

On The Subject of Women in Ministry

The following information is available to those wishing to understand what the scriptures say on the issue of women in ministry. It is a response to a paper ‘*On The Subject of Women in Ministry*’ delivered by the Church of Christ at Burleigh Heads, Queensland, Australia. The paper issued by them stated that it ‘*reflected the Queensland Churches of Christ in Queensland and...nationally*’.

The paper represents similar views increasingly being adopted by the Baptist Union and other affiliations.

I have quoted from sections in the paper in *italics* and then commented on each statement in **bold** and brackets.

(P.1) ‘*The church must be considered an organism that should be in a state of growth, and not stagnating in tradition*’.

[The church should be aiming for growth of its members in *spiritual* terms and in evangelism to the unsaved, etc. But what is meant here by ‘*stagnating in tradition*’? Certainly we must not allow *unbiblical* traditions to encroach on our forms of worship and service. However, if ‘*traditions*’ are biblical and apostolic then they do not need to ‘stagnate’ since they are based on the word of God itself which is full of *life*. Is the ‘tradition’ of male leadership and male preaching a tradition that can ‘stagnate’ if it is based upon the word of God? Far too many churches today are using such arguments of ‘*stagnating in tradition*’ to be an excuse to do away with apostolic traditions that were and are from ‘*the faith once delivered to the saints*’ (Jude 3) and continued to be historical Christianity for more than 1800 years until the advent of *liberal* theology. This argument concerning ‘traditions’ is also too often used as a ‘strawman’ to diverge from the real issue: *Is male only leadership and teaching, biblical?*]

(P.1) ‘*Lets get united, and support any man or woman who loves the Lord to fulfil the great commission*’.

[Are we not already united in ‘*one faith, one baptism...*’ (Eph.4:5)? However, it is granted that unity can be threatened in a variety of ways. One of those ways is to introduce false teaching or to question the *order* and *functions* of man and woman as established in scripture from the book of Genesis and throughout the Bible. Unity is not gained by introducing new teaching or by wrangling over texts that have until the *20th century* been clearly understood in a *unity* of evangelical thought!]

(P.2) ‘*There are instances where Jesus demonstrated his unbiased regard to sex. After all, the word tells us there is no male or female in Christ Jesus (Galatians 3:28) - AMEN*’.

[Galatians 3:26-28 says: ‘*For you are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus. 27 For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ. 28 There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female: for you are all one in Christ Jesus’*

This verse says:

1. Christians are ‘*one*’ and there is no bias or preference in *race* (‘*Jew or Greek*’), *class* (‘*bond or free*’) or *sex* (‘*male or female*’).

The passage is about *salvation*, not offices, authority, or functions in the church! This has been the generally accepted understanding of the verse down the running centuries until the 20th century. *The context is about salvation, being one in Christ and all being baptised into the one body of Christ*. It is not at all about women’s roles in churches or their possible offices!

It is a misuse of scripture to apply this to women holding offices of authority or of teaching within the church and it shows either a lack of understanding of basic interpretation of scripture or an utter disregard for the context of the passage! If Galatians 3:28 teaches that the differences in *authority* and *functions* of male and female are abolished, then how could anyone likewise say that homosexual marriages are wrong?]

(P.2) *'There is no ground for division in the church. Problems that can potentially lead to division must be dealt with quickly. The church needs to be fast and bold to correct, because division is like a cancer. We cannot allow it to create disunity and confusion...those who create division must be disciplined and dealt with quickly'*.

[The Apostles constantly exhorted the elders to 'contend' against false teaching. *False teaching creates division. There was no division in the area of women in ministry until arguably the 19th and especially the 20th century, when Holiness and Pentecostal/Charismatic groups added new doctrines to orthodox evangelical beliefs. In fact the history will show that women in offices of ministry were exceptions, a minority rather than a larger movement as it affects the church today. From the earliest days of the apostolic church most orthodox Christians accepted male leadership and did not accept women in offices of ministry.*

The women's liberation movements *in the world* has had a profound effect on this issue. The modern church is now simply reflecting the culture of our day. But still this controversy is really a late invention! Major denominations did not approve women ordination until 1956 and that was due to the influence of *liberal theology*. Research will show that it is really not until the 60's and 70's that women in ministry became a more widespread controversial issue and yet it still was consistently rejected and resisted.

The seat of the '*division*' is not caused by those wanting to remain with the apostolic traditions as they were in the '*faith once delivered*' (Jude 3); but rather by those who want to change the order of Biblical headship in the church! So, who is creating '*division*' here? And who '*needs to be fast and bold to correct*'?]

(P.2) *'We must put aside disagreements and even personal preferences for the sake of unity'*.

[If the disagreements are to do with fundamental doctrines such as *headship* (taught from Genesis), do we '*put aside*' such? Do we keep unity *at the expense of truth and sound doctrine unchanged for nearly 1,800 years*?]

(P.3) *'Increasingly secular thinkers attack Christianity as against women and thus irrelevant to the modern world'*.

[This is nothing new. The world has always been against the church. The modern world has increasingly shifted in its idea of headship in the family and has capitulated and mirrored this. But why should we cater for the thinking of the world? Do we bow to the culture of the day when scripture conflicts with that culture? The relationship of man and women and the creation order thereof is not variable or reversible according to culture.

John 15 tells us clearly that the world will '*hate*' the church! Why should this argument of what the world thinks ever be brought into an argument that rests entirely on clear scripture?]

(P.3) *'The assemblies of God and other denominations birthed in the Holiness and Pentecostal revivals affirmed women in ministry...two thirds of all missionaries were women. The 19th century women's*

movement fought for women's right to vote...and the abolition of slavery...For Bible believing Christians, however, mere precedent from church history cannot settle a question; we must establish our case from scripture...'

[Then why raise such 'history'? Our authority must be what the Bible teaches, not what a *minority* of women have done in the past. (The trend to ordain women in positions in ministry never became a thorny issue until the advent of *liberal theology* in the 2nd half of the 20th Century. For 1800 years there was widespread opposition to 'ordaining' women!). And why raise the Pentecostal movement that was considered unorthodox and heretical at the time? Further, why raise history that is also purely *secular*? What has secular 'women's right to vote' got to do with women in ministry?

Likewise, the existence of 'slavery' is not rooted in any creation ordinance - *which is the very reason why Paul forbids women to teach or usurp authority* in 1Timothy 2! The New Testament never commands or forbids slavery. Slavery did not exist in the creation, but the headship and the order of men and women and the authority therein was existent. The eventual abolition of slavery did not nullify any biblical teaching; but the new allowance of women in roles of authority does disregard several texts of God's word. The issue of 'slavery' is a 'strawman' and such secular arguments only cloud the real issue. And any oppression of women in the *secular* world does not justify a change in what scripture teaches.]

(P.3) *'Deborah was not only a prophetess but a judge (Judges 4:4). She held the place of greatest authority in her day...'*

[These 'exception' arguments from the Old Testament must be interpreted by the *clear* in the New Testament. Sound interpretation never interprets the clear in the New Testament with the unclear or the 'exceptions' in the Old.

Deborah was more of a 'prophet' than anything else and nowhere is it written that she ever prophesied or taught in public. Her prophetic role was limited to private or individual instruction, (Jdg.4:5). She deferred to men when in battle although it is obvious that Barak was a weak leader. Many fail to see that the Bible views Deborah's judgeship as a rebuke against the weak or absence of male leadership (eg. Judges 4:9).

Deborah is also not mentioned in the line up of heroes in Hebrews 11, but Barak is.

We must be careful in drawing conclusions about women leadership from the book of Judges when it has examples of things *not* to imitate - such as Samson's marriage to a Philistine woman (14:1-4); his visiting a prostitute (16:1); Jephthah's foolish vow (11:30-31; 34-39); and the wrong doing of the men of Benjamin at Shiloh (21:19-23), etc.

Such isolated references of women such as Deborah should not make a rule *when there is clear teaching in NT as to women in ministry!* I Timothy 3 is clear that elders/pastors are to be male - *'the husband of one wife'*, not *'the wife of one husband'*! Other scriptures are also clear that a woman is not to 'teach' or 'usurp authority over a man', (1Tim.2). The weight of evidence in the New testament interprets any seeming 'exceptions' in the Old.]

(P.3) *'Jesus allowed women to join his ranks (Mark 15:40,41; Luke 8:1-3)'*

[These scriptures say *nothing* about women being elders, women preaching or women in ministry'. They simply say women *served*: *'There were also women looking on afar off: among whom was Mary Magdalene, and Mary the mother of James the less and of Joses, and Salome; (Who also, when he was in Galilee, followed him, and ministered unto him;) and many other women which came up with him unto Jerusalem'*, (Mk.15:40,41). *'Ministering unto him'* is not preaching, teaching or eldering! The 'ministering' here refers to *waiting* upon someone and *serving* them. There is *nothing* in these scriptures that can be used for any argument that women can hold

offices of ministry or teach.]

(P.3) *'He allowed a woman who wished to hear his teaching 'sit at his feet' (Luke 10:39)'*.

[Again, there is *nothing* in this scripture that can be used for any argument that women can hold offices of ministry or teach men. Luke 10:39 shows a *learning* situation, not a teaching one! Mary simply sat at Jesus feet and *'heard his word'*! What argument is there in this for women teaching men or women in offices of ministry?]

(P.3) *'The gospels unanimously report that God chose women as the first witnesses of the resurrection...'*.

[These women were simply witnesses of the resurrection and they simply reported the event to the disciples. *There is no public preaching or teaching or usurping authority here!* They went to a private home and reported events. There is no prohibition against women preaching the gospel or to be involved in evangelism where it does not involve publicly teaching men or usurping authority over them. Scripture encourages men and women to talk to each other about the Gospel, (Acts 18:26).

These women who were the *'first witnesses of the resurrection'* simply did not have any offices of ministry when they reported this historic event. It simply does not follow that because women ran to tell the disciples that Jesus was risen that Jesus would oppose His own laws of headship and Paul's limitation of leadership to men]

(P.4) *'Many of the apostles co-labourers in the gospel, were women'*.

[No scripture is given here. Obviously there were women who accompanied the apostles on their journeys and *ministered to the apostles*. They held no offices of leadership and did not teach. They simply *served* or ministered to the apostles. The scriptures are plentiful with women ministering to men in this fashion of serving, (Matt.8:15; Mk.15:41; Lk.8:3). Philippians 4:2,3 mentions Paul's co-workers or 'fellow labourers'. The Greek word is *'sunergos'* and it does not mean equal authority or that these people had any teaching authority.]

(P.4) *'Phoebe was a servant of the church at Cenchrea. 'Servant' may refer to a deacon...'*

[Again, *nothing* is said here of Phoebe teaching or holding any office in the church. The best translations here have *'servant'*. Phoebe was a 'servant' in the church as we *all* should be. 'Servant' here does not refer to the *office* of a deacon. The office of a deacon is clearly male in 1Tim.3. The Greek word for servant here, *'diakonos'* (29 times in NT), has a *wide* usage including the concept of *servicing* or *ministering* for both men and women. The same word is used for a variety of serving functions such as serving meals, (Martha: Lk.10:40). A review of this word in the New Testament will show clearly that it cannot be used for the office of a deacon excepting the passages where the qualifications for the office of a deacon are obviously mentioned, (1Tim.3).

Everyone is supposed to be doing the work of 'deaconing' but not everyone has the *office* of a deacon. Paul never refers to women deacons as an office. Interestingly, he does refer to deacon's 'wives', yet does not qualify that with the word 'deacons' for them. *Women are never found to be holding ordained offices*]

(P.4) *'Elsewhere we learn that she [Priscilla] and her husband taught scriptures to another minister, Apollos (Acts 18:26).'*

[In Acts 18:6 'Aquila and Priscilla' took Apollos aside and 'expounded' a better way. The word 'ektithemi' means to explain and this does not have to include teaching or taking any authority over a man. It was not public preaching/teaching by Priscilla and there is no evidence that Priscilla was 'usurping authority over' Aquila or Apollos. This is simply a case of the wife being with the husband. Again, no office of ministry or teaching or authority is ever implied here.]

(P.4) *'Paul listed two fellow apostles, Andronicus and Junia (Rom.16:7)...Paul could have here referred to a female apostle...'*

[There is no real evidence that Junia was female. Masculine names ending in 'as' are not unusual in the New Testament. (Andrew - Andreas, Matt.10:12; Elijah - Elias, Matt.11:14; Zacharias, Lk.1:5, etc). Names ending in 'as' are often contracted forms for clearly masculine forms. For example, Silas (Acts 15:22) is short for Silvanus (1Thess1:1; 1Pet.5:12). The ending of the Greek word for 'Junia' does not definitely tells us whether it is male or female.

Some later church fathers may have been undecided as to Junia. One single quote by the church father, Chrysostom (347-407), is often used to prove Junia was a female. However, what is not shown by those who use his one quote is that Chrysostom was against women teaching men in public. It must also be recognised that the word 'apostle' in Greek ('apostolos') literally means 'sent one' and is used in a wide context of meaning, including that of 'messenger', (eg. Epaphroditus as a 'messenger' in Phil.2:25; and other 'messengers' in 2Cor.8:23).

The extent of church fathers who considered Junia to be male is extensive. One has to question the honesty and integrity of those who would single out one quote from a Church father hundreds of years later against a massive amount of quotes to the opposite! Epiphanius (AD315-403), bishop of Salamis in Cyprus, wrote: 'Iounias [Junia] of whom Paul makes mention, became bishop of Apameia of Syria'. (1) In Greek, the phrase 'of whom' is a masculine relative pronoun ('hou') and shows that Epiphanius thought Junia was a man. Origen (who died AD 252), in the earliest Latin commentary on Romans, also wrote of Junia as a male. Added to this is the unanimous and numerous quotes by church fathers who teach that women cannot hold offices of pastoring, eldering or teaching men in public.

Jesus did not select a single female apostle. He did not choose 6 women and 6 men. All 12 of the apostles chosen by Jesus were male. When Peter speaks of a replacement apostle for Judas he says it had to be one 'of these men who have companied with us', (Acts 1:21). The term for 'men' here is 'aner' - a male human being.

The book of Revelation also states clearly that the 12 apostles will have their names on the walls of the city of the New Jerusalem.]

(P.4) *'Paul's women colleagues in this region [Philippi] may have moved more quickly into prominent offices in the church (cf Acts 16:4,15).'*

['may have'?...This is pure supposition and an argument from silence. There are simply no mention of women in ministerial offices.]

(P.5) *'Those who complain that Paul did not specifically mention women pastors by name miss the point. Paul rarely mentioned any men pastors by name either.'*

[This is a 'strawman' argument because Paul does not mention any 'pastors' in any church!]

Those in this office were not called ‘pastors’ but ‘elders’ or ‘overseers’. The only time ‘pastor’ is mentioned for a Christian minister is *once* in Ephesians 4:11 and it is not the office but a *gifting* to the church. Nowhere else is ‘pastor’ mentioned except for Jesus Christ himself! This is a diversionary argument that has nothing to do with the issue of women in ministry.]

(P.5) ‘Paul commended them [women] and included commendations to women apostles and prophets, the offices of the highest authority in the church’.

[No scripture is given here - the reason is because there is none! There is no mention of the continuing office of prophets in the New Testament. Also, prophecy differs substantially from teaching. Prophecy is spontaneous revelation (1Cor.14:29-33), while teaching is exposition of received revelation and very often has doctrinal content.

A prophet delivers the message but has no authority of their own but to speak God’s word. It is separate to teaching - which includes explaining, correcting and has a doctrinal element.

Women prophets never prophesied publicly. This understanding is attested to by the church fathers. Tertullian (160-220) taught that women could prophesy but not teach and that they must be under obedience. (2) He also wrote ‘*It is not permitted to a women to speak in the church; but neither* [is it permitted] *to teach, nor to baptise*’. (3)

It should also be noted that Prophets and Priests in the Old Testament were different roles. The Old Testament women who prophesied were never priests. No women were priests. This is not to deny that women may have the gift of teaching. But that gift has a function and order as Paul commands clearly in several places. No doubt some women did prophesy which simply means literally they ‘spoke forth the word of God’. But there is no mention that they held any *offices* or that they taught men, pastored, or held any office of leadership with authority.]

(P.5) ‘Paul seemed to oppose women in ministry...’.

[At face value and taking scripture objectively this is the only conclusion one can come to! Paul ‘forbids’ women to ‘teach’ in public and to ‘usurp authority over a man’ (1Tim.2:12). He also elsewhere lays down the qualifications of an elder/pastor clearly as being the ‘*husband of one wife*’, (1Tim.3; Tit.1). No amount of semantic gymnastics, strawman arguments or arguments from silence can change Paul’s words. The word translated ‘elders’ in Tit.1 is not feminine (‘*presbytera*’) but is masculine ‘*presbyteros*’. And clearly that passage is speaking of a male. The Greek word used here is a word always used for older *men*, (eg. Lk.1:18 ‘*old man*’; Philemon 9 ‘*the aged*’)]

(P.5) ‘Women specifically covered their heads to prevent men other than their husbands from lusting after their hair’.

[This is pure conjecture and certainly not the primary issue. The primary issue being taught in 1Corinthians 11 is *headship*! The covering of the head had nothing to do with ‘lusting’ but was part of headship principles rooted in Genesis, as the verses following in 1Corinthians 11 and 1Timothy 2 explain clearly.]

(P.5) ‘Because Paul, in some cases, advocated women’s ministry...’.

[The issue is not that women can or cannot be involved in ‘ministry’. No one would deny that women can be involved in ministries too numerous to mention within a church. What is so often

forgotten in this debate is that there are numerous roles women can be involved in, in church life. In fact the positions for women to fill in church ministries far outnumber the very few positions that the Bible says are the role of a male only!

The issue is whether women can publicly teach men and have authority over them and therefore take roles such as offices of elder, pastor, etc.

The primary scriptures that teach against women in such ministries have up to this point of the paper not even been touched.]

(P.6) ‘Two passages in Paul’s writings at first seem to contradict the progressive ones. Keep in mind that these are the only two passages in the Bible that could be remotely be construed as contradicting Paul’s endorsement of women in ministry’.

[The ‘two passages’ are actually not ‘remotely contradicting’ the ‘progressive’ view but rather abruptly so! They are direct and unequivocal. And what does ‘progressive’ mean - is this not just another word for what was once described as ‘liberal’ only a few decades ago? So far not one of the ‘progressive’ verses used in this paper have even remotely taught that women can teach or have any authority in leadership!

The paper later states: ‘The only passage in the entire Bible that could directly cite against women teaching the Bible is 1Tim.2:11-15’. However, there are several other passages that the paper does not deal with, such as the qualifications for an elder/overseer in 1Timothy 3 and Titus 1 which more than directly cite against women holding offices in church. 1Tim.3 and Tit.1 clearly teach the office of elder/pastor/overseer is a male. It is ‘the husband [‘aner’] of one wife...One that rules well his own house, having his children in subjection with all gravity; (For if a man know not how to rule his own house, how shall he take care of the church of God?)’. The context here concerns a male. The Greek word for ‘man’ is ‘aner’, not the more general word for mankind ‘anthropos’ which would include male or female. The word ‘rule’ here also refers again to headship and the order in creation: ‘One that rules well his own house’. Since when does the Bible say a woman fulfils this role of ‘ruling his own house’? The Greek and English is absolutely unbending on this. It is a *man’s* role here whether we like it or not!]

(P.7) ‘In any case, here [1Tim.2:1-15] Paul forbade women to ‘teach’, something he apparently allowed elsewhere (Rom.16; Phil.4:2,3)’.

[Romans 16 and Philippians 4 simply do not have any women ‘teaching’! This is clearly a misuse of scripture here and I urge the reader to read these scriptures for themselves. Nowhere has the paper proved that Paul allowed women to teach men. And neither has the paper beforehand stated that women were teaching in these same scriptures used. *The Bible has not one single example of any women teaching in public to an assembled group of believers!*]

(P.7) ‘Women were the most susceptible to false teaching only because they had been granted the least education...so Paul provided a short term solution: ‘Do not teach’ (under the present circumstances); and a long range solution: ‘Let them learn’ (1Tim.2:11)’.

[This has several errors. Women were simply not ‘susceptible to false teaching’ because of their ‘lack of education’ and Paul never uses this argument! There is considerable evidence that many women received literary skills in that era. The Greek, Roman and Jewish cultures testify to this. Both man and women could read and write. Priscilla herself proves this fact (Acts 18:26).

It must also be remembered that Jesus clearly chose men in the beginning who were relatively ‘less educated’! The reason for women not teaching was therefore obviously not due to ‘uneducated’

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women, but was based on the *creation order* as Paul teaches in several passages.

It is also of interest to note that in the passages that speak of false teachers at Ephesus, the false teachers are men, not women, (1Tim.1:19,20; 2Tim.2:17,18; Acts 20:30).

If women were intellectually inferior Paul arguably would not allow them to teach other women and children. But women knew the scriptures as well as the men, heard the same sermons, were taught by their men, etc. The papyri show literacy among Greek women and the ability to read and write. And it is a ridiculous notion to assume that because they were 'less educated' they would not *discern* 'false teaching'. This is and was a gift of the Holy Spirit, not given because of 'education'.

And since when is something in scripture only a '*short term*' command and the next phrase a '*long range*' one? This is nothing short of 'picking and choosing' the word of God for ones own 'progressive' theology. It will not stand up to any sincere or established method of interpretation. The passage is in the present tense. If this passage is 'temporary' then what do we do with 1Timothy 2:1 '*I urge that supplications...*'; and Romans 12:1 '*I appeal to you...*'? If we make such passages 'temporary' then there will be a large number of passages in the NT to ignore. This would open up an unnecessary question mark over many commands in the Bible. It diminishes the authority of scripture itself. Paul's command to Timothy in 1Timothy 2:12 is one from an apostle who is accredited and sent by God. It is part of '*all scripture*' which is '*given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness...*', (2Tim.3:16).

In 1Timothy 2:12 Paul uses the word '*suffer*' ('*epitrépo*') as an exercise of his apostolic authority. It does not mean anything 'temporary' or 'short term'. The proof of this is in the verses following (vs.13,14) where the headship of Genesis is referred to - and this *from Genesis* is not 'short term' but universal! Paul's instruction is not based on women being 'less educated' but rather based on the *creation* and the Fall.

'*To teach*' ('*didaskain*') in the Jewish rabbinical context of the New Testament church carried with it an *authority*. This is also supported by the connection of the term with the function of an elder/pastor/overseer in 1 and 2 Timothy. The Greek word and its cognates denote transmission of apostolic tradition and authoritative proclamations. They are not to be split into what is 'temporary' or 'long term'. The passage (1Tim.2:12-15) has in fact a complete absence of temporary or cultural references. It rather clearly teaches a transcultural and theological concept *based on Genesis!*

The basic instruction in 1Tim.2 is that women *learn*; that they *not teach the men* and that they be *in submission* in a quiet manner and *not exercise authority*. The 'teaching' referred to here in this passage is not allowed because it would be exercising oversight and thus would violate the principle of submission. Also the command concerning women not to teach men is enforced by the word 'silence' as an opposition to teaching. The context here is clear.

The command '*let the woman learn...with all submission*' is not just to husbands and wives but to all women and men. The word '*gune*' (women) and '*aner*' (male human being) are used in a general sense. If Paul wanted to confine himself to husbands and wives only he would have used a definite article or a possessive pronoun as he does elsewhere, (eg.Eph.5:22).]

(P.8) '*Paul spoke only of the husband as head of his wife, not the male gender as head of the female gender*'.

[The Greek '*gune*' does not distinguish between 'woman' and 'wife'. The interpretation is determined by the context. 1Corinthians 11 is obviously referring to wives. 1Timothy 2:12 is not necessarily referring to wives only as most good translations show. If one inserts 'husband' or 'wife' into the entire passage (including the previous verses on 'modesty'), it will be obvious that the context is not just to husbands and wives. The passages in the New Testament where 'husband' is meant are clearly discernable *by the context*. But all this misses the real issue and the clear command - a women cannot 'teach' or 'usurp authority' over a man.]

(P.8) *'Today we should affirm those who God calls whether male or female...'*.

[If a sexual pervert is 'called' to a childrens ministry, do we 'affirm' them? Do we break the word of God and Paul's commands so as to be positive and 'affirm' such? Anyone can say they are 'called', but how is this to be tested? 1Corinthians 14 tells us clearly that gifts can be misused. The Word of God must be the final arbitrator and it carefully says that the offices of elder/Pastor is male (1Tim.3; Tit.1); and that women are not to publicly teach men or usurp authority over them, (1Tim.2:12-15). As well as this there is an overwhelming *silence* as to any women teaching or holding authoritative offices! If any 'calling' breaks God's word then it is not a true 'calling'. Do we 'affirm' false prophets and false teachers who would say they are 'called'?

Scriptural gifts are not only given by God but *they are regulated by the scriptures.*]

Final Thoughts

This paper is indicative of the current misuse of scripture and poor 'apologetics' on this issue. It is full of scriptures that do not say what the paper is attempting to teach. *It is full of teaching that argues from the silence of scripture or scriptures that do not teach what is affirmed.* Why put emphasis on things that Paul did not say in preference to what he did say!

The principle of interpretation in the paper has been to use out of context scriptures to suit a bias; and twist or ignore others that are clear. Much of what is documented as evidence is in fact 'strawmen' arguments or assumptions. Nowhere does the paper clearly demonstrate that headship and submission are now abrogated.

What is most importantly missing too is the *headship* issue, which is dealt with in verses 13,14 following 1Tim.2:12. The paper simply does not deal with these verses. In 1Timothy 2:12 the rule of *'I suffer not a woman to teach, nor to usurp authority over the man'* is because of two reasons given in the following verses: (A) Vs.13: The original creation - *'Adam was first formed, then Eve'* (B) Vs.14: The original order of *sin* (Adam was not deceived by Satan as was the woman. The women took the lead in sin). These following verses are simply left unattended to throughout the paper.

Paul's convictions for male leadership are heavily rooted in the *headship* issue. The whole debate is rooted in Genesis 1-3 and *any argument for women in ministry must deal with this issue!* Paul uses the fact that *'Adam was formed first'* (1Tim.2:13) to reason for men and women having *different roles*. This fact is missed by most who argue for women in ministry positions with authority over men. It was Adam who is named as representing the whole human race, not Adam and Eve.

It is not just the Old Testament that addresses this headship issue. The New Testament also teaches Christ as the head, then man, then woman: *'But I would have you know, that the head of every man is Christ; and the head of the woman is the man; and the head of Christ is God'*, (1Cor.11:3). The order has not been changed from Genesis. As long as men and women are descended from Adam and Eve, this will not change. Eve was made for Adam and after him; not the reverse, and not at the same time as Adam. There is *order* here. This order is played out in many scriptures such as Colossians 3:18-19: *'Wives submit yourselves unto to your own husbands...husbands love your wives...'*; and Ephesians 5:23 *'the husband is the head of the wife...'*. God said this creation with its order was *'very good'*! The relationships were never to be reversed. What authority do we have to change this?

Israel was troubled by this issue in their history of decline: *'Woe unto the wicked! it shall be ill with him: for the reward of his hands shall be given him. 12 As for my people, children are their oppressors, and women rule over them. O my people, they which lead you cause you to err, and*

destroy the way of my paths', (Is.3:11).

God's word is unbending on this issue. Those who ignore or twist Paul's commands for male leadership and authority do despite to the creation order as well as nullify the authority of the word of God. *'Every word of God is pure: he is a shield unto them that put their trust in him. Add you not unto his words, lest he reprove you, and you be found a liar'*, (Pr.30:5,6).

What is really at stake in this whole debate is the authority of the Bible. If that authority is nullified then marriages and family 'order' are in great danger.

The harmful effects of this new teaching on women in ministry has already shown itself in statistics that show a decrease in male attendances and a 'feminising' of many churches, as well as a decrease in a 'high view' of scripture as the only authority for doctrine. Many denominations that have adopted the liberal views on women in ministry are already experiencing decline in membership and income. *

The very authority of the word of God is at stake in this issue. Our Lord Himself said: *'He that rejects me, and receives not my words, has one that judges him: the word that I have spoken, the same shall judge him in the last day'*, (Jn.12:48).

Dr Martin Lloyd-Jones on 'Women Preachers'

'In many ways the root trouble, even among good Evangelicals, is our failure to heed the plain teachings of Scripture. We accept what Scripture teaches as far as our doctrine is concerned; but when it comes to practice, we very often fail to take the Scriptures as our only guide. When we come to the practical side we employ human tests instead of Scriptural ones. In stead of taking the plain teachings of the Bible, we argue with it. 'Ah yes', we say, 'since the Scriptures were written times have changed'. Dare I give an obvious illustration? Take the question of women preaching, and being fully ordained to the full ministry. The apostle Paul, in writing to Timothy (1Tim 2:11-15) prohibits it directly. He says quite specifically that he does not allow a women to teach or preach. 'Ah yes', we say, as we read that letter, 'He was only thinking of his own age and time; but you know times have changed since then, and we must not be bound. Paul was thinking of semi civilised people in Corinth and places like that'. But the Scripture does not say that. It says, 'Let the women learn in silence with all subjection, but I suffer not a woman to teach nor usurp authority over the man, but to be in silence'. 'Ah, but that was only temporary legislation', we say. Paul puts it like this: 'For Adam was first formed, the Eve. And Adam was not deceived, but the woman being deceived was in the transgression. Notwithstanding, she shall be saved in child bearing, if they continue in faith and charity and holiness with sobriety'. Paul does not say that it was only for the time being; he takes it right back to the Fall and shows that it is an abiding principle. It is something that is true, therefore, of the age in which we live. But thus you see, we argue with Scripture. Instead of taking its plain teaching, we say that times have changed-when it suits our thesis we say it is no longer relevant'...'If you want to avoid terrible disillusionment at the day of judgement, face the Scripture as it is. Do not argue with it, do not try to manipulate it, do not twist; face it, receive it and submit to it whatever the cost'.

(From 'Studies in the Sermon on the Mount', Vol.2).

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Recommended reading: 'Countering the Claims of Evangelical Feminism' by Wayne Grudem

(1) *'An Index of Apostles'*, (125.19-20)

(2) Tertullian, *'Against Marcion'*, (5.8.11)

(3) Tertullian, *'On the Veiling of Virgins'*, (9.1)

*** There is not enough space to prove such claims here but several works are available, including the 'recommended reading' above.**

About Terry Arnold:

Terry Arnold is president of *South Pacific Bible Institute*. He holds a Master of Arts and Biblical studies (MABS) as well as diplomas in Bible and Ministry Studies and teaching. He is continuing further studies in New Testament Greek. He is the author of several books and papers and is involved in a full time ministry of teaching, informing and equipping the church. He is also editor of a worldwide publication '*Diakrisis (Australia)*'. His ministry includes preaching/teaching and conducting seminars in a wide range of churches and colleges in Australia and overseas.