

SQUARELY ON THE BIBLE

1. Biblical Support For Restricting Women In Church Leadership

- Women in creation
- Women leaders in the Old Testament
- Jesus and women
- Women in the early church
- Women in the New Testament letters

SQUARELY ON THE BIBLE

2. Biblical Support For Affirming Women In Church Leadership

- Women in creation
- Women leaders in the Old Testament
- Jesus and women
- Women in the early church
- Women in the New Testament letters

TEXT IN CONTEXT

- Identity
- Politics
- Justice
- Truth
- Love
- Unity
- Mission

WIML – A CROSS-DISCIPLINARY ISSUE

Theology	Christology
Pneumatology	Ecclesiology
Missiology	Eschatology
Anthropology	Change Theory
History	Ethics
Epistemology	Phenomenology
Worldview	Tautology
Justice	Leadership Theory
Experience	

DISCOVERY ALONG THE WAY

1. We were confused and divided over what Paul wrote.
2. We tended to pit Paul against the Gospels, Jesus against the Father while ignoring the Spirit.
3. We realized we owned a rather weak theology of culture as it pertained to what value we affixed to the particularity of context and how cultural norms permeated the church.

DISCOVERY ALONG THE WAY

4. We tended to shy away from the totality of issues facing the NT Church, choosing rather to “lift out” of that original context what was deemed timeless.
5. We discovered that we tended to have a “Paul-centric” hermeneutic even though we thought we had a Christocentric hermeneutic.

DISCOVERY ALONG THE WAY

- 6. We realized we were quite removed from a Trinitarian hermeneutic that sought understanding on how all three members of the Trinity relate to this issue.
- 7. We realized we tended to move effortlessly toward an atomization of Scripture rather than take a Canonical approach which demanded more intentionality.

DISCOVERY ALONG THE WAY

- 8. We realized because of the depth of our study that while we remained convicted and convinced WIML was a non-Confessional matter of polity that the way we dealt with *this* non-Confessional matter of polity had everything to do with our Confessional Integrity on multiple levels.

DISCOVERY ALONG THE WAY

- 9. We realized that in our interpretive efforts we had all but neglected a Christian theology of human nature.
- 10. We realized we approached the WIML issue out of rather arbitrary definitions of roles, definitions of leadership that also exposed some rather shaky presuppositions on how we understood power, authority and servanthood.

DISCOVERY ALONG THE WAY

11. Lastly, we realized our shortcoming in addressing the eschatological factors pertaining both to the mission and the kingdom of God.

**A Case Study of Exclusion and Inclusion
Acts 15**

Paul and Barnabas – sharp dispute
The Elders in Antioch – utilize the covenant
Paul and Barnabas – telling stories
Jerusalem Leadership – meet and discuss
Peter – referencing experience at Caesarea
James – affirmation of current experiences
– appropriation of Scripture
– awareness of the cultural sensitivities

**A Case Study of Exclusion and Inclusion
Acts 15**

**Premise Upon which
Church Made Decisions**

1. Current experience of Spirit-infused Christians
2. An embrace of and interpretation of the revealed Word of God
3. An awareness of cultural realities

**A Case Study of Exclusion and Inclusion
Acts 15**

**Premise Upon which
Church Made Decisions**

- 1. Experience
- 2. Scripture
- 3. Reality

MISSION AS THE NEW PARADIGM

“So, even though the church is Christ’s “new creation” ... it is still resident in an old created order ... that “waits in eager anticipation” to be fully “liberated” and “brought into freedom”. Even though their teachings introduced radical social reforms that would in some respect take centuries to work out (e.g. slavery), neither Jesus nor Paul sought to overturn the fallen cultural norms of their day.

MISSION AS THE NEW PARADIGM

“To do so would have shifted the primary focus away from God’s long-term redemptive mission for the world, namely the advancement of the gospel of Jesus Christ ... Though the way was clear to pursue gender equality at every social and ecclesial level, to insist upon it for every congregation might have derailed the mission of God and brought the advancement of the gospel to an abrupt stop.”

Called, Gifted and Affirmed, 26

MISSION AS THE NEW PARADIGM

“There were expedient social contingencies that informed church leaders what could and could not be done in a given situation if the gospel were to proceed. Some New Testament churches in Corinth and Ephesus had their missional effectiveness threatened by false doctrine ... inappropriate behaviour ... a lack of order in public worship ... and a lack of mutual submission and respect in marriage, the home, and the church....

MISSION AS THE NEW PARADIGM

“Thus, while affirming Christian liberty in some contexts like Galatia, Philippi and Rome, Paul gave restrictions regarding the ministry and conduct of women in Ephesus and Corinth because *not to do so* would have impeded the gospel.”

2006 Resolution
Women in Ministry Leadership

MISSION AS THE NEW PARADIGM

“The purpose of this resolution is to empower congregations to exercise freedom of conscience before Christ in determining what leadership polity will be most effective in advancing the gospel in their ministry context....”

Implication 4
2006 Resolution
Women in Ministry Leadership

CALGARY 2006

- 1. The need to be transparent
- 2. The need to be sincere
- 3. The need to practice interpretive humility
- 4. The need to seek God’s wisdom

Pre-Calgary Voting 50/50
 Calgary Resolution 77/23

GIFTED, CALLED AND AFFIRMED

Section 1 – Pastoral Applications

- Orientation to the Topic
- Local Church Positions
- Personal Positions

Section 2 – Points of Rationale

- The Biblical Basis
- The Spirit at Pentecost
- Church as New Creation in an Old Order
- Vision for Mission
- Restrictive Mandate
- Restrictive Passages
- God as Male

GIFTED, CALLED AND AFFIRMED

- It’s about Christ first
- It’s about mission
- It’s about discerning
- It’s about freedom
- It’s about grace
- It’s about opening doors
- It’s about a clear understanding of grace, redemption and living new kingdom realities

THEOLOGICAL REFLECTION

A Sober Assessment

“...invite women to exercise leadership on Conference boards, in pastoral staff positions and in our congregations, institutions, and agencies. We ask women to minister as gifted, called and affirmed. We call the church to be increasingly alert to the gifts of women and to become more active in calling them to minister.”

1981 Resolution
Women in Ministry Leadership

THEOLOGICAL REFLECTION

On the Church *as* God’s Mission

1. A Redemptive Hermeneutic

THEOLOGICAL REFLECTION

On the Church *as* God’s Mission

1. A Redemptive Hermeneutic

“The Christian seeking to apply Scripture today should examine the movement between the biblical text and its surrounding social context. Once that movement has been discovered, there needs to be an assessment of whether the movement is preliminary or absolute...”

THEOLOGICAL REFLECTION

On the Church *as* God's Mission

1. A Redemptive Hermeneutic

"If it is preliminary and further movement in the direction set by the text would produce a more fully realized ethic, then that is the course of action one must pursue...If a better ethic than the one expressed in the isolated words of the text is possible, and the biblical and canonical spirit is headed that direction, then that is where one ultimately wants to end up." Webb,

THEOLOGICAL REFLECTION

On the Church *as* God's Mission

- 1. A Redemptive Hermeneutic**
- 2. An Eschatological Preparedness of Heart**

THEOLOGICAL REFLECTION

On the Church *as* God's Mission

2. An Eschatological Preparedness of Heart

"The church was an eschatological congregation, not because it had experienced the blessings of the messianic age but because it was the people designated for the future eschatological age. The primitive church was thoroughly Jewish in its eschatology, modifying this hope only by the confidence that the exalted Jesus would be the returning Son of Man." Ladd, 376

THEOLOGICAL REFLECTION

On the Church *as* God's Mission

2. An Eschatological Preparedness of Heart

"...There was certainly an exciting sense of living in the end times in the early church, the idea that Jesus and his first followers expected an imminent end of world history (as we know it) is easily exaggerated or oversimplified.... There was not a single worked-out orthodoxy in the New Testament period: Theology was developing."

Ladd quoting David Wenham, 699

THEOLOGICAL REFLECTION

On the Church *as* God's Mission

2. An Eschatological Preparedness of Heart

"Since the new age was already so real, it must have seemed that all things would shortly be consummated. As time passed, however, the interval of the "not yet" became more real. In this sense the outlook and lifestyle of the earliest Christians were saturated by eschatology."

Thomas N. Finger, 101

THEOLOGICAL REFLECTION

On the Church *as* God's Mission

2. An Eschatological Preparedness of Heart

"In systematic theologies, eschatology has included only those events which have not yet occurred...Because the eager expectation of these events has usually faded among systematic theologians and the groups they represent, such events have seldom been near the center of concern..."

THEOLOGICAL REFLECTION

On the Church *as* God's Mission

2. An Eschatological Preparedness of Heart

"In the Bible...eschatology is not merely a set of beliefs which may be pushed aside when certain events are delayed or which push aside everything else when they are thought to be near. ...The eschatological atmosphere of the "already/not yet" pervades every action and thought."

THEOLOGICAL REFLECTION

On the Church *as* God's Mission

2. An Eschatological Preparedness of Heart

"Their eschatology was not merely a set of beliefs concerning future events but also the attitude or atmosphere aroused by these events."

Finger, 102

THEOLOGICAL REFLECTION

On the Church *as* God's Mission

2. An Eschatological Preparedness of Heart

"Consequently, eschatology means the doctrine of Christian hope, which embraces both the object hoped for and the hope inspired by it. From first to last, and not merely in epilogue, Christianity is eschatology, is hope, forward looking and forward moving, and also revolutionizing and transforming the present."

THEOLOGICAL REFLECTION

On the Church *as* God's Mission

2. An Eschatological Preparedness of Heart

"The eschatological is not one element of Christianity, but it is the medium of Christian faith as such, the key in which everything is set, the glow that suffuses everything here in the dawn of an expected new day..."

THEOLOGICAL REFLECTION

On the Church *as* God's Mission

2. An Eschatological Preparedness of Heart

"Hence eschatology cannot really be only a part of Christian doctrine. Rather, the eschatological outlook is characteristic of all Christian proclamation, of every Christian existence, and of the whole Church."

Finger quoting Moltmann, 102

THEOLOGICAL REFLECTION
On the Church *as* God's Mission

- 1. A Redemptive Hermeneutic**
- 2. An Eschatological Preparedness of Heart**
- 3. A Kingdom-Centred Church**

THEOLOGICAL REFLECTION
On the Church *as* God’s Mission

3. A Kingdom-Centred Church

“The biblical understanding of salvation is that our lives become swept up into something larger and greater than ourselves, into God’s purposes for the world.... It is not something we build. We only receive it, inherit it, and enter it. Our lives are drawn into what God is doing.”

James V. Brownson 34, 40

THEOLOGICAL REFLECTION
On the Church *as* God’s Mission

3. A Kingdom-Centred Church

“Christ loved the Church and gave Himself for it that He might redeem it. ...I am bound to be loyal to the Church to the degree that it is loyal to the Kingdom, but my highest loyalty is to the Kingdom, and when these loyalties conflict, then I must bow the knee finally to the Kingdom...”

THEOLOGICAL REFLECTION
On the Church *as* God’s Mission

3. A Kingdom-Centred Church

“Any false loyalty to the Church that would make it take the place of the Kingdom is destructive to the Church.”

Snyder, quoting Jones, 58

THEOLOGICAL REFLECTION
On the Church *as* God's Mission

3. A Kingdom-Centred Church

"The significance of all this is critical. As a vision rooted in faith...*and* experience, a worldview in its basic tenets is not argued *to*, but argued *from*. It is not the terminus of our quest for insight, but our place of departure."

David J. Bosch, 49

THEOLOGICAL REFLECTION
On the Church *as* God's Mission

3. A Kingdom-Centred Church

"[What we have now] in the West is a patronizing, pluralistic boredom.... It looks like a partial eclipse of the sun..."

THEOLOGICAL REFLECTION
On the Church *as* God's Mission

3. A Kingdom-Centred Church

"Everything is remarkably grey and either the birds do not sing or they sing differently. Something is wrong in any case. The transcending being is weak. Or else the dangerous memory has been extinguished and the eschatological memory has become exhausted." Anderson, quoting Bloch, 173

THEOLOGICAL REFLECTION
On the Church *as* God’s Mission

- 1. A Redemptive Hermeneutic
- 2. An Eschatological Preparedness of Heart
- 3. A Kingdom-Centred Church
- 4. Spirit-Led and Spirit-Driven

THEOLOGICAL REFLECTION
On the Church *as* God’s Mission

4. Spirit-Led and Spirit-Driven

“The church does not emerge out of its past. When it attempts to do this it resorts to strategies of resuscitation rather than experiencing the power of resurrection. In its attempts to be contemporary the church usually arrives a decade if not a generation too late...”

THEOLOGICAL REFLECTION
On the Church *as* God’s Mission

4. Spirit-Led and Spirit-Driven

“The renewed church emerges in the present out of its future.”

Ray S. Anderson , 136

SUMMARY

**Elements to be taken into consideration on
Women in Ministry Leadership**

Experience

Scripture

Reality

A Redemptive Hermeneutic

An Eschatological Preparedness of Heart

A Kingdom-Centred Church

Being Spirit-Led, Spirit-Driven


