOTHUIS, REBECCA GROOTHUIS, DAN GENTRY KENT, ALAN G. PADGETT, AIDA BESANÇON SPENCER, WILLIAM DAVID SPENCER, JOE E. TRULL

Board of Reference: MIRIAM ADENEY, CARL E. ARMERDING, MYRON S. AUGSBURGER, RAYMOND J. BAKKE, LINDA BELLEVILLE, ANTHONY CAMPOLO, LOIS MCKINNEY DOUGLAS, MILLARD ERICKSON, GORDON D. FEE, RICHARD FOSTER, W. WARD GASQUE, J. LEE GRADY, REBECCA MERRILL GROOTHUIS, VERNON GROUNDS, ROBERTA HESTENES, CRAIG S. KEENER, JOHN R. KOHLENGERGER III, DAVID MAINS, KARI TORJESEN MALCOLM, BRENDA SALTER MCNEIL, ALVERA MICKELSEN, ROGER NICOLE, VIRGIL OLSON, LADONNA OSBORN, T. L. OSBORN, RONALD J. SIDER, LEWIS SMEDES (dec.), AIDA BESANÇON SPENCER, WILLIAM DAVID SPENCER, RUTH A. TUCKER, MARY STEWART VAN LEEUWEN, TIMOTHY WEBER, JEANETTE S. G. YEP

Board of Directors: MARY DUNCAN, CAROL GERTZ, JOHN R. KOHLENGERGER III, SHARON CAIRNS MANN, THOMAS A. MCCARTHY, VIRGINIA PATTERSON, NANCY GRAF PETERS, RONALD PIERCE, RUBY RENZ, RHONDA WALTON

PRISCILLA PAPERS (ISSN 0898-753X) is published quarterly for members by Christians for Biblical Equality, 122 West Franklin Avenue, Suite 218, Minneapolis, MN 55404-2451. Copyright © 2003. For address changes and other information, phone 612-872-6898; fax 612-872-6891, or E-mail CBE@CBEinternational.org. CBE is on the Web at www.CBEinternational.org.

Melchizedek and the Universality of the Gospel

The application of an allegory.

CATHERINE CLARK KROEGER

THE FATHER OF OUR FAITH HAD JUST EXTRICATED HIS NEPHEW FROM AN AWFUL SCRAPE. FLUSHED WITH victory, Abram was journeying homeward from a rescue operation. With his clever military strategy, he had rid his new homeland of fourteen years of domination by Chedorlaomer, the Edomite king. A failed rebellion led by the kings of Sodom and Gomorrah had brought swift retaliation from Chedorlaomer and a coalition of his allies. When the retaliatory strike included the capture of Lot, his uncle set out in hot pursuit.

Abram, with his own trained militia of 318 men and a few Amorite cohorts, had been more than a match for the marauding forces. The pursuit had taken him north of Damascus, where he had rescued not only his new neighbors but also their possessions. "He brought back all the goods, and also brought back his nephew Lot with his goods, and the women and the people" (Gen. 14:16). At least Abram had proven his worth to the local citizens.

The new land to which God had called him was certainly not free from conflict. First there had been a dispute between his own herdsmen and those of Lot. That had been resolved by allowing his nephew his own choice of land on which to settle, and Lot had chosen the well-watered plain by Sodom. It had afforded more desirable pasturage but was in harm's way during the raid of Chedorlaomer. Lot and his family had been swept away by the superior forces and had been saved only by Abram's rapid intervention.

On the homeward journey, the King of Sodom met him to offer congratulations and to petition for the safe return of his subjects. Close behind came the king of Salem, a priest by the name of Melchizedek, bringing bread and wine for both warriors and liberated captives. The name Salem meant "peace," a welcome respite for the war-weary patriarch. He could do with a release from conflict. Melchizedek's provision was not restricted to mere food rations, however. He brought with him other refreshment as well—a blessing and a reminder that the victory belonged to God.

Blessed be Abram by God Most High, maker of heaven and earth; and blessed be God Most High, who has delivered your enemies into your hand.

(Gen. 14:19-20).

Abram found himself quite unexpectedly in the presence of one who worshiped "the Most High God who made heaven and earth."

There is much speculation as to the identity of Melchizedek. Was this a theophanic appearance of Christ? Or had Melchizedek come at the invitation of the king of Sodom in order to pronounce a blessing in the name of the God whom Abram served? Was Melchizedek a pagan priest or one who knew the true and living God?

Centuries later we have evidence that the name "Most High God" was ascribed by Canaanites to other deities. Most significantly, Melchizedek maintained that the Most High God had made both heaven and earth, and in turn Abram identified the deity whom he worshiped in precisely the same way—"God most high, maker of heaven and earth" (Gen. 14:22). "Most high" (El Elyon) recurs frequently in the Hebrew Bible as a name for God (e.g., Num. 24:16; Deut. 32:8; 1 Sam. 2:10; 2 Sam. 22:14; Ps. 7:8-17; 9:2; 18:13; 21:7; 46:4; 47:2; 50:14; 56:2; 73:11; 77:10; 78:17, 35, 56; 82:6; 83:18; 87:5; 91:1,9; 92:1; 106:7; 107:11; Isa. 14:14; Lam. 3:35, 38; Dan 3:26; 4:2, 17, 24, 25, 32; 5:18, 21; 7:18,22, 25, 27; Hosea 11:7).

The psalmist prayed:

Let them know that you alone, whose name is the Lord, are the Most High over all the earth.

(Ps. 83:18)

And so Abram the warrior and Melchizedek the priest united in worship. The God who spoke to Abram in Ur of the Chaldees was present here in Palestine as well.

As an act of worship to the Lord who summoned him to this new land, Abram offered Melchizedek a tenth of all that he possessed. Then the king of Sodom requested the release of those rescued rather than retain them as slaves. He was willing to concede that all material properties now rightfully belonged to Abram, but begged for the people. The patriarch replied that he had sworn to "God Most High" that he would claim nothing as his prize. All was to be restored to the previous owners. Only the Amorite allies must be properly rewarded for their role in the combat.

Psalm 110

The story of Melchizedek's blessing lived on in Israelite tradition and was memorialized by King David in a psalm speaking of royal enthronement. Some regard it as a hymn that was used at David's own coronation, others thought that it was composed for the coronation of Solomon, and yet others thought that David had in mind the promised descendant who would sit on the throne forever. Even before the Christian era, Psalm 110 was regarded by Jews as a Messianic psalm that foretold the coming of Christ.

Like Jesus, Melchizedek has no priestly pedigree. The Genesis account gives him no genealogy and no connection with the Aaronic priesthood.

Fragments are quoted by Jesus (Matt. 22:43–44; Mark 12:36–37; Luke 29:42–44) and by Peter (Acts 2:34–36). Both understood the psalm as referring to Jesus as Messiah. Actually, the New Testament applies this psalm to the ascended Christ no less than fifteen times.

It is the writer of the Epistle to the Hebrews, however, who makes extensive use of the portion that refers to the everlasting priesthood of Melchizedek (Hebrews 5:6; 7:17, 21). For another quotation from Psalm 110, see Heb 1:13. The epistle also has nine other allusions to the psalm: (1:3; 5:10; 6:20; 7:3; 8:1; 10:12, 12:2, 13).

The Book of Hebrews

The authorship and dating of the letter cannot be established with certainty (though Priscilla is a strong contender). The treatise has been composed by one or more individuals who have not actually seen Jesus (Heb. 2:3), someone close to the apostle Paul and in contact with Timothy (13:23). The writer is steeped in the Hebrew scriptures and knows how to argue the case for Christianity among those who are wavering in their faith. The original recipients appear to have been hellenistic Jews who were reconsidering their decision to receive Christ as Savior and Lord of their lives. They had undergone persecution, and a return to traditional Judaism seemed safer and less stressful.

The religious rights of Jews were protected under Roman law, while Christians were regarded as atheists and immoral. The New Testament and later Christian writings bear witness to the mounting discomfort that diaspora Jews experienced as an increasing number of gentiles were received into the church. Although at first a significant contingent of Hebrew priests had adopted the good news (Acts 6:7), opposition mounted. By A.D. 62 the apostles were no longer safe in Jerusalem, and James the brother of Christ (apparently a zealous Pharisee, cf. Acts 15:5; 21:20) was slain by order of the high priest.

Just as Paul had written to the Galatians not to revert to Jewish legalism, so the author of Hebrews warns the hearers not to return to their old patterns of belief and practice. The treatise is written not in opposition to Paul, for the writer is an associate of the apostle and his coterie. Inspired by the Holy Spirit as was Paul, the author addresses a different set of problems with a different approach and a different logic.

Thus the writer's audience is urged not to renounce their faith and to continue on in their quest for all that God has promised. Jesus is the fulfillment, the author and finisher of their faith. He is superior to the angels, the prophets and the priests. Rather than pointing to the temple at Jerusalem, the author turns to the tabernacle, that portable shrine that accompanied the Israelites throughout their wilderness journey. From its arrangement, a spiritual typology is drawn; for this author loved to allegorize physical realities into spiritual concepts.



The story illustrated: Abraham, Melchizedek, and the king of Sodom.

As in Stephen's defense (Acts 7:44–50), there is an insistence that God is not bound to the temple nor to its cult personnel. There is another priesthood to which true worshipers must turn, a priesthood symbolized by the ancient priest-king of Salem (a shortened form of Jerusalem, Ps. 76:2). Until the destruction of the Jerusalem temple in A.D. 70, the Holy City was the focal point of Jewish faith and practice. The author calls for a consideration of new patterns and paradigms.

Drawing the analogy

Like Jesus, Melchizedek has no priestly pedigree. The Genesis account gives him no genealogy and no connection with the Aaronic priesthood. Thus the gentile Melchizedek bespoke a wider understanding of the priesthood as he blessed Abram, through whom God had promised to bless all the nations of the earth.

The writer points constantly to Christ's completion of all that was foreshadowed in salvation history. Believers are encircled with a "cloud of witnesses," those who demonstrated a faith in what was to come. They did not attain the fulfillment of God's promises, and yet they continued in faith. Here women come to the fore. There was Rahab the prostitute who extended hospitality to the spies because she believed that God would give the land to Israel. There was Sarah who had the faith, even in her old age, to raise the promised child. There was Jochebed who dared to save the life of her infant son, Moses, so that the children of Israel might have a deliverer. These witnesses of the past encourage God's people to move forward with faith in the "better things" that are in store for them.

But, in particular, the writer of Hebrews wishes to prevent the readers from returning to the ritual sacrificial system of the temple. The once-for-all sacrifice of Christ has done away with the need for recurring expiations. Through the offering of his own body, Christ assumed the office of priest, not through hereditary claim or human appointment, but through the efficacy of his work upon the cross. Unlike members of the Aaronic priesthood, Christ needed neither an offering of atonement for his own sin nor to repeat the redemptive act more than once. Like Melchizedek whose recorded ministry consists of a single deed, Jesus' work of expiation was complete. Significantly, Melchizedek's gifts were not sacrificial animals but bread and wine.

The shadowy figure of the gentile priest about whom we know so little—neither his qualifications for the priesthood, nor the circumstances of his birth, life, or death—portrays a notion that is far grander and more ancient than that of the descendants of Aaron. The unknowns become part of the allegory. Hebrew law rigidly restricted the Levitical priesthood to males with unblemished masculine bodies, descended from a limited number of families. Biblical history makes us aware of their faults and

failings, their exclusivism and intransigence. In contrast, Melchizedek stands as a more universal priestly model, not bound to a physical building, rigid tradition, or religious establishment, free from the specifications of gender. He blesses the patriarch who is to become a blessing to all nations and brings nourishment for Abram's body and soul. The great High Priest after the order of Melchizedek extends his ministry to Jew and gentile alike. ■



Catherine Clark Kroeger is adjunct associate professor of classical and ministry studies at Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary and coauthor of No Place for Abuse: Biblical and Practical Resources for Addressing Domestic Violence, and she is coeditor of The IVP Women's Commentary. She was CBE's founding organizer and is president emerita.

The Issue I Can't Evade

The headship of husbands is a New Testament teaching.

GILBERT BILEZIKIAN

BELIEVE IN MALE HEADSHIP UNABASHEDLY AND unreservedly. I cannot evade the issue or rationalize my way around it. The headship of husbands is clearly and unassailably taught in the New Testament. Moreover, the Bible clearly declares that the response of wives to their husbands' headship is submission in everything. Indeed, the husband is the head of the wife as Christ is the head of the church. As the church is subject to Christ, so wives must be subject in everything to their husbands (Eph. 5:23–24). This precept is not given in Scripture as a recommendation, a suggestion, or a piece of advice that may be optionally followed. It is an absolute mandate that requires the same level of adherence as any of its commandments.

Coming from an advocate of the reform movement called egalitarian or, more accurately, nonhierarchical "complementarian," the above statement sounds regressive. For this reason, I also caution against citing it without referencing what follows.

A basic rule of sound hermeneutics requires that no biblical term or concept be infused with meanings foreign to it. For this reason, the meaning of *head* in the New Testament must be defined from within the New Testament itself. It cannot be assumed that the value of *head* in the English language as authority, leader or master carries over automatically into the New Testament's use of the same word *head*.

There is no doubt that, among his multiple functions in regard to the church, Christ is authority, leader, and master over the church since the scope of his universal lordship includes the church. Therefore, what is under scrutiny is not the concept of the lordship of Christ over the church. Rather, it must be determined whether the word *head*, when used to describe Christ's relationship to the church, carries the same meaning of lordship or whether it is invested with a different value. The glib assumption may not be made that, because *head* denotes authority in English, it also does so in the language of the New Testament.

Fortunately, the meaning of *head* can be easily determined within its scriptural use with reference to the headship of Christ in relation to the church, his body. Whatever function the church performs in connection to the body defines the meaning of the term *head* in the New Testament.

The word is used five times in the New Testament to define the relation of Christ to the church. As will be shown below, the use of *head* is consistent in all of those texts.

Ephesians 1:22-23. The passage that immediately precedes this text exalts the supremacy of Christ in his session. But in relation to the church, the role of Christ is described as *being appointed as head for the church, which is his body, the fullness of him who fills everything in every way*. The headship of Christ is never head over the church in the New Testament. Here, it is head for the church. As *head*, Christ gives the church fullness. He provides for the church's growth. The function is not one of authority, but of servant provider of what makes the church's growth possible.

Ephesians 4:15-16. *Christ is the head from whom the whole body grows and builds itself up*. The function of the *head* in relation to the body is to provide it with growth. Headship is not an authority role but a developmental servant function.

Ephesians 5:23. *The husband is the head of the wife as Christ is the head of the church, his body, of which is the Savior*. As *head* of the church, Christ is its Savior. If *head* had meant authority, the appropriate designation for Christ would have been "Lord" instead of "Savior," which is consistently a self-sacrificing, life-giving servant role in the New Testament.

Colossians 1:18-19. *Christ is the head of the body, the church; he is the beginning and the firstborn from among the dead. Through his blood, shed on the cross, all things are reconciled to God*. In a passage that celebrates Christ's supremacy over all creation, this text describes Christ as the source of the life of the church through his resurrection from the dead and because of the reconciliation obtained through his self-sacrificing servant ministry at the cross. Headship is not defined in terms of authority but as servant provider of life.

Colossians 2:19. *Christ is the head from whom the whole body*

grows. The function of *head* in relation to the body is not one of rulership but of servant provider of growth. Christ as *head* of the church is the source of life and development.

This survey indicates that head, biblically defined, means exactly the opposite of what it means in the English language. *Head* is never given the meaning of authority, boss, or leader. It describes the servant function of provider of life, growth, and development. This function is not one of top-down oversight but of bottom-up support and nurture.

Parenthetically, it must be briefly noted that Christ is also *head* of every power and authority (Col. 2:10). Believers are given fullness in Christ, who is head of (not “over” as the NIV has it) every power and authority. Christ is the source of growth for believers just as he is the source of the life of powers and authorities which he has created (1:16).

This meaning of *head* as source of life is verified in the one remaining reference to Christ’s headship in the New Testament. In 1 Cor. 11:3, Christ is not *head* for or of the church, his body, but he is the head of every man. This text is made of three carefully sequenced and studiously related clauses: the *head* of every man is Christ, and the *head* of the woman is man, and the *head* of Christ is God. The question must be raised as to whether the meaning of *head* in this text is consistent with its use in the other references surveyed above or whether it has suddenly changed to mean something different in this one passage.

Sometimes, the word *head* in this text is carelessly infused with its meaning in the English language to obtain this hierarchical order: God *head* over Christ—Christ *head* over man—man *head* over woman. This top-down vertical “chain of command” would then go as follows: God—Christ—man—woman.

However, such results are obtained by manipulating the biblical text. In order to make the text say what the Scripture does not teach in this passage, its three clauses must be taken out of their original sequence and rearranged. The apostle Paul knows exactly how to structure hierarchies in perfect descending order (see 12:28, for instance). In 1 Cor. 11:3, he is not structuring a hierarchy. In keeping with the theme developed in the immediate context, Paul is discussing the traditional significance of origination. The sequence that links the three clauses is not hierarchy but chronology. At creation, Christ was the giver of life to men as the source of the life of Adam (“by him all things were created” Col. 1:16). In turn, man gave life to the woman as she was taken from him. Then, God gave life to the Son as he came into the world for the incarnation. When the biblical sequence of the three clauses is not tampered with, the consistent meaning of *head* in this verse is that of a servant function, as provider of life.

Two additional considerations must be taken into account in order to get at the real meaning of head in the New Testament. There are scores of references in the documents of the New Testament to leaders from all walks of life: religious leaders, community leaders, military leaders, governmental leaders, patriarchal leaders, and church leaders. Never is anyone of them designated as head. A profusion of other titles is used, but *head* is conspicuously absent from the list. The obvious explanation for this singularity is that *head* did not mean “leader” in the language of the New Testament.

The second observation relates to the constitutive elements of the human person according to the New Testament. Again, it contains scores of references to the elements that make up the human being. The functional components of personality are body, flesh, psyche, spirit, mind, conscience, inner person, and heart. *Head* is never cited as the governing center of the person. In the New Testament, that function generally devolves to the heart or to the mind. Only once is there a reference made to the *head* aspiring to wield authority over the body only to deny emphatically its right to do so (1 Cor. 12:21).

Head is used figuratively in relation to the body only in the five references surveyed above and always with the meaning of servant provider, never with that of authority. When the New Testament metaphor of headship is understood generically and is protected from corruption by meanings foreign to the text, it describes perfectly the relation of Christ to the church and of husband to wife as servant life-givers. The Fall had made of Adam ruler over the woman (Gen. 3:16). Christ makes of husbands servants to their wives in a ‘relationship of mutual submission’ (Eph. 5:21). For this reason, I believe in male headship—but strictly in its New Testament definition. ■

Gilbert Bilezikian is professor emeritus of Biblical Studies at Wheaton College (IL) and cofounder of Willow Creek Community Church in South Barrington, Illinois. Among the books of which he is the author are Beyond Sex Roles and Community 101. This article is on CBE’s website: www.cbeinternational.org.



Send your friend a CBE informational packet!

This packet includes a brochure, catalog, sample copy of PRISCILLA PAPERS, and intriguing articles.

Name _____

Address _____

Send to:

Christians for Biblical Equality
122 West Franklin Avenue, Suite 218
Minneapolis, MN 55404-2451
E-mail: cbe@cbeinternational.org

A Woman's Work

How God used Huldah to change the heart of a king and a nation.

BRENDA GRIFFIN WARREN

THIS STUDY ON THE PROPHETESS HULDAH AS FOUND IN II Kings 22 and II Chronicles 34 will include a background study of prophets and prophecy of the Old Testament. This study will include a general definition and role of a prophet as *nabi* and prophetess as *nebiah*. Other prophetic roles such as *roeh* and *hozeh* (seer) will not be included. Also, there is a short study on the message of the prophet and how a true or false prophet is discerned.

Huldah is listed in rabbinical literature as one of seven prophetesses including Sarah, Miriam, Deborah, Hannah, Abigail, and Esther. Even though a detailed study of each of these prophetesses would be beneficial and interesting to the writer of this paper, only Huldah in her role as prophetess will be discussed.

Who were prophets and prophetesses?

Who were the prophets and prophetesses in Scripture? Prophets and prophetesses are listed throughout the Old and New Testaments. These persons were called prophets and prophetesses because each claimed to be communicating a divine message. The broad use of the term "prophet" allows such Old Testament people as Abraham, the priest Aaron, and the singer Jeduthun to be called prophets even though the Bible does not record a specific call of any of them to the prophetic office.¹

According to the Talmud, Moses was "master of the prophets" and no prophet after him succeeded as Moses did in penetrating into the nature of Yahweh by communing with him and receiving His divine message.²

Since Moses is the "master prophet" there is room for many prophets and prophetesses throughout the Old Testament. According to rabbinical tradition, the number of prophets is innumerable and could be as high as double the number of the children of Israel who went out of Egypt. Prophets came from every tribe (Suk. 27b). However, only those prophets who had prophecies containing a lesson for future generations were recorded. Rabbinical tradition states that there were forty-eight Hebrew prophets, seven Gentile prophets, and seven prophetesses. The prophetesses were Miriam, Deborah, Huldah, Sarah, Hannah, Abigail, and Esther (Megilloth 14a).³

Definition of terms. The Hebrew word *nabi* is the most common designation of a male prophet or spokesman. A female prophet or prophetess is *nebiah*. In the Old Testament five women are designated as *nebiah*: Miriam, the sister of Moses and Aaron (Exodus 15:20); Deborah, the judge (Judges 4:4); the wife of Isaiah (Isaiah 8:3); Huldah, who was consulted by King Josiah (II Kings 22:14 and II Chronicles 34:22); and Noadiah, a false prophetess who opposed Nehemiah (Nehemiah 6:14). Stanley Grenz states that "the reference to false female prophets also suggests the ongoing

presence of true female prophets."⁴ It is a matter of scholarly debate whether Isaiah's wife was a prophetess or was listed as a *nebiah* because she was the wife of the prophet Isaiah. Since both males and females are created in the image of God, it is believed that God would choose both prophets and prophetesses to proclaim the words that proceed from his very being. It is a matter of debate whether Isaiah's wife was a prophetess or listed as a *nebiah* because she was the wife of the prophet Isaiah.

The derivation of *nabi* has been a controversial issue. Some scholars say this term means to "bubble up, boil forth," and thus a prophet would pour forth, words as those who speak fervently from their mind or under divine inspiration such as poets and prophets. This definition of *nabi* would indicate that prophets were actively uttering revelations from God's spirit in ecstatic speech. Some scholars describe this as speaking enthusiastically, to utter cries, and make more or less wild gestures.⁵ Other scholars would say that the mood was passive and the prophets were receiving God's speech and then proclaiming it. This would emphasize the reception of the divine communication by the *nabi*.⁶

The plural form of prophet in Hebrew is *nebiim*. This plural word is used for groups of prophets, true and false prophets, and male or female prophets operating individually.⁷ In the New Testament, the Greek form of the word "prophetess" is *prophetis* and refers to Anna (Luke 2:36-38), the prophetess who recognized and proclaimed Jesus to be the Messiah, and Jezebel (Rev. 2:20), the temptress who called herself a prophetess.⁸ In Acts 21: 9, it is recorded that Philip's four daughters prophesied (*parthenoi propheteousai*) and Paul even made special provisions for women who prophesy in church (1 Cor.11:5).⁹ Peter quoted Joel 2:28 saying that both sons and daughters would prophesy when the Messiah came (Acts 2:18). Some biblical scholars consider Elizabeth, the mother of John the Baptist and Mary, the mother of Jesus, to be prophetesses. Elizabeth prophesied about Jesus' birth when Mary visited her. Also, Mary's words in the Magnificat are often considered as prophecy.¹⁰

Therefore, a general definition of prophet or prophetess is a person who acts as a mouthpiece for God, receiving a message from him and proclaiming it in accordance with his commands.¹¹ However, this term could also be used of one who pretended or actually believed that he or she was a mouthpiece of God. This definition would also point out the fact that prophecy was not exclusively predictive. A prophet was both an intermediary and an intercessor.

Who is a true prophet or prophetess?

Moses set forth standards to determine whether a person

was a true or false prophet/prophetess. A true prophet must speak in the name of the Lord (Deuteronomy 18:20-22). A true prophet may produce a sign or wonder (Deuteronomy 13:1-2), but of course, Moses knew full well from dealing with the Egyptians that signs and wonders could be counterfeited. A prediction given by a true prophet may be visibly fulfilled as in Deuteronomy 18:22 where it reads, "If what a prophet proclaims in the name of the Lord does not take place or come true, that is a message the Lord has not spoken." Another very important test for a true prophet is whether his or her prophecy is in agreement with previous revelations (Deuteronomy 13: 1-5). A person might claim to speak for the Lord, might perform miracles, and might give a correct prophecy, but if the revelation is not in line with what God has revealed previously, then that person might be suspect as a true prophet/prophetess.¹²

Biblical scholars have also developed standards from Scripture to recognize false prophets. False prophets tried to comfort the people of God instead of applying God's warnings and threats.¹³ They fostered illusions by advocating *Realpolitik* and gaining popularity and power through this syncretistic and optimistic program. The false prophets provided solutions for the political, economic, and social problems. The false prophets also lived and worked for a human ideal or vision. The hermeneutical framework of the false prophets was different from that of the true prophets. The false prophets "had divorced 'redemption' and 'creation' and thereby formed a definite understanding of what God could and could not do, based on their interpretation of God's covenant promises and the place of theocratic institutions in Israel."¹⁴ The true prophets presented God as creator and sustainer of the universe who ruled over His creation and over nations. False prophets guarded the status quo and taught humanity centered morality.¹⁵

Delivery of the prophetic message

Many prophets spoke their messages orally before individuals or groups. Several prophets illustrated their words with symbolic object lessons as when Jeremiah broke a clay pot to depict God's destruction of Jerusalem (Jeremiah 19), and Ezekiel cut off his hair to depict what would happen to Jerusalem (Ezekiel 5:1-2). Some of the prophecies were selected, arranged, and edited for publication in written form. The prophets' messages were called the word of God, an oracle or an utterance, or a burden from God. The "word of the Lord came to me" is recorded over two hundred times in the Old Testament as a technical formulation for prophetic revelation.¹⁶

Huldah, prophetess of God

Some background. Huldah was a prophetess (*nebiah*) during King Josiah's reign (640-09). The story of King Josiah and Huldah is found in two books of the Old Testament, II Kings 22:14-20 and II Chronicles 34:1-35.

In Hebrew, her name means "weasel."¹⁷ According to rabbinical tradition, the reason she was given the unattrac-

tive name was because she referred to King Josiah as a "man" and not a "king" when she declared "tell the man that you sent to me" (II Kings 22:15). Also, within Jewish tradition (Sifre, Num.78; Meg.14a,b) it is recorded that Huldah was a relative of Jeremiah and that both she and Jeremiah were descendants of Rahab of Jericho.¹⁸ This same tradition also states that Rahab married Joshua and because of her bravery the Lord allowed her familial line to include priests and eight prophets including Jeremiah and Huldah (Meg.14b).¹⁹ The Gospel of Matthew in the New Testament (Matthew 1:5) lists Rahab as one of the ancestors of Jesus, which would surmise that Huldah was also of the same lineage as Jesus the Messiah.

She was the wife of Shallum the son of Tikvah (or Tokhath in II Chronicles 34:22), who was the son of Harhas and he was the wardrobe keeper of the king (II Kings 22:14). It is difficult to pinpoint who Shallum was as "Shallum" must have been a fairly common name. There are fifteen Shallum's (also known as Meshullum or Shillem) listed in the Old Testament. Shallum was the uncle of the prophet Jeremiah (Jeremiah 32:6-7). Also, Huldah was the mother of Hanamel who sold a piece of his family's land at Anathoth to Jeremiah (Jeremiah 32:6-15). Huldah and Shallum lived in the second district of Jerusalem (II Kings 22:14) which is generally accepted as the northern extension of Jerusalem. This district was probably developed as a residential area for palace and temple personnel after the building of the temple.²⁰ At the time of King Josiah's reign, the second district would have been located west of the palace and temple sitting on top of the upper Tyrolean Valley depression.²¹

Huldah is the only prophetess mentioned during the period of the monarchy and only one of two prophetesses within Deuteronomistic tradition, the other being Deborah.²²

According to the Targum on II Kings 22:14, Huldah also conducted a *mishneh* (an academy or college [KJV]) in Jerusalem in the Second District.²³ Some scholars theorize that the Gate of Huldah in the temple (Mid. 1:3) was formerly the gate leading to Huldah's academy (Rashi, II Kings 22:14).²⁴ Some rabbinical tradition contends that not only did Huldah conduct an academy in Jerusalem, but she also taught oral doctrine.²⁵ Great respect for Huldah was shown by the rabbis who declared that the Western Wall, the Gate of the Priests, and the Huldah Gate were never to be destroyed.²⁶ Even Huldah's tomb is reported to be located on the Mount of Olives.²⁷ Only King David's and Huldah's graves were ever allowed within the city of Jerusalem (Tosef., Neg. vi.).²⁸ Huldah is even listed in a midrash that in Paradise she rules seven sections for the souls of pious women.²⁹

The Targum goes on to describe Huldah's husband Shallum as a man of noble descent and very compassionate. He would go outside the city limits daily carrying a pitcher of water to give a drink to travelers. According to rabbinical tradition it was a reward for his good deeds to strangers that his wife was a prophetess.³⁰

It is not surprising that rabbinical tradition has interpreted Huldah as a prophetess only as a result of a reward for her husband's good deeds. The era that Huldah proph-

esied is known for its patriarchy and denigration of women, not only in the Israelite world, but also throughout the Greek, Roman, and Semitic worlds. Yet it is quite extraordinary that women prophetesses of the Old Testament were held in such high esteem. In the time that Huldah prophesied, before Jesus, Jewish women were considered so low that a Jewish man would thank God each morning that he was born a man and not born a woman.³¹ Jewish women were required to keep their heads covered in deference to their husbands and required some women to wear head coverings even in their homes so that their children could not see them.³² They were not allowed to enter the temple except in the outer courts and worse, they were not even allowed in the outer courts if the women were menstruating or within forty days after giving birth to a male child or eighty days after the birth of a daughter (Leviticus 15:19-33). These demeaning rules included the transfer of the daughter in marriage from father to husband as part of a contract of ownership.³³ She was required to obey her husband in all matters and show deference to him such as standing behind him while he ate.³⁴ Many times there was sadness in the home when a female was born instead of a son and in case of danger the husband must be saved first, then the sons, followed by the wives and daughters.³⁵ Josephus, the Jewish historian, recorded these words about women: "The woman, says the Law, is in all things inferior to man."³⁶ One rabbi wrote that it would be better that the Torah be burnt than be spoken from the lips of a woman.³⁷ In fact, she was not allowed to study the Torah.³⁸ Jewish men in Paul's day were warned not to sit among women because evil comes from them like a moth emerging from clothes.³⁹ Later rabbis concluded that God himself avoided speaking with a woman.⁴⁰ Men were strongly advised to avoid all possible contact with women except what was necessary for the procreation of children.⁴¹ Foreign women were thought to be especially dangerous.⁴² Rabbinic literature, even more than the Old Testament, expressed a stridently misogynistic attitude toward women. Women were described not only as evil temptresses but also as witches and nymphomaniacs.⁴³ They were further caricatured as lazy, greedy, vain, and frivolous.⁴⁴

With these rabbinical teachings about women, it is not surprising that the traditional Jewish interpreters would relate Huldah as being gifted as a prophetess only because of her husband's good deeds, not because God called her and trusted her to be his prophetess. In spite of the demeaning rabbinical traditions concerning the female gender, God chose Huldah and other women throughout the Old Testament to authoritatively bring forth His word.

Huldah and King Josiah

The story of King Josiah's reformation and his interaction with Huldah is located in II Kings 22-23 and II Chronicles 34-35. The two narratives of this reformation led by King Josiah display some differing details. It seems that the reformation of Judah may have begun as early as Josiah's eighth year (II Chronicles 34:3, about 633/632 B.C.) when the decision had been made to shift national policy. In Josi-

ah's twelfth year (629/628 B.C.) he began his sweeping reforms to control a part of Northern Israel. Some scholars think that he was able to gain control of Megiddo, Joppa, Samaria, and Gilead.⁴⁵

The reformation process described in II Kings 22:3-23:25 portrayed the reform entirely as an outcome of the discovery of the Book of the Law in Josiah's eighteenth year, whereas the Chronicles version described a step-by-step process beginning in Josiah's eighth year and reaching its full momentum in his twelfth year.⁴⁶

According to II Kings 22:3, the reform took place in Josiah's eighteenth year (622 B.C.) when in the course of repairs to the temple, a copy of the Book of the Law was discovered by Hilkiah the High Priest (who probably was the great-grandfather of Ezra the Scribe⁴⁷ and according to tradition was the brother of Jeremiah⁴⁸). Hilkiah gave the Book of the Law to Shaphan, the king's secretary. Shaphan (grandfather of Gedaliah who was appointed as governor of Palestine by Nebuchadnezzar⁴⁹) took the book to King Josiah and read from it.

King Josiah was terribly upset when he heard the words and tore his robes. He said the Book of the Law showed that God was very angry with them because their fathers had not obeyed the words. He gave the order for his royal court, including Ahikam (son of Shaphan and the father of Gedaliah); Achbor (father of Elnathan who was present at Jeremiah's reading of the scroll to Jehoiakim, Jeremiah 36:12 and the grandfather of King Jehoiachin, II Kings 24:8); Asaiah; Shaphan; and Hilkiah the High Priest. The order was to go to Huldah, the prophetess, and ask her what she thought about this newly discovered Book of the Law. It was probably the Book of Deuteronomy, but could have been the entire Pentateuch. De Wette, a German scholar of the nineteenth-century, is credited as the first scholar to identify the newly discovered Book as Deuteronomy, but this thought was prevalent throughout the centuries and even the Talmud declares that King Josiah read the passage of Deuteronomy 28:16.⁵⁰

Hilkiah, the High Priest and the royal court asked her whether this was a true Book of the Law of God. Huldah responded saying, "Thus says the Lord, the God of Israel..." and began to tell this royal entourage that what is written in the Book is true and is from the Lord. She validated the Book of the Law to render divine judgment upon the people and blessing upon the king and this validation may have been the beginning of the canon. Huldah declared the written word to be the Word of God, and the people and the king heeded her declaration.⁵¹ In this validation process, she gave an oracle of judgment and then gave an oracle of salvation. Huldah told the High Priest and the royal messengers that since the Lord saw Josiah tear his robes in anguish, saw him humbled, and saw him weep in His presence, the Lord would keep him from seeing any destruction or disaster during his reign and that he would be buried in peace. When these men heard Huldah's prophetic words from God, they reported it back to King Josiah. He responded by enlarging his reformation to include the temple, priests, and altars throughout Judah, extending into Samaria and Bethel. King Josiah was killed

in Megiddo by Pharoah Necco and his body was brought back to Jerusalem in a chariot and buried in peace in his own tomb. II Kings 23:25 states “neither before nor after Josiah was there a king like him who turned to the Lord as he did—with all his heart and with all his soul and with all his strength, in accordance with all the Law of Moses.”

Did God disapprove when King Josiah sought the help of a woman prophet instead of Huldah’s prophetic/priestly contemporaries such as Jeremiah, Zephaniah, Nahum, or Hilkiah the High Priest? No, in fact, the passage seems to declare that King Josiah was a truly good king who loved, believed, obeyed, and trusted God. God spoke to King Josiah through the hearing of both the words of the Book of the Law and Huldah’s prophecy, and the King was rightly obedient to both.

The other narrative of this story is in II Chronicles 34 and 35. This passage is considered by some biblical scholars to be closer to the true version of the story of Josiah’s reign.⁵² Keil and Delitzsch believe that the two narratives agree in the essential points, but the Chronicles passage is “chronologically more exact.”⁵³ This passage declares that Josiah became king in his youth and he reigned in Jerusalem for thirty-one years. In the eighth year of his reign, he began to seek after God and by the twelfth year of his reign, he was purging Judah and Jerusalem of pagan idols and altars. In the eighteenth year of his reign he sent Shaphan his secretary to repair the temple. The money for these repairs was given to Hilkiah the High Priest. When the money was being taken out of the temple, the Book of the Law was found by Hilkiah. He gave the Book of the Law to Shaphan, who in turn took it to King Josiah and read it to him. As in the II Kings passage, King Josiah told Shaphan, Hilkiah, and other male royal court members to go to Huldah, the prophetess and ask her thoughts on this Book of the Law. Huldah gave the prophetic formula of, “This is what the Lord, the God of Israel says...” followed by an oracle of judgment and an oracle of salvation.

Josiah believed her pronouncement that the Book of the Law was true and that God would send all the curses that He had promised in this Book. However, because the King was truly repentant and humble for the sins of his ancestors, God issued a reprieve of the curses. King Josiah was told that he would be buried in peace and his eyes would not see the disaster that would be brought upon this place.

In the first part of Huldah’s prophecy, she seemed to have a disregard for Josiah’s earlier reforms as these reforms had not transformed the people. The words of condemnation from God, through His prophetess Huldah, spurred Josiah to make even wider and more comprehensive reforms. Josiah responded to the Book of the Law, and to Huldah’s prophecy, by going to the temple in Jerusalem and reading the Book of the Covenant (also called the Book of the Law) to all the elders, priests, and Levites. He renewed his covenant with the Lord by promising to follow the Lord and keep his commandments, regulations, and decrees with all his heart, and all his soul, and to obey the words of the covenant written in the Book. He then had everyone in Jerusalem pledge himself or herself to the renewed covenant. A magnificent Passover was held that

brought the people and the priests back to a true remembrance of God and his redemptive work in delivering his people from Egyptian slavery.

Huldah’s timeless influence

Huldah’s leadership and prophetic gift has influenced theological debate throughout the ages. Even the early church used Huldah’s prophetic leadership to ordain women to sacred office. The Apostolic Constitutions (8:20), a collection of ecclesiastical regulations and liturgical materials written in the late fourth and early fifth centuries, contained a prayer for deaconess ordination:

Creator of man and woman, who filled Deborah, Anna, and Huldah with the Spirit...look upon our servant who is chosen for the ministry and grant your Holy Spirit.⁵⁴

John Calvin challenged his student, John Knox, concerning whether God would accept a woman as head of a government. Calvin recorded his position in a letter to a friend:

[T]wo years ago John Knox asked me in a private conversation what I thought about the government of women. I candidly replied...that there were occasionally women so endowed, that the singular good qualities which shone forth in them made it evident that they were raised up by divine authority; either that God designed by such examples to condemn the inactivity of men, or for the better setting forth his own glory. I brought forth Huldah and Deborah.

Works of John Knox, vol. 4, p.357⁵⁵

A century after Calvin’s death, the Quakers were the first Christian denomination to advocate the equality of men and women. George and Margaret Fox were the founders of the Society of Friends (Quakers). George stated why the Quakers believe in equality, “There are elder women in the truth as well as elder men in the truth; and these women are to be teachers of good things; so they have an office as well as the men...Deborah was a judge; Miriam and Huldah were prophetesses...”⁵⁶

Elizabeth Stanton, the mother of Women’s Rights and the Suffrage Movement, used the example of Huldah to quench the fiery darts of biblical texts that were hurled at her to prove that God ordained domination of women.⁵⁷

William E. Phipps concludes an article on Huldah in *Biblical Review* with this thought-provoking idea:

It is time to restore Huldah to her rightful place. She was the first to place a seal of approval on a scroll, certifying that it contained Yahweh’s genuine message. She deserves to be honored as the patron saint of textual critics across the ages who seek to validate what is divinely inspired.⁵⁸

Conclusion

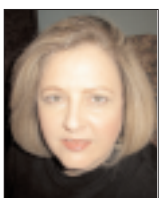
Huldah was a woman capable, chosen, and called of the Lord to be his prophetess, to be a *nebiah*. She was deemed competent of discerning divine will by King Josiah, his male royal court, and Hilkiah, the High Priest of Jerusalem. She was preferred by King Josiah above Hilkiah, the High Priest; Jeremiah, the main prophet of Jerusalem; Zephaniah; and Nahum to give him the words of God that would spur further reform and repentance in the kingdom and

that would declare Scripture as true. One cannot find any disputations against Huldah's prophecies to King Josiah by her contemporary prophets including Jeremiah, Zephaniah, nor Nahum. The two passages cited, in II Kings and II Chronicles, clearly show that God does speak through a female, and that she is not under the authority of a man when she pronounces prophecies of the Lord. Despite rabbinical tradition, Huldah was a prophetess called by God to proclaim his word. She was not called to be a prophetess only as a result of her husband's good deeds.

Huldah and her prophecies are consistent with the tests of a true or false prophet as defined by Moses in the book of Deuteronomy. Her prophecy was fulfilled in that Josiah did not see the destruction of the kingdom and he was buried in peace. Her revelations were consistent with former prophets and she did not speak some esoteric prophecy or some "sweet words." She spoke with authority, both oracles of judgment and salvation, and used the classical prophetic introduction, "thus says the Lord the God of Israel." She was a prophetess of Jerusalem chosen by God to speak his words that brought reformation and transformation within his kingdom. She also certified that the lost scroll was truly the Word of the Lord. The two passages in II Kings and II Chronicles clearly show that God does choose women to lead and to speak prophetically, even to a king and to a High Priest. She was not under the authority of a man to pronounce these prophecies of the Lord. Her only authority was God who required that she speak forth his word. Huldah's courage, her leadership, and her prophetic life has influenced ecclesiastical polity and political status for women throughout the ages.

Even though there were fewer women prophets than male prophets, this does not indicate that God was compelled to use them because there were no men available, nor were they an exception to the rule. Women prophets, like men, were called and chosen of God at his discretion and in accordance with his will. It is often pondered why God did not appoint more women to lead his kingdom and prophesy, but perhaps "because of certain physical limitations, such as home duties, the mores or binding customs of that society and the physical abuse heaped on the prophets, the Lord did not call as many women as men at that time, but call them He did, and still does."⁵⁹

Since the Bible is inspired by God and is authoritative, then truly God does call women like Huldah, Miriam, Deborah, Anna, and Philip's daughters and a host of other women listed within the Old and New Testaments to be prophetesses and to be leaders within the kingdom of God. Our God is the One who chooses who will speak for him, both male and female. You may be chosen. Be ready to speak the word of the Lord. ■



Brenda Griffin Warren is a M.Div. student at Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary and will be graduating in May, 2003. She has been a seminary, school, and public library director and currently serves as the librarian for the Houston campus of Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary. Brenda is a wife and mother of two sons.

Notes

1. G. V. Smith, "Prophet," in *The International Standard Bible Encyclopedia*, vol. 3 (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1986), 986.
2. Louis Isaac Rabinowitz, "Prophets and Prophecy," in *Encyclopedia Judaica*, vol. 13 (Jerusalem: Keter Publishing House, 1996), 1176.
3. Ibid.
4. Stanley J. Grenz and Denise Muir Kjesbo, *Women in the Church* (Downer's Grove: IVP, 1995), 70.
5. "Prophecy, Prophet, and Prophetess," in *Catholic Encyclopedia*. Web page available from <<http://www.newadvent.org/cathen/12477a.htm>>.
6. R. Laird Harris, Gleason Archer, and Bruce Waltke, *Theological Wordbook of the Old Testament*, vol. 2. (Chicago: Moody Press, 1980), 544.
7. Smith, 988.
8. Nola J. Opperwall, "Prophetess," in *The International Standard Bible Encyclopedia*, vol. 3. (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans), 1004.
9. Archibald Thomas Robertson, *Word Pictures in the New Testament*, vol. 3 (Nashville, TN: Broadman, 1930), 363.
10. Ernest B. Gentile, *Your Sons and Daughters Shall Prophesy: Prophetic Gifts in Ministry Today*. (Grand Rapids, MI: Chosen Books, 1999), 132-33.
11. A. A. MacRae, "Prophets and Prophecy," in *The Zondervan Pictorial Encyclopedia of the Bible*, vol. 4 (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1976), 902.
12. Ibid., 886.
13. Willem A. VanGemeren, *Interpreting the Prophetic Word* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1990), 63.
14. Ibid., 64.
15. Ibid., 65.
16. Smith, 999.
17. Aaron Rothkoff, "Huldah." *Encyclopedia Judaica*, vol. 8 (Jerusalem: Keter Publishing House, 1996), 1063.
18. "Huldah," in *JewishEncyclopedia.com* (Web page online); available from <www.jewishencyclopedia.com>.
19. "Rahab," in *JewishEncyclopedia.com* (Web page online); available from <www.jewishencyclopedia.com>. Also, "Rahab," in *The International Standard Bible Encyclopedia*, vol. 4 (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1988), 33.
20. John Gray, *I and II Kings: A Commentary* (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1963), 660.
21. Ibid.
22. Duane L. Christensen, "Huldah and the Men of Anathoth: Women in Leadership in the Deuteronomic History," *Society of Biblical Literature Seminar Papers*, No. 23 (1984), 399.
23. "Huldah" in *JewishEncyclopedia.com* (Web page online); available from <www.jewishencyclopedia.com>.
24. Rothkoff.
25. "Huldah."
26. "Jerusalem" in *JewishEncyclopedia.com* (Web page online); available from <www.jewishencyclopedia.com>.
27. Ibid.
28. "Jerusalem—Synagogues and Schools" in *Jewish Encyclopedia.com* (Web page online); available from <www.jewishencyclopedia.com>.
29. "Paradise," in *JewishEncyclopedia.com* (Web page online); available from <www.jewishencyclopedia.com>.
30. "Shallum," in *JewishEncyclopedia.com* (Web page online); available from <www.jewishencyclopedia.com>.
31. Lorry Lutz, *Women as Risk-Takers for God* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1997), 29.
32. Ibid.
33. Elizabeth M. Tetlow, *The Status of Women in Greek, Roman, and Jewish Society* (orig. pub. by Paulist Press, 1986). Web page, available from <www.womenpriests.org/classic/tetlow1.htm>.
34. Lutz.
35. Ibid.
36. Ibid.
37. Ibid.

38. Tetlow.
 39. Lutz.
 40. Ibid.
 41. Tetlow.
 42. Ibid.
 43. Ibid.
 44. Ibid.
 45. John Bright, *A History of Israel*, 3rd ed. (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1981), 317.
 46. David A. Glatt-Gilead, "The Role of Huldah's Prophecy in the Chronicler's Portrayal of Josiah's Reform." *Biblica* 77. no.1 (1996): 16–31.
 47. "Hilkiah," in *JewishEncyclopedia.com* (Web page online); available from <www.jewishencyclopedia.com>.
 48. Hilkiah," in *The International Standard Bible Encyclopedia*, vol. 2 (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1982), 713.
 49. "Gedeliah," in *JewishEncyclopedia.com* (Web page online); available from <www.jewishencyclopedia.com>.
 50. Willem A. VanGemeren, ed., "Josiah," in *New International Dictionary of Old Testament Theology and Exegesis*, vol. 4 (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1997), 820.
 51. Phyllis Trible, "Huldah's Holy Writ," *Touchstone* (Jan. 1985): 9.
 52. Ibid.
 53. C. F. Keil and F. Delitsch, *Commentary on the Old Testament*, vol. 3 (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1978 reprint), 488.
 54. "The Ordination of Women Deacons According to the Apostolic Constitutions," in *WomenPriests.org* (Web page online); Available from <www.womenpriests.org/traditio/deac_con.htm>.
 55. William E. Phipps, "A Woman Was the First to Declare Scripture Holy." *Bible Review* 6 (April 1990): 14–15, 44.
 56. Ibid.
 57. Ibid.
 58. Ibid, 16.
 59. Gentile, 59.

Tracing the Trajectory of the Spirit *Egalitarian hermeneutics and biblical inerrancy.*¹

GLEN G. SCORGIE

A HISTORICAL CASE CAN BE MADE THAT CHRISTIANITY HAS, all things considered, been good for women. It has not been the mighty agent of gender oppression that it is sometimes made out to be. Still, contemporary Christians can hardly feel smug about the track record of our religious tradition. We live with the uncomfortable awareness that our faith has not been as affirming as it should have been, or as empowering for women as it certainly needs to be from now on.

Over the course of the last couple of centuries in the West there has been a notable rise in female expectations for having a voice, greater personal dignity, equal opportunity, and individual autonomy. Concurrently there has been a growing impatience with what have been perceived as vestiges of gender patriarchy and oppression in our culture. Along the way certain gains for women stand out as landmarks, such as civic confirmation of a woman's right to own property, to attend university, and to vote. The so-called feminist movement, which is generally thought to have begun with the publication of Betty Friedan's book *The Feminine Mystique* (1963), is just the latest phase of this gender evolution.

These developments are forcing Christians (sometimes, truth be told, rather reluctantly) to go back and examine carefully some of our working assumptions about God's will for the sexes, and our views of how men and women ought to relate to one another in the home, church, and society. Christians ponder whether the feminist movement could be God's chastening instrument to prod the church into embracing the fuller implications of its own Gospel, or perhaps just another temptation to parrot the destructive values of secular society.

At the risk of masking the considerable diversity of viewpoints within our circles, it may be suggested that

evangelical opinion has coalesced into two broad and competing responses. While these two competing perspectives are identified by various labels, the most common self-designations are complementarian and egalitarian.² Both sides have polemic labels for the other (e.g., hierarchalist and feminist), but generally the complementarian and egalitarian designations prevail.³ Both sides claim to subscribe to the unqualified authority of Scripture. Both affirm the ontological equality of women and men in the image of God, and both seek God's best for men and women alike.

The pivotal difference of opinion between the two perspectives is whether or not the Bible teaches a normative order for gender relations—an order or gender template that inevitably shakes down into certain restrictions on the roles and functions that women should perform in home, church, and society. Complementarians hold that the male has a unique and God-given leadership role to perform. The essence of maleness is to lead benevolently, and the essence of femaleness is to affirm, nurture, and receive male strength and leadership.⁴ By contrast egalitarians deny the desirability of, or need for, differentials of power and freedom in gender relations. Instead, God's design is ultimately to overcome all the oppressive and estranging consequences of sin in male-female relationships. Among other things, this will require the dismantling of entrenched hierarchy, so that men and women can be reconciled in a grace-filled mutuality.

There is a complementarian aspect to this vision, inasmuch as it validates and celebrates gender difference. However, it maintains that ideally such gender relations should be free from preconditions or limitations that might restrict a person's right to determine how they will live and serve in a given relationship. Like the persons of the Trinity, uniquely-gifted women and men should be at liberty to

find their best way of relating to others and of living in the world. Neither generalizations about gender nor gender profiling have a place in such a vision. Pre-judgments about what constitutes an acceptable or unacceptable gender role inevitably generate iron templates that restrict individual freedom and crush the human spirit. On the other hand, when men and women are allowed to relate to one another in acknowledged equality, complete freedom, and genuine love, we will be able to stand back and witness the mystery of humanity as male and female unfold before our eyes. This is the egalitarian desideratum in a nutshell.

Traditionally, Christians have assumed that the Bible affirms gender hierarchy, and there is general acknowledgment on both sides that patriarchal thinking colors numerous parts of the Word of God.⁵ However, many evangelical Christians today are increasingly uncomfortable about continuing to espouse this position. They see the damage that it is doing to the credibility of the Gospel, and the anger, pain, and low self-esteem it seems to be inducing in so many women. Still, they are convinced that their allegiance to the Scriptures obliges them to retain a hierarchical paradigm for gender relations. They see no alternative short of abandoning the authority of the Bible. If it was up to them, they would be egalitarians, but their hands are tied. Scripture gives them no choice. In conservative evangelical circles it is widely assumed that one has to choose between egalitarian ideals and biblical faithfulness.

From the beginning egalitarians have contested this assumption. Evangelical egalitarians insist that they subscribe to the authority of the Bible every bit as much as complementarians.

They just interpret the authoritative text differently and, to their minds, more accurately. Evangelical egalitarians argue that the real difference between them and their complementarian brothers and sisters is not their doctrine of Scripture, which is essentially the same; it is about their respective approaches to the content of the Bible they both regard as authoritative. The real issue between them is not biblical infallibility but hermeneutics.

Egalitarians realize that if their view is to gain ground in the conservative evangelical community, its compatibility with biblical inerrancy must be demonstrated. They would not want it any other way, since they are as committed to biblical authority as are their opponents on this gender question. For the most part biblically-committed egalitarians challenge traditional interpretation and commend their alternative position by pursuing two revisionist strategies.⁶ They address the so-called problem passages, the biblical texts that ostensibly support gender hierarchy, in two distinct ways. In the first they seek simply to clarify the true meaning and intent of the biblical text. In the second they endeavor to restrict the application of a biblical imperative to its unique historical setting. As we will go on to show in a moment, egalitarians are now beginning to develop a third approach. It is an approach that seeks to discern

movement—to trace the trajectory of the Spirit—within the biblical text itself.⁷ This latter approach is our main interest in this paper, but first a few words about the two more conventional egalitarian approaches to Scripture.

The task of clarifying meaning

The first egalitarian strategy has been to clarify and correct what they regard as misunderstandings of normative biblical statements on gender. This approach assumes that Scripture contains certain normative principles relevant to gender issues which ought to be applied faithfully by the people of God today. By means of this approach, egalitarians simply want to make sure everyone understands exactly what these timeless and trans-cultural norms are. Their goal is to show that in many instances the Bible is not as patriarchal as we have made it out to be. This is the egalitarians' *clarifying* task, and it can be detected, for example, in egalitarian work on the description of Eve as Adam's "helper" (Gen. 2:18, 20), the concept of male "headship" in Paul's writings, and Peter's description of the wife as "the weaker partner" (I Peter 3:7).

Egalitarians engage in this task of clarification when they seek to explain what Scripture really means when it describes the first woman as 'ēzer kēnegdô, "a helpmate for him" (KJV) or "a helper suitable for him" (NIV). Contrary to traditional assumptions, they make the case that there is no

Egalitarians realize that if their view is to gain ground in the conservative evangelical community, its compatibility with biblical inerrancy must be demonstrated.

hint of female inferiority in the Hebrew descriptor of Eve under scrutiny here. For one thing, elsewhere in Scripture the word 'ēzer, or helper, often designates an equal (like a partner) or even a superior (like God). They

argue that *neged* is best translated "corresponding to," or as one to whom you relate face to face (that is, as your equal). This is not the word an author would choose to describe a Girl Friday or helpful assistant. The meaning of the phrase 'ēzer kēnegdô, therefore, may best be conveyed as "a partner corresponding to him." Once properly understood, then, it is thoroughly egalitarian.

We recognize the same clarifying effort in a common egalitarian take on the crucial term *kephalē*, which Scripture uses more than once to describe the man's position relative to the woman (I Cor. 11:3-16, Eph. 5:21-33). Almost always *kephalē* has been translated into English as "head," giving these texts a patently hierarchical character. Alternatively, a good number of egalitarians propose that the term is better translated "source" in these contexts.⁸ They make a rather compelling case that *kephalē* embodies ideas of resourcing, providing and giving both life and nourishment. As such it has a richer and "thicker" meaning than the one normally conveyed by the English word "head." By making this substitution they then propose to prevent any inference of gender hierarchy or unequal privilege from the use of this word. Not all egalitarians agree that hierarchical authority connotations can be completely excised from these passages quite so simply,⁹ but we rec-

ognize this nonetheless as an example of the egalitarian effort to clarify meaning.

A third example of the egalitarian's clarifying task takes us to the Petrine epistles, where we find a reference to the wife (and presumably all women) as the "weaker vessel" (I Peter 3:7, KJV).¹⁰ As a result of this King James turn of phrase, the concept of the woman as the "weaker vessel" has been branded deep in the consciousness of Christians in the English-speaking world for centuries now. Subsequent alternative renditions of "weaker sex" (RSV) and "weaker partner" (NIV, TNIV) continue to employ the word "weaker," and therefore have done little to ameliorate the perception that the woman is in some way intrinsically the lesser. This little phrase "the weaker vessel" has perpetuated a tremendous amount of stereotyping of women. Chauvinistic Christians have enjoyed speculating on whether the weakness in view here is muscular, emotional, moral, mental, or perhaps some combination of all of these. Few translations of Scripture have been more hurtful to the dignity of women.

The problem from an egalitarian perspective is that the entire verse in which this phrase is found has been poorly rendered in virtually all English Bible translations. In the NIV it reads: "Husbands, in the same way be considerate as you live with your wives, and treat them with respect as the weaker partner and as heirs with you of the gracious gift of life, so that nothing will hinder your prayers." According to some egalitarians the main flaws or misleading elements are these. First of all, the NIV begins with the phrase "be considerate as you live with your wives." Taking this phrase to mean that men are to be understanding and considerate has generated all sorts of patronizing attitudes and sexist jokes. It is a translation that suggests that men are supposed to try and gloss over the multitude of ways in which women are inferior and even irritating. A man is to overlook these faults in his spouse, for after all, as the NASB puts it so cruelly, "she is a woman." But in fact men are not called here to be considerate. Rather, they are to be perceptive. Of all the English translations, the old KJV actually wins out here when it reads: "Dwell with them according to knowledge" (*synoikountes kata gnōsin*). And what is it of which the savvy husband is supposed to have knowledge? Simply this, that despite her inferior status and diminished privilege in society,¹¹ his wife is in fact his equal in the eyes of God (an equal heir). The way he cohabits with her ought to reflect this uniquely-Christian insider information. It will certainly involve being considerate, but a consideration rooted in the knowledge that society does not treat women as they really deserve.

In its original Greek form the phrase translated "weaker vessel" is *asthenesterō skeuei*. The crucial word is the adjective *asthenesterō*, which, as we have noted, has almost always been translated as the comparative form of the word "weak." Egalitarian scholarship can point to this as

an unfortunate and inappropriate translation. The Greek root has a semantic range that extends well beyond the idea of being weaker to include sick, ill, and—most significantly—powerless.¹² Of these various options, it seems that the latter—that is, powerless—is in mind here. This choice involves no stretching of the facts, for the identical root word is translated "powerless" in Romans 5:6, where the text reads: "When we were still powerless (*asthenōn*), Christ died for the ungodly" (NIV).

A number of considerations point to the egalitarian conclusion that it is actually woman's lesser social power that is in view here. Certainly the word, as it is used elsewhere in Scripture, allows for the possibility of this interpretation, as when Scripture says that "God chose the weak things (*asthenō*) of the world to shame the strong. He chose the lowly things of this world and the despised things—and the things that are not—to nullify the things that are" (I Cor. 1:27-28).¹³ Patristic usage is likewise supportive. Yet perhaps the weightiest consideration in favor of interpreting the Petrine term this way is that it fits so well with the overall ethos of the epistle. Peter writes to oppressed and marginalized people experiencing discrimination, who as a result were, from a societal perspective, relatively powerless.¹⁴ The burden of proof, in other words, lies with those who would want to interpret the phrase in terms of female physiology or constitution. In summary, the Apostle Peter is suggesting that the woman (or wife) is, in the contemporary idiom, "the less-empowered one."¹⁵

In its original Greek form the phrase translated "weaker vessel" is *asthenesterō skeuei*. The Greek root has a semantic range that extends well beyond the idea of being weaker to include sick, ill, and—most significantly—powerless.

Finally, the *timēn* that husbands are to show towards their wives has been translated as "honor" or "respect". The term "respect" (which the NIV employs) is certainly preferable, since the term honor is more susceptible to misinterpretation as signifying a patronizing deference that would encompass opening doors, helping with heavy groceries, and lending an arm for support on icy streets. By contrast, respect is something to which one is intrinsically entitled. As egalitarians point out, this appears to be the sense intended in the text.

In conclusion, the clarified meaning of this verse (I Peter 3:7) may be translated this way: "Likewise, husbands, live with your wives in an insightful way, showing respect to them as less empowered ones who are actually equal heirs with you of the gracious gift of life, so that nothing will hinder your prayers." A proponent of egalitarianism might point out that those who persist in using the unfortunate phrase "the weaker vessel" in a pejorative sense are committing precisely the fault that the Apostle Peter is eager to excise from the social life of the church. He wants Christian domestic relationships to reflect the respectful mutuality between men and women that will exist in heaven, but which is not yet a restored reality on earth.

The task of restricting application

The second strategy by which egalitarians seek to com-

mend their interpretation of the Bible on gender is to demonstrate that certain texts which have traditionally been regarded as normative for all time were in fact applicable only to the unique situations they originally addressed. This contextual line of interpretation seeks to put a fence around the relevant biblical passages in such a way that their potential application is restricted to local contexts in historically distant times. The authority of certain biblical statements, then, is held not to extend beyond the cultural settings in which they were initially expressed. So if the first task is one of clarifying gender norms, the second task of the egalitarian camp is one of restricting or setting aside biblical material that is not, nor was ever meant to be, applicable to our circumstances today. This is the egalitarians' *restrictive* task.

Perhaps we can illustrate this by considering a restrictive egalitarian interpretation of the second chapter of First Timothy. Here the Apostle begins by making plain his desire that the Ephesian Christians live exemplary lives of godliness, modesty and goodness so that the Gospel will advance with maximum credibility and appeal (vv 1-10). To this end he then says that women should learn in quietness and full submission, and be silent rather than teach or exercise authority over a man. He offers, in what appears to be a theological rationale for this directive, the observations that Adam was formed first, then Eve; and that Adam was not the one deceived first, but the woman. He concludes with the remark, equally famous and enigmatic, that women will "be saved through childbearing—if they continue in faith, love, and holiness with propriety" (vv 11-15).

The traditional interpretation of this passage has been that women are to be in full submission to men, and that part of being in such submission is that they will not presume to teach men or usurp their rightful authority. While complementarian Christians differ among themselves on how rigorously this mandate should be enforced in the various spheres of human relations, they are in agreement that the passage articulates a norm of gender hierarchy that is both trans-cultural and timeless. The most substantive defense of the complementarian perspective to date, *Recovering Biblical Manhood and Womanhood* (1991), takes precisely this position. Contributor Douglas Moo concludes his assessment of this passage by saying: "We must conclude that the restrictions imposed by Paul in I Timothy 2 are valid for Christians in all places and all times."¹⁶

The Apostle's apparent theological rationale for his position seems to be conclusive. He appeals to the orders of creation and the fall. He says: "For Adam was formed first, then Eve. And Adam was not the one deceived; it was the woman who was deceived and became a sinner" (13-14). The statement strikes the reader of today as shocking. It appears to attribute superiority to the male on the basis of Adam's chronological primacy of origin (primogeniture), and added inferiority to the woman on the basis of Eve's chronological primacy in sinning. Eve, the archetypal woman, is second in the order of creation but first in the order of sinning. The implications are clear: she is morally inferior to the man, or at least more gullible. And behind

this, she is ultimately ontologically inferior. Paul's statements seem to lend weight to the view that women are particularly unsuited to teach or lead men since they are inferior in these ways.

It is hard to imagine that the Apostle Paul could ever actually have said such things to beloved female co-workers like Junia, Lydia, or Priscilla. The tone of his remarks seems harsh and strangely dissonant with what we have come to recognize as the Apostle's spirit. Not altogether surprisingly, therefore, there are a few evangelicals who question the Pauline authorship of this epistle, and more than a few who concede his authorship but remain miffed with the Apostle Paul for having said the things he did in the way he did.¹⁷

The most common egalitarian response to this passage is to employ the hermeneutics of restriction.¹⁸ Egalitarian scholars tend to conclude that this text applies only to the unique context of first-century Ephesus. That situation was probably complex, and its overall dynamics admittedly are less than transparent to the contemporary reader. Still, egalitarians note that there was plenty of heresy circulating in and around the Ephesian church (as Ephesians itself, and Paul's two epistles to Timothy, make plain), and it is suggested that a fair number of women in the congregation had become easy prey for the false teachers in their midst. On the basis of extensive research Catherine and Richard Kroeger have concluded that this false teaching was a gnostic-like heresy particularly popular among Ephesian women.¹⁹ While the evidence marshaled in support of this theory may be less than conclusive,²⁰ it is possible that the Ephesian heresies included the notion that women were superior to men in matters of spiritual insight (and ought therefore now to be their teachers), and that domestic responsibilities and child-raising were now beneath their dignity. Whatever the problem was, the Apostle's response is almost identical to his response to a situation in Corinth (see I Cor. 14). The women could continue to learn (and that permission is significant), but they were to do so in quietness, in full submission and in silence.

Paul's subsequent use of theological arguments (Adam's primacy of origin, and Eve's primacy in sin) in favor of his position is problematic for egalitarians, but even this difficulty is not insurmountable. It just so happens, egalitarians explain, that these Pauline arguments very closely match interpretations of Genesis that were current in the Jewish synagogues. "Within the synagogue, which provided a model for early church life and structure," writes Manfred Brauch, "male dominance was traditionally certified by a reading of the chronological sequence of Genesis 2 in terms of male priority." Moreover, the rabbinic tradition inferred from the biblical account of the Fall that "women were by nature more vulnerable to deception than men." There is conclusive evidence of this kind of thinking in the writings of Philo and the wisdom of Ben Sirach.²¹

It is argued, then, that this is another case of Paul the pragmatic polemicist making use of familiar rabbinic spins on Old Testament material when it suits his own objectives. The rabbinic style of discourse sanctioned *ad hominem* argumentation,²² and Paul himself indulges in it else-

where.²³ These embarrassing statements about men and women, then, do not reflect Paul's own understanding of the meaning of Genesis 2 and 3 at all. They are not being presented as serious theological propositions at all. They are homiletical or oratorical devices. They were meant to bring a cohort of bumptious Ephesian women back in line and to restore peace and decorum to the worship life of that church. That was all these remarks were meant to achieve, and there was nothing more to them.²⁴ If such egalitarian arguments are allowed to stand, readers are left with a purely contextual interpretation of First Timothy 2. The prohibition of female teaching and leading becomes circumstantially limited. It cannot be treated as a universal norm.

And because Paul's supporting arguments are viewed as *ad hominem* ones, belief in the absolute authority of the apostle's meaning and intent remains intact.

The task of discerning movement

Authors who defend and commend an egalitarian interpretation of the Scriptures often practice these two strategies (clarifying and restricting) in various combinations. Some material is considered normative and trans-cultural, and simply needs to have its real meaning clarified. Other material is considered no longer directly relevant to our current situation, and needs to be set aside or taken off the table.

Egalitarians pursuing these two hermeneutical tasks of clarification and restriction have actually developed quite a number of persuasive and even compelling arguments in favor of their revisionist line of interpretation. They have convincingly demonstrated that at least some traditional interpretations have been shaped less by what a particular text actually says, and more by the socially-conditioned eyes through which the church habitually viewed the biblical landscape.

But for all of this one has to wonder whether these two hermeneutical strategies can *by themselves* ever conclusively convince the twenty-first century evangelical community that the egalitarian option is actually the more biblical of the two possibilities. The clarifying work done by some egalitarian apologists occasionally appears contrived, and seems to bear the stamp of special pleading. The same must be said of some egalitarian efforts to dismiss certain biblical statements as relevant only to a specific situation in one of the ancient churches. Such efforts remain problematic because they depend on often unsubstantiated speculation about the socio-political conditions addressed by the different biblical writers. While these interpretations may be plausible, there is not always sufficient textual, archaeological, or historical evidence to make them conclusive.

The deeper problem for egalitarians is that these two strategies, by themselves, cannot excise all the hierarchical assumptions and attitudes that persist, explicitly or implicitly, in the Bible and even in the New Testament. By means of these two strategies egalitarians can make a strong point here, win an argument there, and so forth. They can keep the complementarians honest. But hierarchical thinking

cannot completely be eradicated from the New Testament by these means. It is too entrenched to be overcome by these methods alone. Obviously the apostolic writers encouraged acquiescence to the hierarchical structures of their day (including patriarchy) for the sake of the Gospel's reputation. What we would like to see alongside this is more evidence that the inspired writers were aware of, and sensitive to, the unjust and outrageous burden this accommodating approach placed on the shoulders of slaves, women, and other less empowered members of the community. Clearly the apostles were concerned that in Christian relationships the existing harsh patriarchy be mellowed and made more benevolent. What is less clear is whether in gender matters the "finalized ethic" towards which the Gospel points was very much on their personal radar screens yet.

Perhaps for these reasons we are just beginning now to see the emergence of a third hermeneutical approach among evangelical egalitarians. This has been described as a "progressive"²⁵ or "redemptive movement"²⁶ hermeneutic. It is the effort to discern the overall direction the Holy Spirit is taking the church as he unfolds God's will in a progressive way. It seeks to trace across the pages of Scripture and the annals of biblical history the trajectory of the Spirit as he brings us back to the personal wholeness and full relational harmony that have eluded us since the Fall.

Scripture's teaching on gender relations can be envisioned in two ways: static or teleological. The static vision essentially locks the Christian community into the gender norms prevailing at the time the New Testament was written. The latter discerns a path from tragedy to redemption, a process to which we are called to contribute. It attempts to discern the trajectory of the Spirit as God continues to lead the church forward along a vector established by the central impulses of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. This teleological perspective generates what we may call the *discerning* task of egalitarian hermeneutics. This approach focuses on a goal, a not-yet-realized endpoint toward which the biblical revelation is inexorably moving.²⁷ It embraces the concept of progressive revelation as the best way to account for biblical directives (not to mention disturbing biblical silences) that we would be obliged otherwise to consider embarrassing or morally repugnant.

Theologian Austin Farrer once said of his friend C. S. Lewis's approach to apologetics: "We think we are listening to an argument; in fact, we are presented with a vision; and it is the vision that carries conviction."²⁸ Gender egalitarianism is no longer a concession to be artfully wrested from Scripture. It is the vision towards which its inspired contents actually point. Here then is the vision that energizes the teleological approach to biblical hermeneutics. God's original design for full equality and mutuality in gender relations—a design revealed in the remarkable first few chapters of Genesis—was perverted by the Fall. The consequences of human sin distorted gender relations in a most disastrous way. God's original intentions for gender mutuality and equality rapidly deteriorated. Almost universally these patterns have become reinforced by patriar-

chal ideologies.

Ever since, however, the Spirit of God has been at work to redeem this dysfunctional situation, to restore the original design of gender equality and mutuality, and to liberate humanity from every vestige of prejudice and oppression. This redemptive work began modestly and proceeded slowly. The relatively primitive period in which the Old Testament was written has been appropriately designated as an age of patriarchy. Women had very prescribed spheres of influence and few rights or opportunities. Male privilege was rampant and unquestioned during those centuries, and the pages of the Old Testament reflect that reality. As the inspired biblical documents indicate, God's historic revelations to the ancient people of Israel provisionally accommodated prevailing assumptions about gender. Some Mosaic legislation and prophetic utterances sought to soften the harsh impact and injustices of prevailing patriarchal practices, but for the most part the system was allowed to persist. It was a man's world and it remained so. Plotting the trajectory of the Spirit through the Old Testament must begin with recognition that the way things were then is not necessarily the way God intends them to be now. The seeds of the Kingdom took root in patriarchal soil without initially disrupting the soil very much at all.

The high-water mark of biblical revelation, and the zenith of God's plan of redemption, was the incarnation of Jesus Christ. The four Gospels portray Jesus as teaching God's truths with unprecedented clarity, revealing the heart of the hidden God, and modeling the new humanity for everyone to see. The ministry of Jesus was characterized by a bold new egalitarian attitude towards women. This was in fact one of the most strikingly counter-cultural features of his earthly ministry. It was not so much what he said, as how he related to women, that was revolutionary. Among other things, we should never underestimate the significance of the fact that women were privileged to be the very first witnesses to the resurrection.

The remainder of the New Testament builds upon the work Jesus began and the truth Jesus proclaimed. Whenever the practices of the early church moved towards gender inclusiveness they were counter-cultural, and as such were faithful extensions of Christ's own attitudes towards women. Nonetheless, New Testament church practice did not always reflect as strongly or as consistently as Jesus did the trajectory of the Spirit on gender issues. The proclamation of the Gospel was once again accommodated to the realities of the context, in this case to first-century Palestinian Judaism and then to the social norms of the Greek-speaking Roman Empire. Like the books of the Old Testament, the writings that eventually coalesced as the canon of the New Testament were "God-breathed" (2 Tim. 3:16) and are therefore inerrant. At the same time we must recognize that the New Testament writers, especially the Apostle Paul, occasionally counseled compliance with

reigning views of gender and gender roles in order to maximize social acceptance of the Gospel message itself. So it is that one of the greatest challenges facing contemporary students of Scripture is to discern the trajectory of the Spirit through the pages of the New Testament. This requires putting aside, and refusing to treat as normative, biblical statements or arguments that are apostolic accommodations to contextual realities. A key to correct interpretation of the Spirit's intent is to measure the content of the epistles against the ultimate bench-mark of Jesus' own attitudes and behavior towards women.

The more accurately we discern the Spirit's direction back then the more reliably we will be able to extrapolate to the Spirit's will in the gender issues of our own day. As realists we expect that gender alienation and inequality will persist in varying forms and disguises in our fallen world. It will be difficult to root out. At the same time we believe that the church is called to be a prototype of the coming Kingdom of God. The church is intended to be in the vanguard of the movement back to Eden.

In the past evangelicals have welcomed and readily applied the hermeneutical principle of progressive revelation to deal with awkward portions of the Old Testament revelation. What may be revolutionary about this hermeneutical approach, and what is potentially controversial, is that it extends the progressive principle into the New Testament. According to this paradigm, it may not be

appropriate to view every New Testament statement as an ultimate and finalized expression of the driving force of the Spirit's prompting revealed therein. The traditional view assumes that Scripture contains a permanently-binding template for gender relations. The template

is built by assembling all relevant scriptural statements on the topic. This is the view held almost universally by both complementarians and egalitarians alike. Both assume that the apostolic writings of the New Testament consistently express the zenith of insight into God's plan for gender relations. The clarifying and restricting tasks of egalitarian hermeneutics are usually pursued on this traditional assumption that New Testament statements consistently reflect a single, static and trans-cultural paradigm for gender relations.

This teleological approach assumes otherwise. If it is correct in maintaining that the ethical trajectory of the Spirit does not always reach its perfect fulfillment in the inspired teaching and implicit attitudes of the New Testament writers, how then are we to distinguish between trans-cultural truths and biblical statements that are more provisional in nature? Webb's book *Slaves, Women and Homosexuals* is devoted to answering precisely this question. It describes eighteen criteria by which readers of Scripture can detect the difference between the trans-cultural absolutes and transitional material. The most helpful and conclusive of these criteria are the ones that help the student detect "movement" within Scripture itself. The evi-

A crucial prerequisite to any Christian or Christian community's ability to discern correctly the movement and direction of the Spirit is the degree to which their imaginations have already been baptized into the flow and thought-world of the Bible.

dent movement within Scripture on the topics of slavery and women warrant the expectation that the movement is intended to advance beyond the imperfect expressions and even conflicting signals within Scripture itself. By contrast, the evident lack of movement within Scripture on the topic of homosexual behavior would suggest that there is no warrant for extrapolating out to an ethic that affirms such behavior.

Obviously another key to discerning the true trajectory of the Spirit is to have one's mind thoroughly immersed in the richness of biblical narrative, doctrine, language, and symbol. A crucial prerequisite to any Christian or Christian community's ability to discern correctly the movement and direction of the Spirit is the degree to which their imaginations have already been baptized into the flow and thought-world of the Bible. In this way, and only in this way, will they entertain only those possibilities compatible with their prior grasp of Christian truth as a whole.²⁹

Spirit trajectory and biblical inerrancy

This third method of egalitarian hermeneutics can comfortably incorporate clarifying and restrictive techniques, but it is also open to another perspective where appropriate. This distinctive feature of the redemptive movement hermeneutic can be illustrated by a potential interpretation of the so-called headship (lit., *kephalē*) passage of 1 Cor. 11. In First Corinthians the Apostle Paul provides direction to the church at Corinth on what they should believe, how they should behave, and how they ought to administer themselves. The passage before us in chapter eleven is about propriety in worship services, and specifically about the importance of head-coverings (or veils, or hairdos) for women who are praying or prophesying. The men are not to wear such head-coverings, but the women are.

The apostle is insistent that the Corinthian women dress this way, even though he does not spell out exactly why. One plausible speculation is that it was another means by which the young Corinthian church could discreetly build credibility and avoid giving unnecessary offense.³⁰ The idea that Paul's teaching here is a judicious accommodation to prevailing sensibilities is strengthened by the fact that he has just finished saying two verses earlier: "Do not cause anyone to stumble, whether Jews, Greeks or the church of God—even as I try to please everybody in every way" (I Cor. 10:32-33).³¹

The apostle appears to marshal at least three³² distinct arguments in defense of this practice. Of particular interest to us is the first. It is an argument based upon a slightly Christianized (for it factors Christ in), but still essentially Jewish, understanding of the order of creation (vv 3-12). It introduces an unabashedly hierarchical sequence: God, Christ, man and woman. Each of the top three is the head or *kephalē* over the one below: "The *kephalē* of every man is Christ, and the *kephalē* of the woman is man, and the

kephalē of Christ is God" (v 3). Almost invariably *kephalē* has been translated "head" in English, which gives the English reader a strong impression of hierarchical arrangement. In what appears to be a reinforcing reading of the creation account, the woman is said to have been created "from man" and "for man" (v 9). Her subordinate status in relationship to the man is based on the order of creation (woman from man) and the purpose of her creation (woman for man). In other words, her derivation from Adam's side gives him some sort of proprietary status over her, and her reason for existence is essentially to serve his needs. But the task of interpretation gets more complicated by what the Apostle then adds. Immediately he goes on to say: "In the Lord, however, woman is not independent of man, nor is man independent of woman. For as woman came from man, so also man is born of woman. But everything comes from God" (vv 11-12).

Complementarians usually interpret the first part of this passage as a clear affirmation—in fact, one of the clearest and least ambiguous affirmations in all of Scripture—of a normative gender hierarchy. The subsequent reminder that men and women are interdependent (as the Genesis account of pre-Fall conditions made clear) does nothing to overturn the basic hierarchical thrust of Paul's previous remark. It serves merely to pre-empt any excessively harsh or prejudicial applications of this divinely-sanctioned hierarchical paradigm. It is Paul's way of saying that the man

is not totally above the woman, even though he still is to some extent. Each really needs the other, and they both ought to realize this and reflect this realization in how they relate to one another.³³

A common egalitarian interpretation is quite different. It holds that no longer does the apostle personally "buy into" the obsolete hierarchical thinking he has just presented in the first part of this section. But he is willing to lay it out nonetheless because he calculates that it will probably carry weight with those of his readers who still think this way. Pragmatic polemicist that he is, Paul is quite prepared to utilize any argument he can get his hands on in order to make his case compelling. Finally, though, he shows his own hand when he says: "In the Lord, however, woman is not independent of man, nor is man independent of woman." *In the Lord*—that is, from the perspective of truth as it is in Jesus—none of this hierarchy stuff holds water anymore. It has now been revealed to the church that men and women are in fact mutually interdependent, and if there is any privileged position to be had it is held by God, from whom all things ultimately come. What the Apostle is saying here in verse 11 about how things are "in the Lord," then, does much more than cushion the harshness of his earlier statements about *kephalē* headship. It completely invalidates gender hierarchy as anything applicable to Christians. For what conceivable reason, after all, would any Christian want to function according to what verses 3-10 suggest instead of living "in

It is sufficient to acknowledge that where such tension can be detected in Scripture, we have an indication that there is some shifting and growing going on in the biblical author's grasp of the trajectory of the Spirit.

the Lord”?

A redemptive movement hermeneutic allows for a yet a third “take” on this passage. It is willing to acknowledge that there is a legitimate contradiction between what Paul says first about headship, and what he adds later about how things are “in the Lord.” But unlike the two earlier approaches, this hermeneutic also allows for the possibility of a real and less than fully-resolved tension in the Apostle’s own mind between the hierarchical concepts he elaborates in verses 3-10 and the egalitarian statement he makes in verse 11. In a sense the Apostle Paul is thinking out loud here, and as readers we are privileged to witness the greatest theologian in Christian history trying to get his head around a dawning truth. Eventually he tilts in the direction of how things are “in the Lord,” of course, but he is not quite ready to delete or erase the earlier statements he made. They remain, so to speak, on the table. Paul has a handle on the truth, but in his humanity he is still just a bit tentative about it, and it shows. It is not necessary to probe to excess Paul’s private psychological outlook, or to resolve a host of intriguing questions associated with it. It is sufficient to acknowledge that where such tension can be detected in Scripture, we have an indication that there is some shifting and growing going on in the biblical author’s grasp of the trajectory of the Spirit.

Obviously such a redemptive movement hermeneutic challenges our conventional understanding of biblical inerrancy. It suggests that the authors of scripture themselves may have been in a process of Spirit-directed theological growth and formation as they wrote. This is an uncomfortable suggestion to anyone who has embraced and defends the traditional doctrine of inerrancy. We have assumed that through the inspiration and superintendence of the Holy Spirit the authors of Scripture always and only wrote perfectly polished and “finished” truth statements.

Emil Brunner acknowledged that “there is a certain element of depreciation of women” in this passage here. He added: “Along with other elements this forms part of the garment of the times in which the message of the New Testament is clothed. But it is a disappearing element. The way in which Paul speaks in his letters of and to his women fellow workers bears scarcely any traces of the metaphysic of I Cor. 11.”³⁴ We are scarcely surprised at this, for Brunner was after all Neo-Orthodox. He believed the Bible could be the Word of God without it needing to be inerrant.

When evangelicals begin to say similar things, we become understandably disoriented. Some years ago in his book *Man as Male and Female*, Paul Jewett tried to make sense out of this passage by suggesting that the passage reflects a tension between Paul’s inherited Jewish views and the newer insights that now flowed out of his encounter with the living Christ. “Because the two perspectives—the Jewish and the Christian—are incompatible,” Jewett wrote, “there is no satisfying way to harmonize the Pauline argument for female subordination with the larger Christian vision of which the great apostle to the Gentiles was himself the primary architect.”³⁵

Jewett interprets Paul’s subsequent caveat that in the

Lord there is gender interdependence to be “the first expression of an uneasy conscience on the part of a Christian theologian who argues for the subordination of the female to the male”³⁶ This was too much for Harold Lindsell, who concluded in *The Battle for the Bible* that Jewett was alleging in effect that Paul was wrong and the Bible was in error about subordination.³⁷ The matter became something of a watershed issue in the debate over biblical inerrancy within evangelicalism in the 1970s.

Therefore, Evangelicals who espouse inerrancy ought to be careful in how they express the existence of “diversity” within the New Testament, and how the trajectory of the Spirit is understood to be manifest in its pages. But it would be unfair to accuse William Webb, for example, of suggesting that the Apostle Paul was in error in I Cor. 11. Instead he explains in very careful and respectful language that the apostolic qualification that male-female relationships are actually different in the Lord (v. 11), “amounts to a ‘seed idea,’ setting up the potential for further movement that would be mostly unrealized in Paul’s ministry setting.... Within his own day Paul merely uses mutuality in Christ (11:11) to take the edge off of patriarchy and then carries on without further discussion.... As with Gentiles in Paul’s day, and as with slaves later in church history, the fuller implications of gender equality and mutuality in Christ are only starting to be realized.”³⁸

Conclusion

This paper has endeavored to show that the case for gender egalitarianism can best be made through a combination of the three hermeneutic strategies of clarifying meaning, restricting applications, and discerning movement. Some things the Bible says about gender are normative and merely need to be clarified. Other things the Bible says about gender are merely contextual and ought to be treated in that restricted way. Still other things the Bible says concerning gender ought to be understood as only partial and limited expressions of the full implications of the Gospel.

If clarifying meanings and restricting applications are the only hermeneutical approaches the egalitarian cause employs, its attempt to prove the compatibility of gender egalitarianism with biblical inerrancy may ultimately fail. But we have pointed out that there is a third and supplementary approach that warrants serious consideration from evangelicals. A progressive hermeneutic pays more attention to signs of shifting and movement within the great continuum of salvation history, and is not alarmed by promising tension and growth within even the New Testament itself. In practice the church has already embraced this hermeneutical principle in its acknowledgment that slavery was sanctioned in the New Testament even while the seeds of its eventual overthrow were sown in the same pages. At the same time evangelicals can be assured that this approach will not lead us down any “slippery slope” to sanctioning homosexual behavior because we find no redemptive movement on that issue in Scripture.

We cannot tell how much of the complete gospel vision for gender relations was consistently grasped by the differ-

ent New Testament writers, or how deeply each one chose to embrace this vision in their attitudes, priorities, leadership decisions and personal behavior. As we have already said, it is not our place to speculate on the private mind-set of the biblical writers. But if these writers were permitted, as they evidently were, to retain certain technically deficient world-view assumptions without any apparent impairment of their ability to compose infallible Scripture, it seems at least possible that these same writers labored with less than fully-informed understandings of other issues as well. Presumably biblical authors did not have to be perfect in every way to qualify as effective instruments of divine inspiration.

We should not be too quick to dismiss or condemn the redemptive-movement hermeneutic as incompatible with our historically high view of Scripture.³⁹ It contains too much promise for a breakthrough in our standing impasse on these interpretive issues to be dismissed out of hand. Moreover, it does not imply that Scripture is ever wrong, just that it is right in a way that we did not fully understand before. It also contains a salutary reminder that we must prioritize the fundamental drift of Scripture over exegetical inferences from isolated texts. On this matter I allow William Webb to make the final appeal in his own words: "As a community born to the 21st century, we must not be limited to a mere enactment of the text's isolated words. It is our sacred calling to champion its spirit."⁴⁰ ■



Glen G. Scorgie is currently a professor of theology at Bethel Seminary San Diego. He is a past president of the Canadian Evangelical Theological Association and also involved in the ministries of the Chinese Bible Church of San Diego. He and his wife, Kate, an associate professor of graduate education at Azusa Pacific University, are parents of three college-age daughters. An earlier version of this article was presented at the Evangelical Theological Society meetings in Toronto in November 2002.

Notes

1. Earlier versions of this paper were presented at the Far West regional meetings of the Evangelical Theological Society in April 2001, and also at the annual meetings of the ETS in November 2002. I am grateful for the feedback I received on both occasions, and am especially indebted to Joe Hellerman of Biola University and Ronald Youngblood for their comments.

2. Compare Craig Blomberg and James Beck, eds., *Two Views on Women in Ministry* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2001), and Bonidell Clouse and Robert Clouse, eds., *Women in Ministry: Four Views* (Downers Grove: IVP, 1989).

3. Both sides have official organizations to promote their respective causes—the Council on Biblical Manhood and Womanhood (CBMW) and Christians for Biblical Equality (CBE). Each side vigorously maintains web-sites, produces books, publishes magazines and organizes conferences, and publicizes official statements of their positions.

4. John Piper and Wayne Grudem, eds., *Recovering Biblical Manhood and Womanhood* (Wheaton: Crossway, 1991), 32-35.

5. Evangelical scholar and Bible translator Dick France observes that "the patriarchal culture which lies behind much of the masculine language of the Bible is itself also part of the data to be translated, and it is a question how far the translator may properly obscure it." *The Oxford Guide to Literature in English*

Translation (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000), s.v. "The Bible in English."

6. We disregard here the occasional instances in which egalitarians choose to question the authenticity of a problematic biblical text.

7. William Webb, *Slaves, Women and Homosexuals: Exploring the Hermeneutics of Cultural Analysis* (Downers Grove: IVP, 2001), esp. chap. 2; see also Kevin Giles, *The Trinity and Subordinationism: The Doctrine of God and the Contemporary Gender Debate* (Downers Grove: IVP, 2002). The approach is present, but in more latent form, in earlier works like Willard Swartley, *Slavery, Sabbath, War and Women: Case Studies in Biblical Interpretation* (Scottsdale, PA: Herald Press, 1983). A similar hermeneutic is outlined in Paul Hanson, *The Diversity of Scripture: A Theological Interpretation* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1982).

8. Catherine Clark Kroeger, s.v. "Head," in *Dictionary of Paul and His Letters*, ed. Gerald Hawthorne (Downers Grove: IVP, 1993).

9. Egalitarian scholar Linda Belleville seems to reject "source" because of its inapplicability to the Christ-man relationship mentioned in I Cor. 11:3 — *Women Leaders and the Church: Three Crucial Questions* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2000), 126-31. Wayne Grudem makes a strong counter-case for hierarchical connotations persisting in *kephalē* in Appendix One of *Recovering Biblical Manhood and Womanhood*, eds. Piper and Grudem, 425-68.

10. I am grateful for the help of my teaching assistant Aaron Smith in developing this section.

11. See C. C. Kroeger, "Women in Greco-Roman World and Judaism," in *Dictionary of New Testament Background*, ed. C. Evans and S. Porter (Downers Grove: IVP, 2000); compare James Arlandson, *Women, Class and Society in Early Christianity* (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 1997).

12. Compare W. Bauer, *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature*, trans. Arndt and Gingrich (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1979), 15; F. Danker, ed., *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature*, 3d ed. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2000), 142-43; W. Mounce, *The Analytical Lexicon to the Greek New Testament* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1993), 102; J. Thayer, *Thayer's Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1974), 80.

13. Compare Prov. 21:13, Acts 20:35, I Cor. 4:10, I Cor. 12:22, 2 Cor. 11:21, 2 Cor. 13:3, 9; 2 Cor. 12:10. Similar meanings can also be found in Josephus and the patristic writings. For example, "Happiness is not a matter of lording it over one's neighbors, or desiring to have more than weaker men, or possessing wealth and using force against inferiors" ("The Epistle of Diognetus," in *The Apostolic Fathers*, 2d ed. [Grand Rapids: Baker, 1989], 303).

14. I. Howard Marshall, "I Peter", *IVP New Testament Commentary Series* (Downers Grove: IVP, 1991), 24-25; Paul Achtemeier, *I Peter, in Hermeneia—A Critical and Historical Commentary on the Bible* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1996), 23 ff.

15. Rebecca Groothuis concurs that the text means that "women were in a weaker position socially than men and their welfare depended upon their husbands' considerate treatment of them." She adds: "In terms of social status, women were inferior to men; but spiritually they are men's equals, and it is the spiritual reality that should guide the behavior of Christian husbands." The idea is that Christian husbands are not to take their cues from a patriarchal and oppressive culture, but from the counter-cultural truths of their new-found Christian faith (Rebecca Groothuis, *Good News for Women: A Biblical Picture of Gender Equality* [Grand Rapids: Baker, 1997], 175-76).

16. Douglas Moo, "What Does it Mean Not to Teach or Have Authority Over Men?" in *Recovering Biblical Manhood and Womanhood*, eds. Piper and Grudem, 193.

17. See, for example, Brian J. Dodd, *The Problem With Paul* (Downers Grove: IVP, 1996).

18. For example, Groothuis, *Good News for Women*, chap. 9; R. T. France, *Women in the Church's Ministry: A Test Case for Biblical Interpretation* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1995), chap. 3; Stan

Grenz & Denise Kjesbo, *Women in the Church: A Biblical Theology of Women in Ministry* (Downers Grove: IVP, 1995), 125-40.

19. Catherine Clark Kroeger and Richard Clark Kroeger, *I Suffer Not a Woman: Rethinking I Tim. 2:11-15 in Light of Ancient Evidence* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1992); compare Bruce Barron, "Putting Women in Their Place: 1 Timothy 2 and Evangelical Views of Women in Church Leadership," *Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society* 33, no. 4 (December 1990): 451-59.

20. Compare Dodd, *The Problem With Paul*, 161-62.

21. Manfred T. Brauch, *The Hard Sayings of Paul* (Downers Grove: IVP, 1989), 261-62.

22. See also Giles, *The Trinity and Subordinationism*, 207.

23. See, for example, Thorsten Moritz, *A Profound Mystery: The Use of the Old Testament In Ephesians* (Leiden: Brill, 1996), 56-86. Moritz offers an explanation for the well-known fact that Eph. 4:8 does not quote Psalm 68:18 accurately. He proposes the explanation that Paul is actually going with an au courant and deliberately-distorted rabbinic twist on this text from the Psalms. Paul then used it in *ad hominem* fashion to make a Christological point.

24. Rebecca Groothuis has very recently proposed a related explanation. She suggests that Paul's remarks in verses 13-15 are actually a biblical allusion or analogy that happened to come to Paul's mind as he reflected on the problems in Ephesus. She argues that "the thing that happened between Adam and Eve in the Garden is the very thing that Paul wants to keep from happening . . . at Ephesus (Groothuis, "Leading Him Up the Garden Path," *Priscilla Papers* 16, no. 2 [Spring 2002]: 12).

25. Giles, *The Trinity and Subordinationism*, 6.

26. I am especially indebted to Webb's book *Slaves, Women and Homosexuals* (2001) for my introduction to it.

27. Compare Stanley Grenz, "Anticipating God's New Com-

munity: Theological Foundations for Women in Ministry," *Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society* 38, no. 4 (1995): 595-611; see also Paul Hanson's description of the living Word "which moves forth from its dynamic biblical matrix to ever-new chapters of expression in the church" (*The Diversity of Scripture*, 105).

28. Quoted by J. I. Packer, "Still Surprised by Lewis," *Christianity Today*, 7 September 1998, 58.

29. This point is stressed in Giles, *The Trinity and Subordinationism*; see pp. 3-6, 194-97, 264-68.

30. Admittedly, the head-covering imperatives appear to accord with neither Roman nor Jewish precedents.

31. A similar eagerness to commend the Gospel is evident throughout the New Testament.

32. I am not even counting the Apostle's undecipherable reference to doing so "for the sake of the angels" (v. 10).

33. See, e.g., James B. Hurley, *Man and Woman in Biblical Perspective* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1981), 177-78.

34. Emil Brunner, *Man in Revolt: A Christian Anthropology*, trans. Olive Wyon (Philadelphia: Westminster, 1947), 358.

35. Paul K. Jewett, *Man as Male and Female* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1975), 112-13.

36. *Ibid.*, 113.

37. Harold Lindsell, *The Battle for the Bible* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1976), 119.

38. Webb, *Slaves, Women and Homosexuals*, 276.

39. While Tom Schreiner is vigorously critical of Webb's approach, he sets an example by taking it seriously and by abstaining from inflammatory condemnations of it. See his "Review of *Slaves, Women and Homosexuals*," *Journal for Biblical Manhood and Womanhood* 7, no. 1 (Spring 2002): 41-51.

40. Webb, *Slaves, Women and Homosexuals*, 256.

Books Mentioned in This Issue

These may be purchased through CBE's Book Service or online Book Store (www.cbeInternational.org)

- ❖ Linda Belleville, *Women Leaders and the Church: Three Crucial Questions* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2000)
- ❖ Craig Blomberg and James Beck, eds., *Two Views on Women in Ministry* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2001)
- ❖ Bonnidell Clouse and Robert Clouse, eds., *Women in Ministry: Four Views* (Downers Grove: IVP, 1989)
- ❖ R. T. France, *Women in the Church's Ministry: A Test Case for Biblical Interpretation* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1995)
- ❖ Kevin Giles, *The Trinity and Subordinationism: The Doctrine of God and the Contemporary Gender Debate* (Downers Grove: IVP, 2002)
- ❖ Stanley J. Grenz with Denise Muir Kjesbo, *Women in the Church: A Biblical Theology of Women in Ministry* (Downers Grove: IVP, 1995)
- ❖ Rebecca Merrill Groothuis, *Good News for Women: A Biblical Picture of Gender Equality* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1997)
- ❖ Rebecca Merrill Groothuis, "Leading Him Up the Garden Path," *Priscilla Papers*, Spring 2002
- ❖ Craig S. Keener, *Paul, Women and Wives: Marriage and Women's Ministry in the Letters of Paul* (Peabody: Hendrickson, 1992)
- ❖ Catherine Clark Kroeger and Richard Clark Kroeger, *I Suffer Not a Woman: Rethinking I Timothy 2:11-15 in Light of Ancient Evidence* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1992)
- ❖ Lorry Lutz, *Women as Risk-Takers for God: Finding Your Role in the Neighborhood, Church, World* (Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 1998)
- ❖ Aída Besançon Spencer, *Beyond the Curse: Women Called to Ministry* (Peabody: Hendrickson, 1989)
- ❖ Willard Swartley, *Slavery, Sabbath, War and Women: Case Studies in Biblical Interpretation* (Scottsdale, PA: Herald Press, 1983)
- ❖ William Webb, *Slaves, Women and Homosexuals: Exploring the Hermeneutics of Cultural Analysis* (Downers Grove: IVP, 2001)

8TH INTERNATIONAL
CONFERENCE



A CHRISTIANS FOR BIBLICAL
EQUALITY CONFERENCE



"But you are a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, God's special possession, that you may declare the praises of him who called you out of darkness into his wonderful light."

—1 Peter 2:9

Celebrating the Priesthood of All Believers: Serving Christ as a Global Community

AUGUST 8-10, 2003

ORLANDO, FLORIDA



General Sessions

Why the Devil Hates Women in Ministry
J. Lee Grady



Commissioned to Harvest by the Lord Our Spokesman: An Exposition on the Book of Ruth
Funmi Josephine Para-Mallam



The Kingdom of God and the Ministry of Women
John E. Phelan



Women Leading Men: Seven Biblical Observations
Linda Belleville



Plus: 26 Workshops, Music, Drama, Children's Program & Panel Discussion

For general session and workshop information, conference schedule and speaker and workshop bios, see www.cbeinternational.org

Conference Registration

(includes Friday & Saturday night plated dinners)

	Early Bird Rate before June 27	Regular Rate after June 27
CBE member	\$149	\$169
Non-member	\$184	\$204
Group rate (7 or more)	\$130	\$150
Children's rate	\$125	\$125
Full time student	\$ 90	\$ 90
CBE member church (1 staff member)	\$ 75	\$ 75
Booths	\$275	\$275

Conference Housing

Rates for the Renaissance Orlando Hotel rooms are \$79 per room for a single or double occupancy. Call hotel reservations at (407) 240-1000 and ask for the Christians for Biblical Equality conference rate. All reservations should be made by Friday, July 15, 2003. The hotel cannot guarantee rooms after that date.

For questions regarding conference registration, conference programming or CBE membership, call (612) 872-6898, or e-mail conference@cbeinternational.org.

Check our Web site for complete conference details! www.cbeinternational.org or phone (612) 872-6898

A Female Apostle

Was Junia a man or a woman?

DENNIS J. PREATO

Greetings to Andronicus and Junia, my relatives, who were in prison with me. They are very important apostles. They were believers in Christ before I was. (NCV, Rom. 16:7)

Was the Junia mentioned in Romans 16:7 a man or a woman? The Greek word *Iounian* has been translated either as “Junias” (male) or as “Junia” (female). And what is the meaning of “outstanding among the apostles”? These questions influence how the church should carry on her mission. The answers may indicate that both women and men in the early church participated in all areas-- as ministers, deacons, leaders, and even apostles.

Two views: male or female

The word translated *Junia(s)* appears only one time in the Greek New Testament, and the Greek form used, *Iounian*, depending on how it is accented, could refer either to a man with the name “Junianus,” found here in its contracted form “Junias,” or to a woman with the name of Junia.¹ The use of such accent marks did not occur, however, until the ninth or tenth century.

There is a limited amount of data regarding the gender of this person that Paul refers to as *Iounian*. Why? Probably because the issue was not a concern for those who lived in Paul’s time. The early Christian community would have known the gender of the person in question.

Bible versions differ on how they translate the Greek. The American Standard Version (ASV), New American Standard Bible (NASB), New International Version (NIV), Today’s English Version (TEV), New American Bible (NAB) all refer to this person as Junias, while the King James Version (KJV), New Revised Standard Version (NRSV), New King James Version (NKJV), New Century Version (NCV), and Revised English Bible (REB) use the name Junia.

Evidence of early manuscripts

The majority of support for the name Junias (male) comes from manuscripts dated in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries. These contain accent marks reflecting *Iounian* as a masculine name.² But manuscripts from this late date do not provide justification to support a male reading.

How about earlier church writings? John Piper and Wayne Grudem state that Epiphanius (A.D. 315 to 403) wrote an *Index of Disciples*, in which he writes, “*Iounias*, of whom Paul makes mention, became bishop of Apameia of Syria.” According to Piper and Grudem, Epiphanius wrote “of whom” as a masculine relative pronoun thereby indicating that he thought *Iounias* was a man.³ They also did a computer search of early literature and found only three examples of Junia as a woman’s name. They found none, however, for a male named Junias.

Scholar Douglas Moo points out that in the same passage where Junias is understood to be a male, Epiphanius refers to Prisca (Priscilla) as a man.⁴ Epiphanius also wrote that “the female sex is easily seduced, weak, and without much understanding. The Devil seeks to vomit out this disorder through women. . . . We wish to apply masculine reasoning and destroy the folly of these women.”⁵ Epiphanius’s misogynist statements concerning women casts strong doubt about his provision of objective evidence in support of a male reading. His beliefs about women no doubt colored his thinking and writing.

According to many scholars, “Junia” was a common name in Greek and Latin literature. Brootten states, “the female Latin name Junia occurs over 250 times among inscriptions from ancient Rome alone.”⁶

Support for a female named Julia appears in one papyrus, P 46, dated about A.D. 200. Other early manuscripts from the third, fourth, and fifth centuries provide additional support for this female name.

The quality and age of these manuscripts provide strong support for a female name whether it is rendered Junia or Julia.

Evidence for female church leaders

We have seen that evidence from writings of early church leaders testify that Junia was a woman apostle. In writing on Romans 16:7, John Chrysostom (347–407) states:

Greet Andronicus and Junia. . . who are outstanding among the apostles: To be an apostle is something great! But to be outstanding among the apostles—just think what a wonderful song of praise that is! They were outstanding on the basis of their works and virtuous actions. Indeed, how great the wisdom of this woman must have been that she was even deemed worthy of the title of apostle.⁷

Chrysostom was not alone in confirming the gender of Junia as female. Origen of Alexander (185–253) understood the name to be feminine.⁸ Others include Jerome (340–419), Hatto of Vercelli (924–961), Theophylact (1050–1108), and Peter Abelard (1079–1142).⁹

From the earliest times, the attitude of the church fathers toward women could be described at best as negative.¹⁰ Origen, Chrysostom, and others were no exceptions to the prevailing attitudes. Yet, despite their negative attitudes regarding women, they gave testimony that Junia was female. Thus we can see that the testimony by church leaders through the twelfth century provide convincing support that Junia was female.

An apostle or just “highly regarded”?

A second question is whether Andronicus and Junia were

“among the apostles” or simply “highly regarded by the apostles.” Although some have said that both meanings are possible, virtually all English Bibles translate the phrase as meaning they were “among the apostles.” Contemporary and past scholarship, lexical definitions, and grammatical construction all support the understanding that these two people were “regarded as apostles.” Here are some translations:

Outstanding apostles, NAB
 Outstanding among the apostles, NASB, NIV
 Prominent among the apostles, NRSV
 Eminent among the apostles, REB
 Of note among the apostles, KJV, ASV, NKJV
 Very important apostles. NCV

Natural meaning of *apostles*

Greek scholar A. T. Robertson states that the phrase *en tois apostolois* “naturally means that they are counted among the apostles in the general sense of Barnabas, James, the brother of Christ, Silas, and others. But it can mean simply that they were famous in the circle of the apostles in the technical sense.”¹¹

J. B. Lightfoot agrees that the only natural way to translate *episemoi en tois apostolois* is “regarded as apostles.”¹² Aida Besançon Spencer makes the grammatical point that “the Greek preposition *en* used here always has the idea of ‘within.’”¹³ F. F. Bruce adds that not only were they “well known to the apostles,” but they were “notable members of the apostolic circle.”¹⁴ James A. Witmer states that they are “illustrious, notable, or outstanding” among the apostles.¹⁵

Early church bishop attests Junia as apostle

The fourth-century bishop of Constantinople, John Chrysostom, wrote a series of homilies that have been preserved. On Romans 16:7, he wrote of Junia, “Oh, how great is the devotion of this woman that she should be counted worthy of the appellation of apostle!”¹⁶ He also praised other women. In reference to Paul’s greeting of Mary in Romans 16:6, he wrote

How is this? A woman again is honored and proclaimed victorious! Again are we men put to shame. Or rather, we are not put to shame only, but have even an honor conferred upon us. For an honor we have, in that there are such women among us, but we are put to shame, in that we men are left so far behind by them...For the women of those days were more spirited than lions.¹⁷

Chrysostom’s writings provide us with important insight into the ministry of women in the early church, despite his misogynist views.

Is there evidence for “highly regarded”?

Some interpreters have said that Andronicus and Junia were merely “held in high esteem by the apostles.” Piper and Grudem say that they were held in high regard or were “of note among the apostles,” meaning that they were well known before Paul was converted.¹⁸ Thomas Schrein-

er states that if Junia was a woman apostle, then tension would be created because “apostles were the most authoritative messengers of God.”¹⁹ He implies that women could not serve God in this manner.

Craig Keener says, “[S]ince they [Andronicus and Junia] were imprisoned with Paul, he knows them well enough to recommend them without appealing to the other apostles, whose judgment he never cites on such matters, and the Greek is most naturally read as claiming that they were apostles.”²⁰

There is no exegetical evidence that could substantially justify that “highly regarded” is the probable and natural reading of this passage.

What does *apostle* mean?

Paul said that Andronicus and Junia were apostles. What did he mean?

James Walters offers four distinct ways that the term “apostle” is used in the New Testament. (1) The twelve original followers of Jesus; (2) persons who had seen the risen Lord and been commissioned by him (1 Cor. 9:1; 15:1–11); (3) a missionary successful in church planting, labor, and suffering (which underlie Paul’s arguments in 2 Corinthians); (4) an emissary or missionary sent out by a particular church to perform specific tasks (2 Cor. 8:23; Phil. 2:25).²¹

The first and fourth choices can be ruled out because they were not among the “twelve” nor was their apostleship specifically associated with a particular church or specific task. Selecting between 2 and 3 is more difficult, for they could certainly have been among either or both of the remaining groups. I believe they ministered together in the pattern of Prisca and Aquila, who are mentioned by Paul in Romans 16:3–5a. Paul did not assign any gender-specific roles in his greeting to Andronicus and Junia. They were both equally deemed outstanding apostles, probably by virtue of their apostolic sufferings, the number of years they had been in Christ, their labor, and their humble service for Christ.

May the eyes of all those in the church be opened to see this important truth and its implication that women should be allowed to minister equally as they are called by God. To do otherwise is to deny the full redemptive work of Christ (Gal. 3:28). ■



Dennis J. Preato has practiced as a business and financial advisor. He is currently enrolled at Bethel Seminary, San Diego in the Master of Divinity — Greek Track program of study — and is expected to graduate in 2004. Dennis along his wife, JB, also an M. Div. candidate, participated as panelists in CBE’s recent Marriage and the Family of God conference in Portland.

Notes

1. Douglas Moo, “The Epistle to the Romans”, *The New International Commentary on the New Testament* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1996), 921; James Walters, “Phoebe and Junia(s)-Rom. 16:1-2,7,” in *Essays on Women in Earliest Christianity: Vol. I*, ed. Carroll Osburn (Joplin, Missouri: College Press, 1995), 186.

2. Ibid.

3. John Piper and Wayne Grudem, "An Overview of Central Concerns: Questions and Answers," in *Recovering Biblical Manhood and Womanhood: A Response to Evangelical Feminism*, eds. J. Piper and W. Grudem (Wheaton, IL: Crossway Books, 1991), 80.

4. Moo, *The New International Commentary on the New Testament*, 922.

5. Ronald L. Dart, "The Christian Woman" [on-line article], available from <http://www.abcog.org/woman.htm>; accessed 9 October 2001.

6. Bernadette Brooten, "Junia," *Women in Scripture* (2000):109; quoted by Dianne D. McDonnell, "Junia, A Woman Apostle" [on-line article]; available from <http://www.churchofgoddfw.com/monthly/junia.html>; accessed 8 February 2002.

7. Bernadette Brooten, "Junia . . . Outsanding Among the Apostles (Romans 16.7)" [on-line article], available from <http://www.womenpriests.org/classic/brooten.htm>; accessed 2 February 2002.

8. Ibid.

9. Dianne D. McDonnell, "Junia, A Woman Apostle" [online article]; available from <http://www.churchofgoddfw.com/monthly/junia.html>; accessed 8 February 2002. This article includes discussion of how Junia become known as a male during the papal reign of Boniface VIII.

10. Dart, "The Christian Woman", accessed 9 October 2001.

11. Archibald Thomas Roberston, *Word Pictures in the New Tes-*

tament, Vol. 4: Epistles of Paul (Hiawatha, Iowa: Parsons Technology, Inc., 1997), electronic edition.

12. Walter Schmithals, *The Office of Apostle In the Early Church*, trans. John E. Steely, (New York: Abingdon Press, 1969), 62.

13. Aida Besançon Spencer, *Beyond the Curse* (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 1985), 104.

14. F. F. Bruce, *Paul: Apostle of the Heart Set Free* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1981), 298, 388.

15. John A. Witmer, *The Bible Knowledge Commentary, An Exposition of the Scriptures by Dallas Seminary Faculty: New Testament* (Hiawatha, Iowa: Parsons Technology, Inc., 1997), electronic edition.

16. Leonard Swidler, *Biblical Affirmations of Woman* (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1979), 299.

17. Ibid, 295.

18. John Piper and Wayne Grudem, "An Overview of Central Concerns: Questions and Answers," in *Recovering Biblical Manhood and Womanhood: A Response to Evangelical Feminism*, 80.

19. Thomas R. Schreiner, "The Valuable Ministries of Women in the Context of Male Leadership: A Survey of Old and New Testament Examples and Teaching," in *Recovering Biblical Manhood and Womanhood: A Response to Evangelical Feminism*, eds. John Piper and Wayne Grudem (Wheaton: Crossway, 1991), 221.

20. Craig S. Keener, *Paul, Women and Wives* (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson Publishers, 1992), 242.

21. James Walters, "Phoebe and Junia(s)," 188.

Female Subordination Challenge

Proponents of female subordination are asked to prove their case from the Bible.

GILBERT BILEZIKIAN

Challenge #7

Cite a biblical text according to which men are favored over women in the distribution of spiritual gifts, including those that qualify believers for ministries of leadership

In the garden, Adam and Eve were jointly entrusted with the dual responsibility of populating the earth and managing the environment (Gen. 1:28). The two mandates were committed to both of them without any role differentiations on the basis of gender. In order to fulfill this command, the man and the woman must have brought their best abilities to the accomplishment of both tasks in a relationship of equal partnership, best defined as non-hierarchical complementarity.

On the day of Pentecost, Peter gave the inaugural speech that marked the beginning of the life of the church universal. The very first statement he made concerned the consequences of the new availability of the Holy Spirit to all believers. The outpouring of the Spirit promoted both men and women without differentiation to the ministry of prophecy (Acts 2:16-18), a function that was regarded as one of the highest ministries in the life of the church (1 Cor. 12:28).

Consistently, the New Testament declares that all the members of local churches are endowed with spiritual gifts

by the Holy Spirit (Rom. 12:4-8; 1 Cor. 12:7-12) without any mention of women being excluded from such ministry roles. Furthermore, the text teaches that no individual has the right to excuse oneself (v. 14-16) and that no one has the right to exclude someone else from doing ministry (v. 20-22).

On such premises, all may prophesy (14:31), and both men and women may lead in worship through prayer and the spoken word (11:4-5) such as the four women who prophesied in the church of Caesarea (Acts 21:9).

In this light, it is evident that the statement in 1 Corinthians 14:33-36 forbidding women to speak in church has nothing to do with women exercising their spiritual gifts. In this passage, the apostle was dealing with a different issue that did not concern the exercise of spiritual gifts. He was actually opposing, by quoting their words derisively, abusive church leaders who were intent on excluding women from active participation in the life of the church. (For a commentary on this passage, see Bilezikian, *Community 101*, pp. 86-89.) ■

— See Gilbert Bileziakn's article, "The Issue I Can't Evade" on page five of this edition of the PRISCILLA PAPERS. His bio can be found on page six.

CORRECTION: The previous Subordination Challenge: No. 6, by Gilbert Bilezikian, printed in the Winter 2003 issue should have cited 1 Cor. 7:4 (rather than 1 Cor 1:4) in the fourth paragraph.



Have you heard the claim that relationships between men and women should image the “eternal subordination” in the Trinity? If so, read this book. With a profound, concise course in Trinitarian theology and hermeneutics, using two case studies to exemplify points, *The Trinity & Subordinationism* is highly recommended.

Kevin Giles’ work has three sections; (1) a discussion of the Trinity through the hierarchalist’s claim that there is eternal subordination within God, and a review of the historical church’s position; (2) a discussion of the church’s historical view of women, followed by a comparison of the hierarchicalist’s and egalitarian perspectives as compared to the historical position; and (3) a discussion of slavery, which parallels the gender debate, and the ways in which Athanasius and Augustus handled the issue of the Trinity.

With clarity and humor, Giles lucidly and effectively skewers subordinationalist and hierarchical arguments. This book provides the methodology evangelicals need to move beyond proof-texting, without dismissing the authority of Scripture that is necessary to inform us on modern issues. In the end, Giles expresses his sincere delight in the way that God used his own study on these matters to broaden his understanding of what it means to

work with theology.

Kevin Giles is vicar of St. Michael’s Church (Anglican) in North Carlton, Australia. He has contributed numerous articles to scholarly journals. He is the author of several books, including *What on Earth is the Church?* and a contributor to the *Dictionary of Jesus and the Gospels*. Giles’ experience and learning makes this book insightful!

The Trinity & Subordinationism provides extensive footnotes, as well as Scripture, author, and subject indices and an appendix on homosexuality. The chapters on the Reformers’ view of the Trinity, the novelty of the modern hierarchical position on women, and the “biblical” case for slavery are excellent.

This book will prepare any reader to better understand and articulate his or her own views of Scripture. Giles reminds us we are all imperfect interpreters of God’s Word and encourages us to receive His grace. ■

**The Trinity and Subordinationism:
The Doctrine of God and the
Contemporary Gender Debate**
by Kevin Giles
IVP (2002)



Kim A. Pettit grew up in Latin America and accepted Christ as her Savior after her family moved to the U.S. She is married, has two children, and works for Cook Communications as managing editor of publisher development resources. She also does freelance writing and translation, and publishes a newsletter, *The Equalizer*, for the Colorado members of CBE.

PRISCILLA
Papers

BECOME A SUBSCRIBER — OR GIVE A GIFT TO A FRIEND!

Member subscription*	U.S. subscriber	Int'l subscriber
(Use coupon on p. 27)	\$30 for 1 year \$85 for 3 years	\$39 for 1 year \$112 for 3 years

Name (PLEASE PRINT) _____

Street Address _____ Apt. No. _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

1 year/ 4 issues

3 years/ 12 issues

\$_____ enclosed

This is a gift from _____

*Includes special member discounts on books and conferences.
All subscriptions include complimentary subscriptions to MUTUALITY.
Mail to: CBE, 122 W. Franklin Ave., Suite 218, Minneapolis, MN 55404-2451

**15 years
& counting...**



**Celebrate CBE's 15th
birthday by making
a generous contribution
to CBE's endowment
fund!**

Amount enclosed
\$ _____
(Endowment Fund)
\$ _____
(General Fund)

CHRISTIANS FOR BIBLICAL EQUALITY

Christians for Biblical Equality is an organization of Christian men and women who believe that the Bible, properly interpreted, teaches the fundamental equality of men and woman of all racial and ethnic groups, all economic classes, and all age groups, based on the teaching of Galatians 3:28—*There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is neither male nor female; for you are all one in Christ Jesus.*

Core Values

We believe . . .

- The Bible teaches the equality of women and men.
- God has given each person gifts to be used for the good of Christ's kingdom.
- Christians are to develop and exercise their God-given gifts in home, church, and society.

Mission Statement

CBE equips believers by affirming the biblical truth of equality. Thus all believers, without regard to gender, race, and class are free and encouraged to use their God-given gifts in families, ministries, and communities.

Core Purpose

To broadly communicate the biblical truth that men and women are equally responsible to use their God-given gifts to further Christ's kingdom.

Envisioned Future

CBE envisions a future where all believers will exercise their gifts for God's glory, with the full support of the Christian Community.

STATEMENT OF FAITH

We believe the Bible is the inspired Word of God, is reliable, and is the final authority for faith and practice.

We believe in the unity and trinity of God, eternally existing in three equal persons.

We believe in the full deity and full humanity of Jesus Christ.

We believe in the sinfulness of all persons. One result of sin is shattered relationships with God, others, and self.

We believe that eternal salvation and restored relationships are 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 in the work of the Holy Spirit in salvation, and in the power and presence of the Holy Spirit in the life of believers.

We believe in the equality and essential dignity of men and women of all races, ages, and classes. We recognize that all persons are made in the image of God and are to reflect that image in the community of believers, in the home, and in society.

We believe that men and women are to diligently develop and use their God-given gifts for the good of the home, church, and society.

We believe in the family, celibate singleness, and faithful heterosexual marriage as God's design for us.

CBE membership is available to those who support CBE's Statement of Faith. Members receive quarterly issues of CBE's newsmagazine, *MUTUALITY*, and CBE's educational journal, *PRISCILLA PAPERS*. Members are eligible for discounts on items from CBE's Book Service, including books, articles, tapes, and videos. Members are also offered discount on all international CBE conferences.

CBE MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

Enclosed is my yearly CBE membership fee. All fees are in U.S. dollars. Please check one:

United States Members	1 Year	3 Year
Individual	<input type="checkbox"/> \$35	<input type="checkbox"/> \$ 95
Household	<input type="checkbox"/> \$50	<input type="checkbox"/> \$140
Low Income	<input type="checkbox"/> \$25	N/A
Library Subscriptions	<input type="checkbox"/> \$30	<input type="checkbox"/> \$ 85
International Members	1 Year	3 Year
Individual	<input type="checkbox"/> \$44	<input type="checkbox"/> \$122
Household	<input type="checkbox"/> \$59	<input type="checkbox"/> \$167
Low Income	<input type="checkbox"/> \$34	N/A
Library Subscriptions	<input type="checkbox"/> \$39	<input type="checkbox"/> \$112

Additional Contribution \$ _____
 TOTAL ENCLOSED \$ _____

CBE is an exempt organization as described in IRC Sec. 501 (c) (3) and, as such, donations in excess of the basic membership fee may qualify as a charitable contribution where allowed by law.

Name

Address

City

State/Province/Country

Zip/Postal Code

Phone

E-mail address

Church Denomination

Please mail or fax to:

Visa MasterCard American Express Discover

Card #

Signature

Exp. Date

Christians for Biblical Equality
 122 West Franklin Avenue, Suite 218
 Minneapolis, MN 55404-2451
 Phone: 612-872-6898 Fax: 612-872-6891
 E-mail: CBE@cbeinternational.org
 http://www.CBEInternational.org



**Christians for
Biblical
Equality**

Christians for Biblical Equality
122 West Franklin Avenue, Suite 218
Minneapolis, MN 55404-2451

FORWARDING SERVICE REQUESTED

Non-Profit Org.
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
Minneapolis, MN
Permit No. 26907



**CBE turns 15 this year!
Celebrate CBE's
15 years of
ministry by
participating
in the CBE
Endowment
program.
See page 26 for details**

15 years
& counting...