

## **Women & Men Leading Together**

(B. D. Tate March '05; Lord of Lords Bible Community Church; A position Paper addressing women in leadership from a Biblical perspective; Approved and Passed into the content of our Constitution '05)

The Bible is male dominated there is no question of this fact: The Patriarchs of the Old Testament were called by God; The Prophets of the Old Testament were called by God and everyone of them male except Huldah (2 Kings 22:14); The Judges prior to the kings of Israel were all male except Debra the prophethess (Judges 4:4); The kings in Israel of course were all male; The Priesthood established in the Law of Moses was strictly males over thirty years old (consequently that is why Jesus' ministry began when he turned thirty); The Savior is male; the Apostles were all male. There are very few women mentioned in any leadership capacity throughout the Bible's pages. So, if that is the case why would anyone argue, from a biblical perspective, that women should be in leadership?

### **THE TENSION:**

Sometimes what appears to be obvious and straightforward is not always an open and shut case. We live in a fallen world and sin blinds us all. For we all see or look through a glass dimly. Our sin nature has a way of convincing us of things that are not the truth. For example: There are many areas within scripture that appear to contradict. In first John 1:8 *"If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us."* Later in first John 3:6 *"Whoever abides in Him does not sin. Whoever sins has neither seen Him nor known Him."* There is a tension that is created when we try to reconcile these two scriptures. One says we deceive ourselves if we say we have no sin. The other says whoever abides in Him does not sin. How can the two verses both be true? We must dig deeper into the heart of the matter. The tension tempts us to let go of one or the other truth. If we do that

we'll lose revelation knowledge that God has placed for us to know in the tension these verses create. The answer is that both verses are true and it is in seeking that we come to see what is going on. The sin nature is always with us until we die. If we deny any sin, we deceive ourselves and the truth is not in us. The new man, the born again Spirit of God within us, does not sin nor can it for we are born of incorruptible seed. These two natures are in opposition within the believer. Both of these principles are at work, both are true at the same time.

There are many such tensions created in scripture for us to dig deeper into our understanding of God and this world. We often want to eliminate the tension so as to lessen the work, make life simpler, and take control. **We need to remain in the tension.**

#### FROM THE BEGINNING:

In answering the issue of women in leadership I want to begin where the Bible does. In Genesis a fundamental picture of God's original design and purpose is explained.

Gen. 1:26-28 "Then God said, "Let Us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness; let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, over the birds of the air, and over the cattle, over all the earth and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth. So God created man in His own image; in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them. Then God blessed them and God said to them, 'Be fruitful and multiply; fill the earth and subdue it; have dominion over the fish of the sea, over the birds of the air, and over every living thing that moves on the earth.'"

There are major things established here:

- 1) God is plural "Us"
- 2) Man made in God's image
- 3) Man to have dominion
- 4) Man is male and female
- 5) The dominion is not over each other but the world.

So from the beginning they were to have dominion together and together subdue the earth.

#### FINAL OUTCOME:

When we fast forward to the end of things in Revelations, in the teachings of Jesus concerning the final outcome, and in the epistles, we have a similar picture.

Jesus said in Luke 20:34-36 “The sons of this age marry and are given in marriage. But those who are counted worthy to attain that age, and the resurrection from the dead, neither marry nor are given in marriage; nor can they die anymore, for they are equal to the angels and are sons of God, being sons of the resurrection.”

Here Jesus says that when we are resurrected from the dead we will be like the angels who are neither male nor female, marrying or given in marriage. **Both men and women are the sons of God together.**

Galatians 3:26-29 “For you are all sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus. For as many of you as were baptized into Christ have put on Christ. 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. And if you are Christ’s, then you are Abraham’s seed, and heirs according to the promise.”

Again, this identifies all, male and female, as the sons of God. Everyone who is in Christ Jesus is made one in Him. The two become one similar to the same teaching about marriage where the man shall leave his father and mother and shall cleave to his wife and the two shall become one.

Romans 8:16-17 “The Spirit Himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God, and if children, then heirs—heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ, if indeed we suffer with Him, that we may also be glorified together.”

Every Christian male or female is a child of God and a joint heir together in Christ. There are many scriptures that confirm this understanding.

So, from the beginning to the final outcome, God intended that man, male and female, have dominion together, to rule and reign, to have leadership together, at first in the Garden, and at the end, in Christ.

## SO WHAT HAPPENED?

The *Fall* happened. The curse that God declared from the fall is very telling listen to

Gen. 3:16 “To the woman He said: ‘I will greatly multiply your sorrow and your conception; In pain you shall bring forth children; **Your desire will be toward (subject) to your husband, and he shall rule over you.**”

God is not deciding to put the woman under the man as a slave but telling the world what is going to happen because of the fall. The man will dominate taking advantage of his strength turning the intended relationship between men and women into a perversion. Her desires will be subject to him, and he will rule over her. The dominion of the earth will be male driven and dominated; women will lose out on their God given place.

Women were meant to rule and reign in this life along side men. That is not what happened. Only a short investigation into history will show that males have completely dominated women treating them like possessions, slaves, cattle, and even children. Men have deprived women of their equality, their rights as joint heirs in this life, and making them subservient as a second-class people.

**Does this mean that there are no roles, no positional relationship between men and women?** No. Remember the tension of scripture that it is often not an either/or scenario, but both. In this case, there are roles, relationships, positions, as indicated by the creation account where Adam was created first, then Eve from Adam’s rib. She was not taken from his head that she should rule over him, neither was she taken from his foot that he would rule over her, but from his side, near his heart, that he would provide, protect, and esteem her as himself.

## THE MARRIAGE INSTITUTION:

This picture of the relationship between a man and a woman is about marriage! This institution created by heaven is not to be mixed up with society as a whole. Marriage is a unique relationship between one man and one woman for life. The husband and wife relationship is to be intimate, personal, joint, communal, trustworthy, mutual, considerate, and honoring. The husband has the headship role of servant-leadership; this speaks of treating his wife as he would himself. This role is to make sure the will of God is done in the marriage and home. This relationship is joined as one, there is a mutual sharing, giving and taking, loving and leading between them. Together as heirs of salvation the husband and wife have dominion over their household. Love does not dictate, love serves, love provides equality, security, respect, and love operates as one. In the midst of this relationship the Bible is clear that wives are to respect their husbands and submit to their leadership and husbands are to love their wives as themselves (Titus 1& 2; I Pet. 3; Eph. 5). Leadership doesn't dictate it provides for the one who is capable, talented, knowledgeable, to lead—sometimes the wife should lead. There are times when a husband should step back and let his wife take over, especially when she knows better.

## SOCIETY IS TO BE EGALITARIAN:

This picture of marriage is not to be applied to society. Women are not to be subject to all men, obeying them as they would “*their own husband.*” Men are not to treat all women like their own wives. Society is another class unto its self. Society is not made up of husbands and wives relating to each other, **it is made up of brothers and sisters relating to each other.** The husband and wife relationship stays within marriage. Outside of marriage the general application is back to Genesis 1:26-28 where man is defined as male and female made in the image of God. In this role men and women are to have dominion together over all the earth—this is an egalitarian society. **In this arena we are brothers and sisters to each other like in a family they are**

**equal.** Brothers do not have a superior position to sisters in the normal family (at least they should not).

I Pet. 5:5 “Likewise you younger people, submit yourselves to your elders, Yes, **all of you be submissive to one another**, and be clothed with humility, for

‘God resists the proud, but gives grace to the humble.’”

Eph. 5:19-21 “speaking to one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord, giving thanks always for all things to God the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, **submitting to one another in the fear of God.**”

These passages refer to the body of Christ, male and female, working side by side, submitting to one another in love. This means that promotion, leadership, career, positions, opportunity, abilities, talents, gifts, knowledge, information, intelligence, skill, are not based on being male nor female but upon attributes earned and exhibited. That society is right for the most part about giving males and females equal opportunity, equal pay, and equal rights under the law (I draw a line for the military where men have the primary role of protecting).

#### THE GODHEAD IMAGE:

The Father, Son, and Holy Spirit these three are One. We were created in God’s image. We were created male and female therefore, **God is both male and female**—although God is much more. God the Father is the source of all authority; yet, the Holy Spirit is equal to and just as much God. The Holy Spirit operates like the female, motherhood of God being the one who conceives and gives birth to the Word of God. The Word of God is the Son. Would anyone deny the Holy Spirit’s authority? Would anyone deny the role of the Holy Spirit is all-powerful? Yet, the Holy Spirit will not move, confirm, conceive, or give birth to any other word except the Father’s. Like a faithful wife, the Spirit is ever faithful to the Father—they are One. Does the Holy Spirit lead, absolutely, but never outside of the Father’s will. The Son of God, the Word of God is also God. Does Christ lead? Does Christ rule?

Absolutely, but not outside of the Father's will and the anointing of the Holy Spirit—these three are One.

Then there is the Bride of Christ, which is the body of Christ, the saints of God. The Bride is One with Christ and will rule and reign (and lead) in Him. The Bride is female, yet, will rule and reign with Christ. Never will the Bride usurp authority over her head—Christ, yet, the two shall be One. (The Bride is also the daughter of God.)

**This teaching is consistent throughout the Bible that men and women were meant to share together in the dominion of the earth and the eternal kingdom of God.** It is sin that has warped this perspective. It is the prophetic fulfillment that God declared would happen.

\*\*\*The Godhead then shows that there are roles each play but the leadership and dominion are shared. Although they share authority, power, and leadership, there is no question who is ultimately in control—the Father.

We don't see a Godhead that is male dominated and dictatorial but loving in full respect and complimentary. We should not disrespect the Holy Spirit but be subject, willingly submissive, desiring to be filled by the same.

#### SEEKING BALANCE:

Men and women are different. The uniqueness of both sexes is awesome and mysterious at the same time. Both bring to the table strengths and weaknesses. Both bring abilities, talents, gifts, and graces. To eliminate one to serve over the other in a societal setting is to blind us in one eye. Both eyes are needed, both ears hearing, both hands working, both feet walking.

Furthermore, the spiritual attributes for leadership described in scripture are not exclusive to males they are attainable by both. What we need in leadership are those who are spiritually minded, spiritually stable and mature, balanced, not coming to be served but to serve, biblically literate, able to teach and share their faith, sensitive to the Holy Spirit, repentant, considerate, not new

converts, not given to losing their temper, able to manage their household well, good conduct, good reputation, good sense, good judgment that comes from knowing Christ Jesus. These attributes are found in males and females.

What we need are those who have spiritual life in the Holy Spirit, a visible life of the Word of God being applied in their lives, and a sincere desire to see the will of the Father done.

*Special addition* : When we face opposing teaching, interpretations, and/or understandings from scripture we need to allow both to inform the other. We can't choose to ignore some verses or decide that some verses trump others—removing the tension. In this case where some verses, the way they are translated and taught, exclude women from teaching men, or preaching in the church, **flies contrary to major themes from the gospel**. If Jesus commissioned **all disciples** for example to walk as He walked then these verses have great weight and should not be ignored. What happens is that the whole counsel of God's word is thwarted because we compartmentalize the issue. This issue concerns the role of women in the church. **All disciples** mean men and women doesn't it? **All believers** mean all men and women doesn't it? So consider the following verses:

Mark 16:20 Then **the disciples** went out and *preached everywhere*, and the Lord worked with them and confirmed his word by the signs that accompanied it. (Disciples are men and women)

John 14:12 "Most assuredly, I say to you, **he who believes** in Me, the works that I do **he will do also**; and greater works than these he will do, because I go to My Father. ("He" refers to anyone who believes not just men and Jesus went about preaching everywhere!)

Mr 16:15 And He said to them, "Go into all the world and *preach* the gospel to every creature. (He commissioned **all**, not just men)

Matt. 28:19 "Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit,  
20 **"teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you**;  
(Disciples are men and women teaching **all** to observe what Christ commanded the apostles, which includes healing, teaching, and preaching...)

Ga 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. (We all have the same Spirit, to do the same things, for the same purpose, we all have Christ in all that Christ is.)

2Co 5:20 Now then, **we** are ambassadors for Christ, as though God were pleading through us: we implore you on Christ's behalf, be reconciled to God. (Women are ambassadors as much as men)

Ac 2:17 And it shall come to pass in the last days, says God, **That I will pour**

**out of My Spirit on all flesh;** Your sons and your daughters shall **prophecy**, Your young men shall see visions, Your old men shall dream dreams. (To prophesy is to proclaim, teach, instruct publicly the word of God, God gives women as much to say as men)

Ac 2:18 And on My menservants and on *My maidservants* I will pour out My Spirit in those days; And they shall prophesy. (all flesh are commissioned to act just as Jesus did)

1Jo 4:17 Love has been perfected among us in this: that we may have boldness in the day of judgment; **because as He is, so are we in this world.** (both men and women are as He is in this world.)

Joh 20:21 So Jesus said to them again, "Peace to you! **As the Father has sent Me, I also send you.**" (Just as means just like, with the same emphasis, the same power, the same mission, the same works, Jesus went about preaching everywhere so are **all of his disciples.**)

## SCRIPTURE AT ISSUE:

In **I Timothy 2:11-15** it says these things:

“Let a woman learn in silence with all submission. And I do not permit a woman to teach or to have authority over a man, but to be in silence. For Adam was formed first, then Eve. And Adam was not deceived, but the woman being deceived, fell into transgression. Nevertheless she will be saved in childbearing if they continue in faith, love, and holiness, with self-control.”

This passage seems to contradict what I have just written. First, let's recognize that this teaching of Paul's is addressing the **marriage relationship**. This is true because he refers to Adam and Eve who were the first marriage. Marriage is not the standard for society or the church relationships between men and women. Second, the word "man" in verse 12 is the Greek word "Aner" which refers strongly to husband. The context and the word agree that Paul is speaking about husbands and wives operating in the Church.

The culture also affirms this possibility strongly because women were not given an education, no rights, no authority, and were treated like possessions. When the early church met many of them sat men and women on opposite sides of the Church. When the women had questions they would call across to their husbands for answers disrupting the service. In some cases, maybe they were

correcting the husband's behavior publicly bringing disgrace to him.

Third when Paul admonishes women to be silent in this passage it is better-translated "**wives.**" In I Tim. 2:9, 11 & I Cor. 14:34 & 35 the Greek Word is "Gune" which is specifically applied and defined as wife. A paraphrase could be rendered as follows:

Wives be silent in church, be in submission to the service, and do not teach or usurp authority over your husband, but learn in silence.

As far as a women being deceived more than a man that is very debatable, Paul could be simply stating what happened at the *Fall*. Jeremiah 17:9 "The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked: Who can know it?" This is a male and female problem!

In **I Timothy 3:1-7** (Titus 1:5-9) qualifications of overseers are given.

"This is a faithful saying: If a man desires the position of an overseer he desires a good work. The overseer then must be blameless, the husband of one wife, temperate, sober-minded, of good behavior, hospitable, able to teach; not given to wine, not violent, not greedy for money, but gentle, not quarrelsome, not covetous; one who rules his own house well, having his children in submission with all reverence (for if a man does not know how to rule his own house, how will he take care of the church of God?); not a novice, lest being puffed up with pride he fall into the same condemnation as the devil. Moreover he must have a good testimony among those who are outside, lest he fall into reproach and the snare of the devil."

There is no question that this is referring to a male; however, there are some interesting and reasonable possibilities that could include females.

- 1) The Greek word for "man" in verse one is "Tis" that refers to any man, any person, whosoever will, the

general definition of man. This man being defined as male or female from Genesis is entirely possible.

- 2) The attributes given in this passage are not exclusively male. A female can be blameless, temperate, sober-minded, of good behavior, etc.
- 3) The specifically male orientation as being the husband of one wife could be cultural in that men were the leaders in society because women were not treated as equals. **The expectation then would be that leaders would be male.**
- 4) From the practical point of view women in a subservient role in society and suddenly having authority in the church without education, experience, rights, and personal confidence, may be a disaster waiting to happen.

Christianity, specifically protestant Christianity, has elevated the role of women in society. In the cultures of Islam, Catholicism, or other religions, women do not enjoy the same rights and privileges as they do say in America. The male dominated societies leave women under men as a whole. This is not Biblical, as I have tried to explain, from the beginning or in the end. When we separate the Marriage institution from society and allow men and women equality in opportunity and leadership, we are heading in a more Biblically intended model.

When we look at the scriptures that teach about the marriage relationships we cannot apply them to society or the church. Yes, it is true that the household is a good test for good church leadership. But that test does not mean that the father of the home is now the father of the church. It means that good leadership has a sound basis from which to work if it has been faithful in the home.

*Special Addition:* In Paul writing to Timothy we have a mentor writing to a young man about his ministry (I Tim. 1:2). Paul is exhorting Timothy to not let his youth be despised or cause him to doubt his teaching to others (I Tim.4:12).

Paul is writing things to a young man and is exhorting him specifically (I Tim. 1:18).

Because of the general and major themed verses listed above (and that is not all of them) from Jesus' teaching (and apostles) we need to allow them to *inform us about this letter to Timothy*. If we interpret Paul's exhortations to Timothy as strictly prohibiting women from teaching men, we have a conflict if not an outright contradiction. We can however, maintain a faithful interpretation of these major verses and look again at Paul's message to Timothy.

As I have explained **I Timothy 2:11-15** we can see how it can move into the marriage relationship from its context. This needs to happen because we do not let go of the general commission to all disciples—including women. When Paul writes to Timothy about elders and deacons is it possible that it is male dominated because he is writing to Timothy who is a male? If Paul had written to a female about elders and deacons it would reflect the gender related changes. For example: If I write to my son about joining the police force I'm going to write about the requirements from a male perspective because he is male. If I write to my daughter about joining the police force I'm going to write about the requirements from a female perspective because she is female. It unfolds this way: "Dear son, a policeman is required to perform certain tasks. He is required to pass this standard and that one. All policemen are expected to do this or that..." To my daughter I would write, "Dear Daughter, a policewoman is required to perform certain tasks. She is required to pass this standard and that one. All policewomen are expected to do this or that..."

**IMPORTANT:** Consider this verse from II Tim. 2:2 (which Paul wrote after the controversial verses) "And the things that you have heard from me among many witnesses, commit these to *faithful men* <444> who will be able *to teach* <1321> others also."

*Strong's Concordance* references the actual Greek words with the numbers that follow it. "**Men**" is the Greek word (444 ) anyrwpov anthropos *anth'-ro-pos* i.e. a human being; AV-man 552,

- 1) a human being, whether male or female
- 1a) generically, to include all human individuals

\*The apostle Paul is writing to Timothy (in second Timothy) to commit all that he is teaching him to faithful men and women (human beings) who will be able to teach others also. This agrees with the general exhortation of the major verses listed while it would contradict the *traditional* interpretation given to **I Timothy 3:1-7**.

The word *to "teach"* in this passage is as follows: 1321 didaskw didasko *did-as'-ko* AV-teach 93,

- 1) to teach
- 1a) to hold discourse with others in order to instruct them, deliver didactic discourses

1b) **to be a teacher**

1c) **to discharge the office of a teacher**, conduct one's self as a teacher

2) to teach one

2a) to impart instruction

2b) instill doctrine into one

2c) the thing taught or enjoined

2d) to explain or expound a thing

2f) to teach one something

## **I Corinthians 14:33-35 Order in the Church Meetings.**

“For God is not the author of confusion but of peace, as in all the churches of the saints. Let your women (wives) keep silent in the churches, for they are not permitted to speak; but they are to be submissive as the law also says. And if they want to learn something, let them ask their own husbands at home; for it is shameful for women (wives) to speak in church.”

First, the **context of this teaching is about order in the Church**. Confusion would erupt when talking out of turn, excessively, to break the silence merely as an extended or random harangue. This definition is from the Greek word “laleo” which is the word used in verse 35 to speak. Wives were not to speak out in the silence in order to ask their questions of their husbands but to wait until they got home. It was considered irreverent. Why were the women doing this? Again, the women were not educated; they did not read nor write and they were treated as second-class citizens, if not children. They simply may have wanted to know what things meant, what was being said, and so on. This confusion within the services is the same theme Paul was addressing in I Tim. 2:9-15 (“...as in all the churches”).

Second, although at face value this passage seems to shut the door on the issue of women speaking in church and (consequently being in leadership): Women speaking as in leading in prayer, in prophesying, or as in teaching (That is what is traditionally interpreted by speaking here); It also **directly contradicts** with what Paul just wrote in verse 26 of the same chapter:

“How is it then, brethren? Whenever you come together, **each of you** has a psalm, has a teaching, has a tongue, has a revelation, has an interpretation. Let all things be done for edification.”

Brethren include brothers and sisters. Peter preached in Acts 2: 17 & 18 by quoting prophecy that in the last days God will pour out His Spirit on all flesh, including females. Furthermore, on that same day there were one hundred and twenty disciples in the upper room including Mary the mother of Jesus with other women and they **All** spoke with tongues. **Brethren does not mean just men.** Although the Greek definition for brethren is brother implying only males, it is meant in the communal concept of souls being saved together, men and women—brethren, joint heirs of the inheritance of the saints. For example Romans 8:29:

“For whom He foreknew, He also predestined to be conformed to the image of His Son, that He might be the firstborn among many brethren.”

This passage doesn't just mean males. We are all brethren in Christ Jesus, males and females, being conformed into His image. From Genesis we understand that man means both males and females. When the scriptures speak of brethren it means the body of Christ!

As we look into the meaning of the word that was used for speak in the Greek, “Laleo” it has an extended meaning that includes: to speak after, an extended or random harangue; to ask, bid, boast, call, describe, give out, name, put forth, say, tell, utter. For anyone to interrupt, to take away attention or focus from the service by using anyone of these descriptive methods would be rude causing confusion and disorder.

I am suggesting strongly that a more appropriate understanding of Paul's admonition is a prohibition against speaking that causes confusion and disorder in the church service. This was the context of the teaching from the rest of the chapter. He is not prohibiting women from speaking, teaching, preaching, sharing, testifying, singing, or prophesying, in church because he just stated that each (the brethren—men and women) in their own

turn, in order, may do so; but let all things be done for edification. Why doesn't he mention men then if the speaking admonition is about disorder? Is it not true that women have been known to speak more often, more at random, more in public, uttering, asking, breaking the silence, than men? Are men capable of violating this prohibition? Absolutely; however, even studies have shown that women speak twenty to twenty-five thousands words a day compared to men who speak ten to fifteen thousand. Do women speak more than men? Is it more of a problem for women than men? In most cultures the answer is yes.

### **Issues concerning I Cor. 11: Head Coverings.**

This chapter is interesting, confusing, and difficult to discern as it is translated. It is interesting because Paul addresses the line of authority: God, Christ, man and woman. It is interesting because he places great significance on creation's order (as opposed to evolution). The fact that woman came from man means that she is his glory. While specifically he states that a man is God's glory. Furthermore, because of the creation account, woman was made for man, not the other way around. These to me are powerful arguments from creation and God's intent. In fact, one could argue that all women are to be under all men from verse 3.

“But I want you to know that the head of every man is Christ, the head of woman is man, and the head of Christ is God.”

I find this passage confusing because another major theme of Paul's teaching is that in Christ there is equality for all are one in Him. Verse 11:

“Nevertheless, neither is man independent of woman, nor woman independent of man, in the Lord.”

Paul, Peter, John, and all of the teaching found in the New Testament strongly and clearly state that anyone in Christ is joined as one in the Lord. Anyone born of the Spirit is a son of God, including women. We are to be subject one to another... I have made a sharp distinction between the marriage institution and the body of Christ as a whole. In the marriage there is one type

of relationship, in the body of Christ there is a different relationship between men and women. Marriage does not dictate community in the body of Christ nor does the community of believers dictate marriage relationships. In marriage we are “One” husband and wife; in the community we are one being brothers and sisters. These are two different set of relationships, two different understandings of the meaning of being one.

If we take this passage above and use it to understand how the body of Christ, the community of believers is to relate to one another, we are going to come out with one set of conclusions. If we look at this passage as Paul addressing marriage we’ll come out with a different set of conclusions.

Some would argue I’m sure, that it doesn’t matter; however, I feel strongly that it makes the whole passage understandable, useful, and consistent, **if we do chose properly what institution Paul is addressing.**

A simple investigation comes up with some rather interesting facts. First is that every where in this chapter where “woman” is translated it is the Greek word, “Gune” which as in the other passages I cite is better translated specifically a wife—wife, woman. Second, that every where in this chapter where “man” is translated is the Greek word, “Aner” which strongly indicates a man—husband!

*Special note:* I find it very curious that other words in the Greek for man were not used such as: Anthropinos, Anthropos, or even “Tis” which are more in line with the general sense of man, a human being, common man, mankind (Not a husband but man). In the Greek whenever “wives or wife” is translated into English, or whenever a woman in general is meant to be understood and translated into English, it is the same word—“Gune.” So how do we translate it woman in the general sense or wife specifically in other cases? The context determines its application and translation. So, if that is the case, and it is, translating this passage as “wives or wife” is entirely proper, possible, and plausible.

If we stay consistent with the two institutions being separate and having their own parameters we can go back to this passage and begin to apply our understanding differently and I think more accurately to what Paul is teaching under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit.

- 1) This is not about the body of Christ and therefore to be used for general community relationships between men and women.
- 2) This is about the marriage relationship and how it applies to husband and wives, head coverings, praying, or prophesying in church or otherwise... (Again a wife can prophesy in Church according to this passage from verse 5 and then relating it to verse 16).

Re-read this teaching and replace man with husband and woman with wife. Now, to me, it begins to make better sense. Why should we take this step? I have argued that the issue of women sharing leadership with men is Biblical. If this passage seems to conflict with other places that validate shared leadership, then we need to look deeper, discern its meaning by reevaluating its intention. I believe the intention is to address marriage relationships not the body of Christ. Doing this is like taking a puzzle piece and seeing that it just doesn't seem to fit where it is, taking it out of the puzzle, turning it a little, looking at a another place, and finding its home where it does fit and belong.

In essence, it seems that Paul is addressing a Corinthian argument about wives having head coverings. He seems to be restating some of the major points of this argument. Then at the end he basically says, "If anyone is contentious about this matter, we don't have it anywhere else (Verse 16)." **In other words, Corinthians you are the only ones teaching this custom.** Head coverings are not an issue anywhere else. This to me would be entirely consistent with Paul's teaching about circumcision for example. Paul clearly states that uncircumcision nor circumcision is nothing (I Cor. 7:17-19). Outward or physical acts of piety are ultimately based on works to obtain righteousness that God has freely given through grace.

AS YOU REREAD IT, for example...

Paul's line of authority would then relate to the marriage institution making it more consistent with other passages dealing with the body of Christ. It is reconcilable to see it fitting as: God is the head of Christ; Christ is the head of the husband; and the Husband is the head of the wife. That is consistent for example with Ephesians 5:22-24

“Wives, submit to your own husbands as to the Lord. For the husband is head of the wife, as also Christ is head of the church (bride); and He is the Savior of the body. Therefore, just as the church is subject to Christ, so let the wives be to their own husbands, in everything.”

I added the parentheses “bride” to indicate the consistent relationship of Christ and His bride, husbands and their wives. Furthermore, Paul says let wives be subject to THEIR OWN husbands, NOT some other husband, or men in general. The teaching in I Cor. 11 would indicate strongly that women are to be subject to all men arguing from the creation account which quite frankly is between Adam and Eve—the marriage institution. To me then, these two passages would be in conflict if we don't reread and re-translate as I suggest.

#### PASTORS:

Pastors are the shepherds of the flock of the local congregation. They are responsible to teach and train the body of Christ under his care to do the work of the ministry. Shepherds feed, instruct, correct, train, lead, encourage, and develop the spiritual life of believers.

Jer. 2:8, those who pastor are to know the Lord and preach and teach only what the Lord commands.

Jer. 3:15, Shepherds are to be after God's own heart who will feed the flock with knowledge and understanding.

Jer. 10:21, Shepherds are to stay sensitive to the Holy Spirit and spend their life seeking the Lord.

Jer. 12:10, Shepherds are to protect God's vineyard.

Jer. 23:1, Shepherds are to gather, feed, nurture, and attend to the flock of God.

Eph. 4:11, Christ himself gave some to be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, and some pastors and teachers, for the equipping of the saints for the work of ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ.”

Pastors are the under-shepherds, the head of the local body of Christ. Pastors are considered elders and require the same qualifications listed in I Tim. 3 and Titus, etc.

Elders who rule well are to be respected, given double honor, and not to be accused except by two or three witnesses (I Tim. 5:17-20). Any man or woman can fulfill these admonitions and qualifications.

## THE PREFERENCE

The preference of pastors should be men because the Good Shepherd (John 10) is Jesus. Jesus is male and head of the body of Christ; therefore the local expression of the headship of Christ should also be male. This leadership role is also an example for the body of Christ. **The body of Christ is the bride and under the bridegroom Jesus—pastors represent this relationship of the shepherd and the flock; the bridegroom and the bride.** If this is true, then by way of example, order, and consistency, a male pastor fulfills this role better—simply because he is male.

The local church leadership—pastor, due to the overwhelming example in scripture of male leadership listed in the very first paragraph on this position paper, should be men of God called to pastor. Women pastors, in my opinion should be the exception and mandated by practicality. A woman pastor should be chosen over any male that is unbiblical in theology, shows poor qualifications as listed, is new in the faith, etc. Ultimately, the leadership of the Church and in particular the pastor **should be primarily the most spiritually grounded and experienced persons—male or female.**

## SUMMARY:

- 1) From the beginning and the final outcome, men and women are joint heirs, working together to subdue the earth. The leadership is shared.
- 2) It is the **Fall** that has perverted our understanding of the leadership roles of men and women.
- 3) The definition of “man” is both male and female, which means wherever the Bible refers to “man” is it meant for both male and female, except where the context indicates otherwise.
- 4) The Godhead operates in unity, authority, and leadership, with roles and relationships being uniquely manifested. Yet, the equality and shared authority is evident.
- 5) The tension between shared leadership in the body of Christ and roles of responsibility in marriage is something we must work within.
- 6) The marriage institution and the Church are two separate realms of roles and responsibility. The Body of Christ refers to both men and women.
- 7) The submissiveness of men and women is to be mutual in the body of Christ.
- 8) The marriage relationship of husbands and wives are to be embraced from scripture. This relationship does not continue into the Church.
- 9) Male leadership is obvious from Genesis to Revelation there are some exceptions.
- 10) Men and Women can both attain the attributes and qualifications found in scripture for overseers in I Tim., Titus, and I Peter.
- 11) Ultimately, the Godhead, the marriage institution, and the male dominated leadership of the Patriarchs, Priests, Judges, Prophets, Kings, Savior, Apostles, and Church Fathers, strongly suggests that Church leadership be male where possible and practical. Where no strong male leadership exists, then women should lead. **I speak specifically of the pastorate.**

Therefore, under these guidelines, principles, and examples, **I see the pastorate of the Church being under male leadership (like the Godhead, the Priesthood, the Judges, the Prophets, the Savior, the Apostles, and even like the marriage institution)**; however, all levels of leadership under this being shared by both men and women depending upon the attributes, gifts, graces, and qualifications manifested in their lives. Similarly, as in the home, after the parents (Shepherds), the brothers and sisters are to be equals. Obviously, the shepherds of the home are the father and mother! The pastor should be male, elders can be female to provide the balance needed from the example of the home, the Godhead, and the mutual respect and submissiveness of the body of Christ.

**Special note:**

There is tension even in this position paper. On the one hand, I am saying that the Church is not a marriage institution but more egalitarian; however, I embrace the representative nature of Christ and His Bride, the Church, in referencing the Pastorate. I am arguing that leadership is shared in church with men and women because it is the body life, a society setting; yet, I strongly lean to the shepherd (Pastor) as being male because of marriage images of the Godhead, the savior who is the Great Shepherd was male, and the household head is the father. I write that men and women in society are equals and leadership attributes are attainable by each; but then use a household image of brothers and sisters being equal in the home to support shared leadership. The conclusion is that although marriage and the home are separate institutions from society, they do intermingle and are intended to support each other. It is not clean-cut altogether or black and white between marriage and society. There are times they share defining moments, purposes, and meaning.

THE QUESTION BECOMES...

**Is preaching & teaching, and leading only a male responsibility and privilege?**

**Acts 2:17, 18:**

“And it shall come to pass in the last days, says God, that I will pour out of My Spirit on all flesh; **Your sons and your daughters** shall prophesy, Your young men shall see visions, Your old men shall dream dreams.

And on **My menservants and on My maidservants** I will pour out My Spirit I those days; And they shall prophesy.

Peter in preaching on the Day of Pentecost proclaims that the prophecy of Joel 2:28-32 is fulfilled and the Holy Spirit is now being poured out on all flesh—both men & women. Furthermore, he says that both men and women, sons and daughters, shall prophesy. To prophesy is to publicly proclaim and expound the Word of God; to preach out and testify of God’s message about the past, present, and future. Preaching is therefore not just a male responsibility it is for both. God chooses women to inspire, to fill, to lead, to expand upon the Word of God also. God gives women something to say too.

### **What about leadership?**

There is no prohibition in scripture (New Testament) against women in leadership or teaching in the body of Christ. If you take away the scriptures cited (I Tim. 2:11-15 & I Cor. 14:33-35) before and categorize them as referring to the marriage relationship—which I strong feel they do. What we have left is inference. The inference that since male leadership dominates from Jesus’ own disciples, to most of the references in Acts, that female leadership is not Biblical. I fully understand taking the qualifications for elders found in I Tim. 3:1-7 & Titus being male and believing that must be the end of the story; however, I’m not sure we can end it there nor should we.

If we have some opposing understandings of women in leadership, as I think we do, then we must see if there is any other pertinent information that could inform us on how these opposing views come together. The tension is: the leadership found by example is male for the most part; yet, there are scriptures that indicate strongly as I have presented that women are to be included in leadership—to have dominion with men.

## **What could inform the situation further?**

- 1) Women were neither educated nor respected by society. They were not given rights; their testimony and place in the judicial system practically did not exist. They did not hold public office, vote, or own property, businesses, as a general rule. Their lot in life depended upon their father, husband, or brother. A widow would have influence, money, property or some power if her husband did. A woman did not serve in the military but was given simple choices such as family, caring and nurturing, giving birth, or serving along side their man.
- 2) Women were not trained in self defense, given guns, cars, opportunity to be on their own. In practicality, for a woman to journey anywhere was risky business of being attacked, raped, kidnapped, exploited, etc.,. Only in a safer, more egalitarian society can or should women travel, evangelize as in a missionary journey, where law and order are secure. The culture even under Roman domination didn't mean travel was safe. Modern technology, travel, security, provides a much safer place for women. Living on their own, owning their own business, whether in the city or country, is relatively a contemporary opportunity for women.
- 3) The culture in which Christianity was birthed was pagan. This means that women were not treated as equals but usually objects of male desires and wants. Until the gospel could change men, provide a society that respects and protects women's rights, women would need to remain second class in participation in many ways.

**Can women lead?** Absolutely, they can and do often times despite their disadvantages. Women over the centuries have led through their husband's position of power. The saying: "He is merely a figure head," wasn't birthed out of nothing. Women have led in the home and some would say: "And that's where they should stay!" If God created man to be male and female, where

does it say that the dominion they were to share only occurs in the home? Further, the fact that a woman, mother, does have dominion at home, sharing that leadership with her husband, means that this institution shows they were meant to genuinely lead together in the earth. If it wasn't for the capable, effective, gifted leadership of women in the home, our world would be utterly in chaos. If they can lead our most valued treasure, our children, they can lead anything else that comes along.

If only men are to lead in the Church, in society, and in the home, then women indeed are being treated like children. This is the case with Islam, Catholicism, Hinduism, and other religions and cultures. Do we think they got it right? Judaism, which is the foundation for Christianity, also is very male dominated, but they missed the Messiah do we think they got it right everywhere else? **Conversely, I don't think Paul got it wrong when the culture of his day was so male dominated. His teaching would be consistent with loving protection of women, and until society changed and treated women as equals, male leadership was expedient, and practical.**

#### CONCLUSION:

I think we can see a logical, valid, scriptural basis for men and women sharing leadership together. I think when the Kingdom of Christ comes we will see that God intends leadership to be shared. In Christ there is neither male nor female...this doesn't eliminate the roles of marriage, but it speaks volumes to our community, fellowship, the body of Christ, and society as a whole. The fall has distorted women's roles and responsibilities in the world, society, and the church. They have been robbed of their rightful role to stand alongside men and lead. Dominion was not given to males alone; it was given to both males and females—man. If godly men do not stand up and defend, protect, and provide women their equality, opportunities, and responsibilities, they will remain second class citizens. **We are brothers and sisters, not masters and slaves, and not husbands and wives to each other.** Therefore, our church will include women alongside our men in all

areas of leadership, teaching, and serving, including the pastorate, if necessary.

***Final Notes:***

-Prophetesses are mentioned in (Judges 4:4 & II Kings 22:14) and Acts 21:9,

“Now this man had four virgin daughters who prophesied.”

-The church that meets at Aquila and Priscilla’s house infers the possibility of a woman in leadership from I Cor. 16:19

-Aquila and Priscilla explained and taught Apollos the gospel more accurately in Acts 18:26.

-Qualities of a Sound Church from Titus 2:3—

“...the older women likewise, that they be reverent in behavior, not slanderers, not given to much wine, teachers of good things—“

**They are teachers**, especially of younger women in their marriages, homes, and parenting; however, this does not exclude teaching of good things in the church...it is assumed here that older women only teach younger women (it implies this), yet, the door is not closed because teaching good things is much more than marriage, home, and parenting.

**QUOTES CONCERNING THIS ISSUE OF WOMEN IN LEADERSHIP**

Women, Authority & The Bible, edited by Alvera Mickelsen InterVarsity Press, Copyright 1987. This publication is a collection of essays and responses from an Evangelical Colloquium on Women and the Bible held October 9-11, 1984, in Oak Brook, Illinois. These quotes are a representation of the issue from “some of today’s leading evangelicals (who) seek to break through a critical impasse.”

“The passages mainly in view are I Cor. 11:3-16; 14:33-35 and I Tim. 2:9-15. To lump these three passages together and rule out their relevance to our present age and society appears to me

arbitrary and likely to raise questions about the seriousness of one's commitment to biblical authority." Page 45

-The suggestion that the passage is perfectly plain and admits no other interpretation than that it disqualifies women for the office of elder or pastor is simply not acceptable." I Tim. 2:8-15 Page 46

-“Appointive Male leadership” husbands are to be head over their wives, and men are to be the leaders of the churches. (page 53)

-“...Scripture twisting. No evangelical likes to be told that he or she is cheating in exegesis, even if one is.” (page 54)

-“...biblical feminists see the Bible tied together by the creational themes of complementarities, full humanity and equal opportunity/accountability, with this triad thrown radically out of kilter by the Fall, but restored by redemption. (page62)

-Feminists and traditionalists both are trying to harmonize two apparently discrepant strands in Scripture. (page 62)

-Therefore, while we should approach I Cor. 14 on its own terms, we should honestly recognize that only it and I Tim. 2:8-15 in all of the New Testament specifically restrict the ministry of women.” (page 148-9)

-I Tim. 2:11-12 is it the controlling text or is Gal. 3:28? (page213)

-I Tim. 2:11-15 because women did ministry in the New Testament passages, could only be a temporal prohibition due to the perilous situation for women in society at that time and place. (page 217)