

WOMEN'S MINISTRY

Mrs Judge, Dr O'Brien, Ladies and Gentlemen. It is privilege for me to be back here in Australia. I have to say that on this topic one's primary qualifications for speaking are: first, one is brave; the second, one is foolhardy; or third, one is leaving the next day for another city. I qualify in the two later dimensions, certainly not the first.

Although this is slightly outside my mandate I would like to begin by a brief exposition of one passage of Scripture. Sometimes this topic is dealt with so topically that the flow of argument in any particular biblical text is overlooked. So with apologies to the chair and to the inviting committee I would like to step outside my mandate for a few minutes if I may and begin by a brief exposition of Ephesians 5:22-6:4. And then I shall turn the mandate suggested by the title.

Ephesians 5:22-6:4

This is what is called a housetable. A table for specifying household relationships and virtues. And in fact it goes all the way down to 6:9. However there are few slaves present I can perhaps profitably skip that section tonight. Although even that section on slaves has something to teach us. Let me begin by reading.

"Marriage is a step so grave and decisive that it attracts light-headed variable men by its very awfulness", so wrote Robert Louis Stevenson. Contrast the bible. Marriage should be honoured by all and the marriage bed kept pure. In other words, there has frequently been a fundamental clash between the perception of a major social institution in the culture at large and what the bible says about a social institution. In this case we are talking about marriage. So before we domesticate what the bible says to current perspectives, the bible must be allowed to speak for itself. Christians, therefore, who reverence scripture as the very word of God will want to re-examine again and again and again what the text says. I shall begin with

men. Partly because the greatest part of this passage is devoted them and their responsibilities. And partly because I suspect that tonight there is a preponderance of men here.

So, first a word to you husbands and to those of you who aspire to become husbands. Vv. 25-33. The thrust of this passage is this: God lays responsibility on you to love your wife with a love modelled on Christ's love for the church. Nor is this the only passage where some such emphasis is made. For instance, Col 3:19 "Husbands love your wives and do not be harsh with them." Something similar in 1 Peter 3. Christ's love for the church then must be your model.

First, in its self-sacrifice (v. 25), "Husband's love your wives just as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her." Whatever headship means (we'll come to that), it cannot take away from the male responsibility to love his spouse in a self-sacrificial way. This is the magnificent destruction of all notions of merely dictatorial rights. When I say, "Jump! You jump and ask how high on the way up. I am the head." It destroys any notion of women as chattel. It touches questions of fidelity. Is Christ faithful to the church? More importantly, you must ask yourself, men, how you have denied yourself in your love for your wife or you have disobeyed the word of God. Inevitably that means sacrifice of what you might otherwise do with your time. Putting aside some of your preferences. Not coming home after a long day and immediately turning on the television and reaching for a can of beer and expecting the little woman to serve you hand and foot. It says something about her sexual rights and your determination in self denial to please her. Christ's love for the church then must be your model in its self-sacrifice. It must be your model in its goal, vv. 26-28.

Christ loved the church we are told to make her holy, cleansing her by the washing with water through the word and to present her to himself as a radiant church without stain or wrinkle or any other blemish but holy and blameless. In this same way husbands ought to love their wives as their own bodies. In other words, this love is for the wife's good. Her spiritual good. Just as Christ's love for the church is not to satisfy himself, but for the church's good. So the husband's love for his wife is for her good. Not least her spiritual good. Which means

praying for your wife. When was the last time you spent 10 minutes in pray for your wife. Praying with your wife. It means being concerned for her total welfare. Including her emotional well-being when she has three children under the age of five. It means that if she has a decent mind you will be concerned that it is still stimulated, that she is given opportunity to read and think and study, to serve, to grow. It is a love like Christ's love for the church in itself self-sacrifice and in its goal.

Third, in its self interest. Our love for our spouses, our love, men, for our wives is modelled n Christ's love for the church in itself self-interest. The second part of v. 28 - v. 30, "husbands ought to love their wives as their own bodies. He who loves his wife loves himself. After all no one ever hated his own body, but he feeds and cares for it just as Christ does the church, for we are members of his body." Self-love is here presupposed not commended. That is to say, unless you are suicidal you will do something to make yourself more comfortable, more happy. In the divine realm, Christ loves the church to seek her good but at the end of the day, the good of the church is not his ultimate goal but his own glory. He is the Lord, and the glory of the Father who sent him. That is why we recite with the Westminster Confession that our chief end is to glorify God and to enjoy him forever. Thus, in one of the most moving passages on the sonship of Christ in John 5:16-30, the heart of the Son's obedience to his Father that takes him to the cross on our behalf is not his seeking of us for our good, but is glorifying of his Father, his pleasing of his Father. The sheer God-centredness of his mission is stunning.

Likewise then, husbands are to love their wives not only for their good but in the recognition that in God's universe, ordered in God's way, this is also the way that is for our good. And this is part of a larger picture of life lived in obedience to Christ. How does the Christian find satisfaction, contentment, fulfilment? By seeking satisfaction, contentment, fulfilment? God forbid. The name of this is idolatry. No, no, no. You take up your cross daily and follow Christ. If you seek self-satisfaction and fulfilment you will not find it. If you die to self-interest and seek Christ you find satisfaction and fulfilment. That is such an elementary component in the teachings of Christ, it is astonishing we do not know it better. But exactly

the same thing is true in a marriage. If you seek your own satisfaction and contentment and fulfilment and expect your wife to follow the same line, with you at the centre of the universe, then you will not find it. But if with self-sacrificial love you seek her good, you discover it breeds your own contentment and satisfaction and fulfilment.

So the Christian love, the Christian husband's love for his wife modelled on Christ's love for the church, is modelled on Christ's love in its self-interest. It is also modelled on Christ's love on its typological fulfilment. Note the back and forth language in vv. 27-28 & 31-32. Vv. 27-28, Christ loved the church, he sought thereby to present her to himself as a radiant church without stain or wrinkle or any other blemish but holy and blameless. Clearly you have moved away from the husband. I am no trying to love my wife so she won't have wrinkles. You are entirely now in Christ's love for the church. And then, lest you think that Paul has forgotten his drift, he says in the same way husband's ought to love their wives. Then you move to vv. 31-32. V. 31 quoting Genesis "'for this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife and the two will become one flesh.'" This is a profound mystery, but I am talking about Christ and the church." But the verse is not talking about Christ and the church it is talking about a husband and wife.

We shall see in due course that marriage is understood throughout scripture as a massive typology of the relationship between God and covenant people. And there are reciprocal bearings then on how God's relationship with his covenant people ought to shape our views of marriage. But now that he has defined this mystery I wish I could unpack the term *mysthvrion*, mystery, with you but I'll let that slide. He immediately says v. 33 "however each one of you must also love his wife as he loves himself, and the wife must respect her husband." In other words one of the fundamental ingredients the pattern that Paul traces out steps way beyond social paradigms to the entire structure of biblical theology. It is bound up with how God relates himself to his covenant community and to abstract your notions of marriage to that is profoundly reductionistic.

In the light of this immeasurably high standard the comments of the cynics are both sickening and evil. In marriage a man becomes slack and selfish and undergoes a fatty degeneration of

his moral being. I can't imagine Paul agreeing. Men, you may not all be presbyters in the church. If you are a husband you are an elder in your home. This is the word of God to you who are husbands or who wish to become a husband.

Now a word to you wives and to those of you who aspire to become wives. Vv. 22-24. The thrust of this passage is this: God lays responsibility on you to submit to your husband. Considerable energy is expended today to avoid this rather obvious reading of the passage. Sometimes this is based on a certain interpretation of 5:21, "Submit to one another out of reverence for Christ." Because formally the language there is reciprocal, hermeneutically this verse is used to explain away every wife submit to husband passage in the New Testament and there are quite a few. There is no husband submit to your wife passage in the New Testament. Not one! But that doesn't matter because 5:21 saves the day. All submission is mutually reciprocal. Case closed. Henceforth, every time we read "wife submit to your husband" the text does not mean what it says because 5:21 saves our bacon. Now on the very face of it that is bad reading. And when you get close to the text you can identify why it is bad reading for several reasons.

First, the verb "to submit", *uJpotavssomai*, regularly functions to talk about the submission of someone in an ordered array to another person ranking above the first in some way. It can be a military ranking or political ranking or whatever. But it is not used normally in the ancient world to talk about mutual courtesy or mutual deference or mutual respect or any such thing. It is a word regularly used in ordered arrays.

Second, the pronoun rendered "one another" in the NIV is not necessarily perfectly reciprocal, that depends entirely on the context. I love to quote the old adage, "A text without a context becomes a pretext for a proof-text." So also here, consider Rev 6:4, "Then another horse came out, a fiery red one. Its rider was given power to take peace from the earth and to make men slay one another." The same pronoun, "one another". Does this mean that they all shot at exactly the same time. In other words, is the slaying of one another perfectly reciprocal. Well, of course not. In the context its perfectly clear what is meant. This one slew that one and that one slew another and there was a lot of mayhem around and murder and they were

killing one another! To argue that this means perfect reciprocity in that context is irresponsible. So also in this context, v. 21 is tied to what follows in the Greek text precisely because there is no verb at all in v. 22. That is to say, the notion of mutual submission in v. 21 is unpacked without repeating the verb, which you can get away with in Greek, as if to say "submit to one another" and what I mean is "wives submit to your husbands, children to your parents and slaves to your masters". That is what comes immediately following is a *housetable*. A table of household ethical duties. A common form in the ancient world. In other words, to take v. 21 and abstract it from the flow of the context, not only misunderstands how the verb would be grasped but it fails to see the flow of the argument.

Third, the flow actually extends back further to this word on the Spirit. "Do not get drunk on wine", v. 18, "which leads to debauchery, instead be filled with the Spirit." The NIV then begins with a new sentence, "Speak to one another with psalms, hymns and spiritual songs." New sentence, "Sing and make music in your heart to the Lord." Then, a participle, "always giving thanks to God Father for everything in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ." New sentence, new paragraph, "Submit to one another." But in the Greek text the flow runs like this: "Do not get drunk on wine which leads to debauchery, if you are going to get high get high on something far better. Namely, be filled with the Spirit." Then a series of participles. "What does being filled with the Spirit in actual conduct and performance? What kind of high am I talking about? Speaking to one another with songs, hymns and spiritual songs." That is, mutual edification in the context of corporate praise. "Singing and making music in your heart to the Lord. Always giving thanks to God the Father for everything in the name of our Lord Jesus. Submitting to one another." And what that means is the *housetable*, an ordered array in society. In other words, this is nothing less than unpacking what it means to be filled with the Spirit.

Now there are many other things that could be said here about "headship" and the term *kefalh*, head, and I will mention one or two of them later. But on the face of it, to soften the thrust of vv. 22-24 by the now common exegesis of v. 21 that I have just outlined is simply

bad exegesis, it is bad reading. It is quite frankly, irresponsible. At the same time certain things need to be said about this submission of the wife to her husband.

First, it is not to be confused with certain pathetic stereotypes. Grovelling, self-pity, supporting unequal pay for equal work as if God were the author of injustice. Cherishing every pathetic instance of male abuse of the entire sorry history of the church. It is not to be confused with any of such things.

Second, this submission does not deny that equality. That's a modern human rights term, that is not applied in human relationships in the first century. But we'll use it since we understand what it means. It does not deny perfect equality existing in many realms. After all the bible insists, and Paul picks it up that both male and female were made in the image of God. The woman is made *Greek*, no less than the man. We are made equivalently, if you don't like the word equal, God's image bearers. Gal 3 insists that we are equivalently justified before God by faith. In 1 Cor 7 on many fronts men and women clearly have equivalent rights. The man is not to deny the woman her sexual rights and she is not to deny the husband his sexual rights. It is not patterned as many would have patterned them in the ancient world with the men having all the rights and the woman basically designed to give her mate pleasure.

Third, like the responsibility laid on the husband, this responsibility is dramatically opposed to self-interest. This then, is fundamentally against the world's definitions, goals, thirsts. In an age that speaks endlessly of human rights, Christians must stand up and say, "Rights. We forfeited them in the fall." What right do we have biblically speaking, except the right to hell. Now, do not understand me. I am not suggesting for a moment that there are no important issues of justice for which Christians should contend. Whether in a Christian context or not, righteousness exalts a nation, sin is a reproach to any people. One of the entailments of monotheism is that God is in some sense God of all whether he is recognised by all or not. But human rights in the West have become increasingly individualistic and absolute, and finally arbitrary. So that if you agitate forcefully enough, you move from voting rights, to sexual rights, to abortion rights, reproductive rights, to green rights, animal rights. Where does it end? Anything you want you stick the word "rights" after it and agitate in parliament,

and you will attract a lot of money because who wants to be against rights. The opposite of rights is wrongs. But in biblical worldview there is a still profound necessity of saving that we are all, all, all under the judgment of God. It is of his mercy that we are not consumed. So by all means fight for integrity, for decency, for the fact that we are image bearers of the everlasting God. But for rights? I hear the overtones of selfishness in 80-90% of the western use of rights.

Fourth this submission is modelled on the church's responsibility to submit to Christ and that is sweeping. Hear the word of the Lord, "Submit to your husbands as to the Lord. For the husband is the head of the wife as Christ is the head of the church. Now as the church submits to Christ so also wives should submit to their husbands in everything." If you don't like the argument about the non-reciprocity of that pronoun, are you going to say that in this latter half of v. 24 there is perfect reciprocity. Yes, Jesus submits to the church, the church submits to Jesus. The husband submits to the wife, the wife submits to Jesus. Now I would love to take you through the exegesis of some of the pronouns and conjunctions here, all of which have a bearing on how we understand this text. But I pass by. I simply insist that belittling your husband, nagging, manipulating, endlessly complaining, putting him down to keep him in line, is profoundly evil. It is unbiblical.

Tragedy occurs when each side attempts to lecture the other one of the other's responsibilities. Each side can make the other's responsibilities much easier by discharging its own responsibilities well. Most women would happily submit to their husbands if their husbands loved them as Christ loved the church. And most husbands would find it a little easier to love their wives in some fashion approaching the love of Christ for the church if the women weren't so domineering.

I would argue that there are fundamental biblical reasons why the stress on husbands and wives is as it is. I do take the argument in Genesis 3:16-17 that part of the entailment of the curse is that women will desire to dominate men and men for their part will be brutal and women will serve them. So women, therefore, must learn to submit and men must learn to love. The gospel is the power of God to unravel the curse. Not in the direction of complete

egalitarianism, but in the direction of reversing the social malfunction imposed by the curse of Genesis 3.

Finally, God's ways are always perfect and wise and for your good. Brothers and sisters in Christ, do not put up with these things as if they were an nuisance to which you have to submit because you are Christians. Delight in them because God knows best.

Third, a word to you children. I shall not to say to those aspire to become children. Children are a heritage from the Lord. Though admittedly in brief moments of vexations some of us parents would gladly sell our birthright. I speak as one with a teenage daughter. Actually, no, she is a charmer. But there are moments are there not, you who are parents, when you would to wring someone's neck. It's alright, your teenagers would like to wring yours too. Our sensitivities to the subject are increased as we see the degeneracy around us. Paul insists in 2 Tim 3:3 that in the last days whether his or ours, for what he means are the days between the coming of the Messiah and his parousia, his appearance on the last day. Children will become disobedient to their parents. From the perspective of the sweep of scripture two points I think are to be clarified from this passage.

First, the children then that are in view are those who are still dependent upon the parents. They are the ones to obey their parents. That is to say, this is not suggesting that every son who is 62 with a father of 93 must obey his father of 93 in everything. For already Genesis no less makes it clear that a man leaves his father and mother and sets up a new home. The children that are at stake, the vocabulary is clear in any case, are those who are still dependent upon their parents, they are to obey to their parents. This we are told is right. Why? Why? Even the Ten Commandments not only gives this as an injunction but includes in the injunction the first promise connected with a commandment. "Honour your father and your mother" which is the first commandment with a promise. See! "... that it may go well with you and you may enjoy long life on the earth." That is to say when society functions this way, things generally go well with you and there is a stability to society such that there is longer life and enjoyment on the earth. If it does not function this way, marriages break up, there are more suicides, there is more tension. It has been demonstrated again and again that single

people die younger on average than married people. Society degenerates, it corrodes, it corrupts and you do not live long on the earth. Nations and empires have collapsed with collapsing families. The implications of this of course is that part of what it means for a child to be filled with the Spirit is that he or she learns to be obedient to his or her parents. There is a further entailment. Christian parenting is bound up with teaching obedience.

Meanwhile in the broader framework all children in the sense of offspring are to honour their parents. This is partly a question of modelling. If you do not honour your parents, how do you think your children will learn in due course to honour you when you are aging. The sins of the parents are visited on the children.

Finally, a word to you fathers. There is much more that is said in scripture here, but this word is extremely important. "Fathers do not exasperate your children; instead, bring them up in the training and instruction of the Lord." One of my friends at Trinity, Perry Dowes, has two daughters and he has had with his wife, 29 foster care children. His relationship with his daughters is superb. The older one, Tracey, is now married working on a Masters degree. And I recall when she was about 16 or 17 he was talking about headship in the home around the dinner table, and she said in a flippant way "I think we ought to have a vote on that 'Who's going to be president of the family?'" He said, "Okay, lets do it." So they started banners and campaigns. You know, "Be an Ace, Vote or Trace" and this sort of thing. Now he entered into the whole thing precisely because he wasn't threatened. You see, he was not thereby disobeying 6:1-3 he was obeying 6:4. There are some of us who are so uptight in our parenting that we do exasperate our children. Not exasperating our children includes modelling, not just telling. Having enough of a sense of humour that you can be razzed and take it. And razz back! Reading our different children correctly. One is helped along by incentives, another is helped along by a gentle push. One is first class academic, the other one quite frankly hates books, struggles through high school and is going to be a fine garage mechanic provided you don't frustrate the poor chap because he is not doing first class honours in mathematics. It means exercising different discipline at different ages. What works when a child is 13 is not going to work when a child is 17. Do not exasperate your

children. It is a problem I know I need to watch more. Those of us precisely who have Christian standards, so badly want those standards to be birthed in our children that when we don't see them we immediately set down rules and threats and clamps, and everything else, and we won't allow them to make the very same mistakes that we made. Don't exasperate your children. That's a command from God. Hear the word of the Lord.

Now all of that is before I get to subject that I was invited to speak on. Nevertheless it is not entirely unrelated. Because it is important it seems to me to hear the flow of the word of God in its context now and then, and power, before you get to argue over nit-picky details and the precise nature of ordination and things of like moment. So I turn now more explicitly to the specific title of the evening. The last part of the title "Where's the debate going? - An Overseas Perspective" warns you that I am addressing the question bearing two foci in mind.

First, I am talking about trends: Where is the debate going? From now on I am not so much concerned with the details of this passage or that, or with the hermeneutical principles betrayed by this approach or the other. But I want to analyse, evaluate where the entire debate is going. I did speak on the hermeneutical principles of some of these issues about 10 years ago. Which tape eventually got circulated such that I found it in Japan, Papua Guinea and other corners of God's green earth. How I am not sure. All I know is that in the modern church one is not allowed to say anything to anyone without it being taped.

The second focus that I have in mind in this title, this overseas perspective, means that I am tracing trends in evangelicalism and beyond at least in the western world and sometimes beyond the western world. I am not restricted to trends in Sydney. Although I have read the recent *Briefings*, including the one that appeared today, Issue 164 with Bishop Paul Barnett's response to Issue 159 & 160, and Tony Payne's response to the Bishop and so forth. My mandate is not primarily to adjudicate in that one however sensitive the subject may be. Maybe it is the only reason you came tonight. My adjudication will be entirely tangential. What I may be able to contribute to your context in a minor way, is not mediation in the specifics of a diocesan dispute in Sydney, so much as an evaluation of larger trends in the Christian church. Four points:

There is a flavour of triumphalism. By and large an egalitarian view of what is appropriate in terms of eligibility for the ministry of the word is still on the ascendancy. There are of course important and articulate exceptions, but by and large this is still true. And the spill over in views of the family; in the rules of publishing for example where almost all evangelical publishers of note demand egalitarian language for example. Or where you frankly have in many circles much more likelihood of academic preferment if you're a woman scholar than if you are a male scholar precisely because, especially in North America where things are quantified especially, one has to keep up the averages. The spill-over touches many areas of society but now and then beyond those merely quantifiable developments there is a strident note of triumphalism that is quite ugly. When the house of bishops in the Church of England in November 1992 in their wisdom voted as they did for the ordination to the priesthood of women, they set in motion a set of trends which on the ground allows no exceptions or very few exceptions for those with a long, theological, passionate commitment to any other view. Now the incumbents who hold a traditionalist view are not jeopardised. But to try to get someone with a profound commitment to the historical view through the selection process in Britain. And when you try you are likely to be put down as ignorant, not submitting to the winds of the Spirit as voiced by the bishops, 19th century or worse. An Australian scholar whose name shall remain unmentioned to protect the guilty has insisted in a recent publication that "the intellectual battle for egalitarianism has already been won and there are only a few ignorant bigots left who do not recognise the point." My reading of the debate is not quite the same as his. But quite apart from who has the correct reading of the debate there is an ugly triumphalism in putting it like that that is surely morally reprehensible.

Beyond on the broader realm some of the most influential writers supporting feminism, understand feminist exegesis to be a fruit of post-modernism. Now, I need to unpack that a bit. The reason I do so is because post-modernism is intrinsically triumphalistic. As I use the terms modernism and post-modernism I am referring to the realm of epistemology. How you know that you know or how you think you know what you think you know. Modernism runs from roughly Decarte, the beginning of 1600s until, it varies, the second half of 20th century roughly 1970-80 depending on where you are. And it taught that with appropriate

foundations in any discipline and appropriate methods you could turn the crank and generate culture transcendent objective truth. Foundations whether intellectual or empirical, whether rationalist or empirical, plus the appropriate methods, appropriately cranked out generated culture transcendent truth. Thus in the 19th century the German historian, Von R , insisted that the "end of history was to describe things, ' *German words* ', as things really were and things really happened." No western historian would say that today. Now some would be a little more careful to be accurate with the primary sources and approach the subject as close as one possibly could. But all would recognise no matter how fairly they handled primary documents, all would recognise that we all come out of a bias. And some historians, an increasing percentage of them probably in many institutions, openly argue out of a self-confessed bias. For a while Marxist bias or an economic bias, or a libertarian bias or whatever. And the insurances that all writing of history is so bound up with the cultural framework in which the historian operates that generating culture transcending objective truth is an impossible goal, the merest chimera. That's post-modernism. In every area of intellectual life now post-modernism denies the possibility of any sure foundation or any widely agreed method with the result that all readings are possible except the reading that says that other readings are not possible. For the first time in the entire history of the church the dominant heresy in our culture is the view that there is no such thing as heresy. That's post-modernism. It infiltrates the church when the aim of a local bible study is not together to infer from the text what God is truly saying and bow to it, but that everyone should speak his or her opinion. That's the impact of post-modernism.

Now, the strongest post-modernism is inevitably a movement so disparaged, so broad, so intellectually diverse, covering so many disciplines, it has an entire spectrum of opinion. But the strongest post-modernists today would argue that since objectivity in interpretation is not only impossible but is not to be held up as a goal, but because it is impossible, therefore our readings should reflect with integrity what authenticates our own struggle. Either individually or in our school of interpretation, in our interpretative community, Stanley Fish would say. This seems therefore that feminist readings of scripture are often self-consciously deconstructive. That is to say, you approach the text and although the text may seem to say

this, you pick up those elements from the text which could be used to destroy the text. From those elements you abstract what you can use yourself in your world view and create a critique that ultimately destroys what the text apparently says. Objectivity is impossible in any case, so therefore any creative reading out of a socially responsible matrix is authentic. Which being interpreted means good. So Elizabeth Sch... , Cheryl Ex... , are on the forefront of this vanguard. This generates an interpretation of John 4, the woman in Samaria, for example, which I have found in at least 6 or 8 publications, which at the end of the Jesus is either having dalliance with the woman of some sort or he is trying to seduce her or whatever. There are variations. On the face of it you say, "How can this be serious scholarship?" It is not only serious, it is highly sophisticated. And the one thing you must not say about it in academic circles is "This is wrong." Now, post-modernism is inherently triumphalistic because it does not bow to what a text is saying. It promotes what the agenda of my interpretative community is. So there is flavour of triumphalism in the movement.

Second, there is a growing catalogue of errors. I have to say with regret that certain plain historical or semantic or syntax or hermeneutical errors are being repeated so often that they are believed. But they are still errors for all of that. And have been pointed out by more careful scholars again and again. I have time to mention only a small number from a large list. Let me mention 3 or 4 very quickly,

First, the construction of highly doubtful historical backgrounds to explain away a text. First example, the Kragers' reconstruction in "I suffer not a woman of religion" in Ephesus is I don't know how to say it with less force than this. But I don't mean to be rude. It is historical nonsense. The errors of fact; widely anachronistic sources of categories; complete ignorance or non-use of 4,000 Ephesian inscriptions and the vast secondary literature; the horrendous lapses in translation. I know of no reviewer who is familiar with the primary sources, from whatever perspective on women's issues, who think that the Kragers have it right. But yet that book is still a vanguard in the arena of evangelical feminism.

The best treatment I think now is by S. M. Baugh, in a new book now in the press edited by Baldwin & Köstenberger, which is entitled, *Women in the Church*. It is a close study of just 1 Tim 2. Baugh's treatment is entirely based on the primary sources drawn from Ephesus. Read it for yourself and judge who has it right so far as you are able if you haven't read the primary sources yourself. In fact, he breaks new ground by opening the ancient papyri and the like. I think, if I may say so, there is a milder form of this sort of thing in Fee's reconstruction of the background of the Pastoral Epistles. His reconstruction, however, can support his exegesis only by, dare I say it, a certain exegetical slipperiness. We are co-editors on a project. I know him. If he were here I would still say this to his face. I am not talking behind his back. So he comes for example to 1 Tim 2:11-12 and he says, after constructing this entire background of a kind of feminist religion in Ephesus, "by saying, 'I am not permitting', Paul focuses particularly on the situation in Ephesus. Such language as this, as well as the 'I want' in 4:8 lacks any sense of universal imperative for all situations. This is not to say that he does not see his word as authoritative but that it simply lacks the thrust of a universal imperative." But note, his translation of the present tense usually rendered "I do not permit", he makes "I am not permitting". Precisely in order to create the impression of a temporary and local ruling. Although the same tense frequently gives clear universal instructions. For those of you taking notes, Rom 12:1, 1 Cor 4:16, 2 Cor 5:29; Gal 5:2; Eph 4:1; 1 Thess and on and on and on. Secondly he uses rather subjective criteria for deciding how to understand the word. He says, "it simply lacks the thrust of a universal imperative." He uses exactly the same word in 1 Cor 14:34 with a universal thrust and in 1 Cor 16:7 with a universal thrust. "I permit" opens up the possibility that you go along or not. For when an apostle says, "I do not permit" and then in the context of 1 Cor 14 says not only "I do not permit" but "if anyone including a prophet disagrees let him be ignored". Then "I do not permit" has a certain kind of culture transcending authority.

Second, head, kefalh. Long, long debates and even lengthier tomes and articles have been generating stemming from a work by Wayne Grudem published first in *Trinity Journal* a number of years ago and then elsewhere. What Grudem did was to use a computer to scan the available Greek literature for every instance of the word kefalh. First all between Homer,

8th century BC and 5th century AD, finding about 12,500 targets. He then reduced them to about 2,500 give or take from about 200 BC to 200 AD since this is the range of the historical period that concerns us in the interpretation of the New Testament. Then he worked through them and argued that the common assertion that "head" commonly or at least frequently means "source" and has nothing so ever to do with authority when used metaphorically is simply mistaken. Now, this generated endless debate. Perhaps the smoothest and most scholarly summary of the debate is by Joseph Fitzmeyer, a Catholic scholar with no axe to grind in this sort of area at all. He has written two articles and basically his conclusions are about 90-95% lined up with Grudem. Yet the article on "head" in the recent IVP *Dictionary of Paul* ignores all this. Paragraph after paragraph of an accurate translation of sources, misreading, anachronisms. It is an horrendous piece.

Now, there is an essay being presented at the Evangelical Theological Society in America this Fall, that will surely be published, that documents this with the technical footnotes and so forth. It would take me too long to give you some examples from it. But with this particular author never believe anything she says unless you have read the sources for yourself in their context. She ascribes one particular view, for example, to an ancient author and when you go and look it up, it turns out to be in the context of you that author is refuting. It is a egregious error. I scarcely know what to say. I slap the wrist of a first year student at seminary for doing that. Don't you read the context. The text within a context is a pretext for a proof text.

Third, there are some recent technical studies that put some of the language in 1 Tim 2 on a sure basis. They have been published, they have been circulated, they are getting more widely circulated now but they are still largely unknown or ignored. For example, Andreas Köstenberger, again used a computer to look up every instance in the two centuries before Christ and the two centuries after Christ, 200 BC to AD 200, to target the construction "not *verb* nor *verb*". Because of course the critical language in 1 Tim 2 is "I do not permit a woman to teach or have authority." That is "not *this* nor *that*". Just that construction. Regardless of what the verb is. Merely "not *this* nor *that*". There are 52 of them in the New Testament. He found 48 in the tagged texts available on computer. The intriguing thing is

that in every instance bar none, both verbs either have in their contexts positive overtones or negative overtones. In no case did one verb have a positive overtone and the other verb have a negative overtone. Yet it is axiom of most feminist exegesis of 1 Tim 2 to understand the verb "to have authority", *aujeqtevw* to mean "I do not permit a woman to domineer or teach". Then the two verbs are linked together to mean "to teach in a domineering way". So that Paul's prohibition is not teaching in the context of the confessing church on this reading but a domineering arrogant teaching. Now there is a word study problem bound up with *aujeqtevw* there. I think they are mistaken at that level as well. But his point is not to look at the word alone but the larger syntactical construction. Not this nor that with two verbs in any morphological form. And what is found is that in every case the two verbs represent two separate items. They are not to be conflated and in every case they are either both positive or both negative. Now teaching all sides agree is positive. Which means the verb *aujeqtevw* on all statistically likelihood at least, likewise to means simply to have authority in a good sense, not to domineer over or something like that.

Final error. It is I regret painfully common to take certain texts as though they can be abstracted from the larger biblical theological framework without perceiving what kind of losses there are to the bible's storyline. Let me take an easy example from outside the discussion and then bring it back to the discussion. Some translators have argued that if you were rendering "behold the lamb of God" into the language of a culture where they do not know anything about lambs and sheep but where they sacrifice pigs, then it would entirely appropriate to render that "behold the pig of God". Now, you do want people to understand what you mean and there is a certain apriori bias in favour of good communication and clarity of thought. If they have never heard of a lamb why not use an animal that they commonly sacrifice. It is not after all whether the animal is furry or hairy or with wool on it that is important. Whether it bleats or whether it oinks. But the notion of sacrifice. The problem with that view is twofold. There is a minor element and a major element.

The minor element is that if you do that too often you are overlooking how God has disclosed himself in real space time history to real people in real cultures and you begin to sacrifice the

historical element. Just as we in western culture may have sheep and lambs, but may not understand an ancient covenantal construction in which two people walk between an animal slaughtered and cut in two, and therefore have to explain it in the context of the church. So now, in this primitive culture for which you are translating the word of God, you may have to explain what a lamb is precisely in order to anchor the original revelation in the context of real history with real people. It is what is sometimes referred to in Christian discussions of revelation as the scandal of historical particularity. Which being interpreted means that God did not give an abstract philosophy system but spoke to real men and women in real languages in concrete historical context and you sacrifice that to your peril. Now that is only the minor criticism.

The major criticism is that within the Canon, sheep are tied to so many other themes and pigs are unclean animals that after you have moved away from translating John 1:9 and you start getting to Leviticus you are in big trouble. Now, you see likewise in this area of submission, it is one of the reasons why I began with Ephesians 5. I wasn't really entirely outside my mandate. In fact, in scripture the relationship between God and his people is so often tied to the marriage metaphor that each side mutually illumines the other. Thus for example in the pre-prophetic Old Testament material, in Moses and elsewhere, again and again God insists that when his people are becoming apostate they are breaking their marriage vows or they are playing the part of the harlot or they are turning to lovers. By the time you get to the prophets this becomes stronger yet. The whole book of Hosea turns on that kind of understanding. They go a whoring after other gods. It crops up in the New Testament now not Yahweh and Israel but Christ and the church. Paul says, I betrothed you to Christ as a pure virgin, to the maid betrothal was binding. Now you are awaiting the consummation. Thus the glorious hope at the end is the marriage supper of the lamb. Nor is that merely a narrow metaphor without heavy semantic significance. The last two chapters of the bible, in the final consummating vision of a new heaven and a new earth is bound up with this marriage supper of the lamb. Why? Because the deepest, most intimate personal relationships that human beings can know is marriage. One flesh. Hearts beating as one. It is profoundly sexual but the bible does not back away from it. If you have a good marriage, you have some idea of

what I mean. And now we are talking about a consummating union with the living God. What will the bliss of heaven be like? How awful is spiritual apostasy. Whoredom. Foul. The prophets used shocking language: neighing after every stallion that goes by; or cows running after every bull; paying lovers to have sex with you. That is the way the prophets speak of spiritual whoredom. And the whole book of Revelation can be summarised in the old adage, "A tale of two cities: the harlot and the bride." The two cities are Babylon and Jerusalem. And the harlot and the bride are respectively for Rome standing from an entire society that takes you away from faithfulness to God, and the bride is sworn to God and is one day united with him at the marriage supper of the lamb. Now you see, Ephesians 5 and its view of marriage is bound up with that. And to abstract a few texts, twist a couple of nouns in order to meet our social agenda at the price of the enormous typological structures within scripture on the long haul, will do horrible damage to the understanding of the word of God.

Now my last two points I will handle much more quickly. Mrs Judge asked me at the beginning, "I hear you have a reputation for keeping to time." Mercifully before I could respond someone took her attention in another direction. But now she knows the truth. I must say a few words from the historical perspective. An ignorance of history. I want to in two quite different directions here rather briefly.

There is a rising number of very interesting and for the most part competently done books by feminists on the history of the abuse of women, within the church, outside the church, in western culture, beyond western culture, Chinese culture, whatever. There is a very large literature and whole university departments are given over the feminism and so on. Some of this material is very enlightening and it certainly means that many of us have many things to repent of. I don't want to justify any abuse ever. But, again let me draw an analogy from outside this context to lower the heat, and then bring it back to this context.

Because America, the country in which I minister although not the land of my birth, has been a slave nation, there is likewise in America a very large literature dealing with slavery. And again a great deal of this is immaculately researched and very interesting and always

condemning of slavery as an institution and so forth. But it is sometimes very difficult to read such literature without getting the impression that contemporary social structures are being used as the moral test for everything that went on without grappling with how these things worked in their time. Do not misunderstand me I think slavery is appalling. But let me give you two examples from African American scholars. One is from a chap at Harvard University in a book called, *Before Color Prejudice*, published by Harvard University Press. It is a very interesting study of slavery in the ancient world. And what he does is document something I knew but had never thought about. Namely that in the ancient Roman world, although slavery was common, it was not racially bound. There were black slaves, there were white slaves, there were Jewish slaves, there were Gentile slaves, there were male slaves, there were female slaves, there were Egyptian slaves, there were Italian slaves. As a result slavery was not tied as it was in the American experience to colour. Thus slavery in the ancient world, which could range from the extremely brutal, to slaves who had a great deal of technical skill and competence and even a certain amount of freedom although they were locked in by law to one master all their lives. It was not tied up with a kind of culture/racial thing that is part of American history. When an American thinks of slave, he thinks black. When he sees a black he inevitably thinks former slave or child of slave. He may not think it self-consciously but that is the framework. And meanwhile the black person himself or herself inevitably feels, my parents were slaves, white people owe me. Do you see? Now there is no way that is the way it worked in the Roman Empire.

A second book written by another African American scholar condemns slavery equally. He is the grandchild of slaves. He is not excusing it, but he tries to give a certain kind of historical perspective that I have seen in very little of this literature. For example, he argues that judging by the entire history of the human race what is astonishing is not that there was slavery but that it stopped. Chinese had slaves, Africans had slaves within Africa, certainly the Incas had slaves, Europeans had slaves, everyone had slaves. Slavery was everywhere. It was partly an economic reality sometimes. Partly a question of mere brutality and force. And although the slave trade through Africa to America was awful, it mustn't be forgotten that the overwhelming majority of those who were picked up, were picked up by Africans marauding

weaker African tribes, then dragged to the coast and sold to the whites. And the Arabs in North Africa certainly captured far more African slaves than Caucasians, than what the British Empire ever did and brutalised far more, and turned far more of their women into sexual chattel. Yet in the Arab world there is almost no literature on this. In the world under the impact of Judeo-Christian influence there is endless self-finger-pointing. Endless cathartic effusions of guilt, *may be Greek, may not*. And in fact, the nation that changed all this was Britain under the impact of the gospel. Shaftsbury was a convert under the Whitfield-Wesley awakening. Wesley wrote endless letters to parliament in order to influence things. Almost without exception of the leaders of the abolitionist argument emerged from the Great Awakening. And then, although it gave them no economic advantage the British Empire bullied nation after nation after nation to abolish slavery. And used its warships to stop the trade. Do not misunderstand me. I am not thereby justifying Britain's slave trade and its participation in it. I am saying that good history demands that you say that as well. Doesn't it? Some how the literature has taught us that the British Empire was the worse slaveholder that ever was. Rubbish! It was merely typical. It was also the one which under the power of the gospel damned the trade worldwide. That's not bad coming from an African American.

Now what's that got to do with the price of peas in China? You see there are many of these studies on the abuse of women which at a certain picky level are exactly correct. There are all kinds of things to repent of. Just as the brutal descriptions of life for slaves in the lower decks of the transport ships in the sailing era are correct at a picky level. And for the people living in them it is more than a picky level, it hurts. But if you are going to understand the movements of history and what things meant at the time and how things were perceived at the time it is important to place those sorts of movements in a larger social framework as to how those things were viewed at the time, before you make your quick moralistic judgments. It is not that we should make moral judgments based on the word of God, but don't be too quick. And, meanwhile, I ask you in what cultures have women achieved the greatest independence and self-fulfilment and material prosperity and individuality on the face of God's green earth. In Africa? In Moslem states? In India? So I begin to resent the kind of literature that

pictures the church as the great persecutor of women and Paul as the great destroyer. God knows the church has made endless mistakes in this area, as it made mistakes in the area of slavery, and we need to repent on our knees. By all means read the literature. But read of the triumphs of the gospel. Read of the triumphs of the gospel. I freely predict, though I am neither a prophet nor the son of a prophet, I freely predict that if secularisation prevails and women's rights prevail to the extent to which egalitarian wish them to prevail, the result will be a further enslavement of women. Because at the end of the day where there is no transcendent moral order, ultimately brute force wins. It's called sin. And that word, God help us, has become a snicker word in the west rather than a signal for all that is odious.

So there, I fear, is an ignorance of history in these discussions. But with the camp, within evangelicalism there is another kind of ignorance of history to which I should say, about which I should say something. This is a desperately simplistic reconstruction, but forgive the want of footnotes and let me fly for a few moments. The great era of missionary expansion from about 1800 to the present, it started earlier but about that time, saw first of all men and married couples going to the mission field. Until the turn of this century the overwhelming majority of missionaries sent out by western Christianised powers were male. Single ones that went out were usually attached, single women that went out beginning with the nurses under with Florence Nightingale, were often attached to families and many of them performed heroically. However, the dawning of the 20th century brought a number of things, World War I and World War II. World War I, 10 million young men were mowed down in the trenches across Europe and therefore 10 million women didn't find mates. In World War II about 50 million men were killed, a relatively small number of women usually connected with bombings or take overs of land where there was rapes and so forth. But in terms of the systematic mass slaughter from warfare itself a relatively small number of women, which meant that 50 million women were doomed to singleness. Throw in the suffragette movement in the 1920s. The suffragette movement had many Christians involved at the beginning, but eventually the Christians who were serious about the word of God wanted to put some brakes on and the suffragettes moved decisively against the word of God precisely because they saw that there were going to be some brakes. The story has been well

documented in a dissertation by Margaret Ben . The result of this, of course, is that you had a lot of very intelligent, very able, young women around who were not going to be mothers, who were not going to be wives, who were not going to be part of a marriage relationship, who nevertheless in many cases were Christians, well trained and wanted to serve the Lord. So for the first time in history we had a preponderance of women going to the mission field. We now have two to one women to men on many, many mission fields. Many of them serving valiantly in all kinds of difficult situations. Planting churches, preaching the word of God, "teaching natives", who when they come home of course are not allowed to do that, their women. So suddenly you have a profound evangelical double standard that has at the social level been generated in part by two World Wars and a commitment to mission. Should we have kept the women home? Is it alright for a woman to be an elder of a church in Pongo Pongo, Burundi but not at home? Worldwide then denominations or groups that espouse women ministries can, I think, be broken down into three types at the risk of generalisation:

First, a few groups at home have always allowed women ministers, mostly within the Pentecostal Charismatic heritage. It is bound up with a certain theological view of the gifts. But it has to be said that for whatever reason none of the major assemblages of such groups has women anywhere near 50% of the total of ministers. The highest is about 15%, and many at 5%.

Second group. There are persecuted churches, as the church in China, which again and again and again lost its male leadership. In the house church movement in China, not least the free church movement, many, many women are at the helm. But they will often be the first to tell you that the able men have been killed off in persecution.

Third, denominations once against this step but now for it. The overwhelming imperatives for this change in most cases, though there are a few notable exceptions, has been a form of liberal theology. But I know of no major denomination where this move has accelerated growth or evangelism or increasing membership. I know of none, there may be one but I haven't heard of it and I've looked. In every case where this step was taken by a major

denomination the decline was accelerated. Now that is merely an historical observation. All these historical details that I have been spelling out you could interpret in quite a lot of different grids, but if your grid is a biblical, theological one you will not argue from inconsistency in evangelical mission history to a necessary view of women in ministry today, you will ask, how should the inconsistency have been changed modified, improved, adapted, whatever. But if we are going to face what we are doing, when we hear the siren cry, evangelicals are pushing women to the periphery and the church will in fact undergo enormous revitalization and growth if only we ordain ministry. I have to tell you history is against you. And indeed, in the public world where a great deal of religion is still tied in the popular mind to women and children, you have to ask yourself another couple of historical questions. Where has this come from?

The Sunday School movement began in 1700s under the Whitfield/Wesley awakening by a chap called, Rakes, who was interested in the first instance in teaching the poor illiterates on the streets of London to read, it was a school rather than a theological service. But gradually as standards improved in Britain and elsewhere and the state took on more responsibilities for the education of all, universal education became a mandated right, the Sunday School changed its focus to a kind of biblical Christian theological training time. And in many western countries, not primarily here, but in many parts of the world and certainly in America, the Sunday School became one of the primary vehicles for winning people to Christ. Now, this generated a whole literature in which it was argued, it was taught to me in seminary, a whole literature in which it was argued, our history of evangelism has shown us that 85-90% become Christians before the age of 18.

Now, I believed that at one time. Then I started reading my bible and I noticed that Paul didn't start with evangelistic crusades for children. There is not a single incidence of anyone in Acts being converted because the children were converted first. And I remembered my own heritage in French Canada where there was so much opposition in those early years. You never began with a Sunday School. You never got the children. You never began with the wife . It was still such a patriarchal society in those days that you couldn't get the wife

without getting the husband. But if you got the husband: you got the husband, the wife and the kids, and the pocket-book. The primary reason why all of these statistics exist about why more people become Christians under the age of 18 is because under the impact of the Sunday School movement there were more hours of work directed to people under the age of 18 than in all the rest of society combined in the height of the Sunday School movement in the United States.

I started checking it out when I was pastor of a Baptist church on west coast of Canada 25 years ago. I started looking around. I tried to get some men involved with me in house to house evangelism and this sort of thing. I couldn't find them. So I started tracking the man-hours that were involved in our church. All the Sunday School classes; then the Youth Groups of different ages, Impact Club, Boys Brigade, Pioneer Girls; then the Junior High and then the Senior High, the College and Careers. And then I started looking around for what is going on amongst adults!? The Deacons Meeting; the Women's Missionary Fellowship. So in my first act of brutality as a pastor, I cancelled a whole lot of children's programs. We had about twice as many women as men in the church and I was still single so I used that as excuse for largely ignoring them. There were all kinds of very competent women and I dumped women's ministries on them as fast as I could. And then I went after the men. And within two years we were getting two or three men converted for every woman or child. My statistics were different! Why? Because people don't really accept Christ very much after the age of 18. Oh, rubbish! Is the gospel that weak that you can only go after kids?! If you put on a concerted effort to put 85% of you man-hours after people over the age of 75 that's where you 'll get most of your converts!

History. There is a profound ignorance of history that is misreading things and all kinds of bad arguments are being drawn from bad history.

This has come about for several reasons. In mainline denominations, those who oppose the ordination of ministry fall into several categories and the issues quickly become complex. Anglo-Catholics do so largely around their view of church order in which an apostolic line must come through the bishops and men on the one hand, and second on their view of

sacrament. So the real turning point for them is not whether or not women may preach but whether or not women may preside at the sacrament. But for informed evangelicals, the issue is not that. Quite frankly, I don't mind if a woman presides at the Lord's table so long as it doesn't split the church. That is a consideration. But I have no profound theological objection to it, I have to confess. I may judge it to be unwise for all kinds of pragmatic and other reasons on certain occasions. And it is a church right not an individualistic one in my view. I know there are some here who take another reading of it. But on the other hand, I have no objection in principle.

But where the biblical texts talk about, to summarise it this way, church recognised teaching authority over men, it seems to me that the texts are pretty clear despite our best efforts to get around them. So as a result instead of having a monolith in the mainline denominations of people who are opposed to the step. In fact those who are opposed to the step are opposed to it for very different reasons, so they all start fighting amongst themselves. Then you get to the question of women preaching, and then you get into a Sydney debate. Does this mean preaching occasionally under the authority of somebody else? Or does it mean preaching at all? Now, at the risk of phrasing this in a way that will bring down the wrath of both sides on my head, I would want to give first of all an adjudication and then a biblical based value judgment.

The adjudication first is this. Regardless of your reading of that particular issue. Regardless of it. Surely all sides who are committed to the word of God and the general line of exegesis which I have tried to work out here and hint at here, surely all sides must agree that it would be not only wrong but profoundly evil to use the preaching of women under the authority of a minister as the proverbial nose of the camel in the tent. In other words, if this begins to be practised and then because people do it sometimes you can jack it up to a few more times until its 60% or 80% and then eventually enough people are doing it. Well there doing it under this pattern, why can't they do it under that pattern? After all it is still functionally the same thing. Until eventually by our sheer pragmatism we have destroyed what we said we believed. Surely, that is profoundly evil. It reminds me of what Jesus said about some of the

traditions of the pharisees by which they destroyed the word of God. If on the other hand, that is not the intent nor is it the practice and it is strictly policed, then even if you are personally against it thinking you have biblical mandates on your side, you will surely not want to split the church over it.

Now let me go one stage further. I have been coming to Sydney now for 10 years. This is my 12th or 13th time. I like coming here. It is not often that I find a bunch of Anglicans who are thinking theologically. Besides with the exception of Peter O'Brien who always introduces me with far more courtesy than I deserve, I can count on being introduced here by the most amazing array of colourful insights and insults of anywhere in the world. I come back for them, just to get a few more. I am really quite sorry that Peter Jensen didn't introduce me tonight. But I have to say, that this is one scrappy diocese. You know, you agree on the deity of Christ, don't you? You agree on the authority of scripture. You agree on the atonement. You agree that Jesus rose from the dead. You agree that men and women are lost without Christ. You believe in work of the Spirit. You believe in one holy catholic church. You believe from the resurrection of the dead. You believe in final judgment. You believe in justification by grace through faith. At least I hope you do. By and large with some significant exceptions you do believe that there are some distinctions between men and women in scripture. Now, are you going to split the church on whether or not women preach once in a while under the authority of somebody else? No, of course, you are not going to split the church. Okay. Are you going to conduct the debate in a manner in which the whole watching world says, "My those Christians love one another." Or, in your passion to defend your view of the word of God, will you, God help us, deny that very word's injunction to love brothers, to love the sisters. Don't misunderstand me. I am not for a moment suggesting that love means not talking about these things. I commend you for your willingness to talk about these things. But I have heard already, and I have been here two days, that there are some of you on both sides of this issue who find it very difficult even to be civil to the other side because you disagree on this issue. Isn't that sin. "By this shall all men know that you are my disciples if you love one another."

There is a want of godliness in this discussion. It will do the church no good to justify the truth in one relatively peripheral area if you deny the central mark of the church, "by this shall all men know that you are my disciples if you love one another." I implore you, discuss, debate, argue, think theologically, with humility of mind. Believe at least once a month that you might be wrong. Be willing to learn from the other side. Find out why they think as they do. Do not partition yourself off into holy-than-thou huddles which communicates with the other side only in the printed word, but never over a cup of coffee with an open Greek text in front of you. There is a want of godliness.

Brothers and sisters in Christ, if this lecture does any good at all some of you will not leave tonight until you have apologised to others of you, and humbly bowed before God that you will keep things honest in the sight of all men, and love one another word Christ's sake. You have so many strengths, do not sacrifice them on this loss. Amen.

Question: It was mentioned that the gospel had changed slavery. Has the gospel changed the abuse of women or can it change the abuse of women? Have Christians tried to change the abuse of women?

Answer: I thought I tried to tease out in the argument, in the filling out of the historical analogy, namely, which countries in the world have least abuse of women. Without exception they are ones that have been "Christianised", that is they worked out of a certain kind of moral framework that has felt the impact of the gospel. Now if you ask if every individual Christian is wonderfully clear on this issue. No. But my argument at that point in the paper is, how you read history, what is your understanding by what has gone on in history? In that connection, I think, my analogy is a pretty good one.

Question: We have been encouraged to love one another but have we heard criticisms from the speaker of people who might take a different point of view? (I think that sums up the question.)

Answer: The last thing I would want you to do is going out feeling I have distorted or abused your position or slighted you and if I have been guilty of that I profoundly apologise. On the other hand, I have to tell you that I think that you have distorted somewhat what I said. I did not say, for example, that those on the other side are guilty of spiritual whoredom. My discussion of spiritual whoredom was in the framework of how scripture uses marriage as a type for the larger antitype of God's relationship with his people and that is connected with spiritual apostasy and whoredom and all sorts of other things, such that if we distort a biblical view of marriage we start distorting huge areas also of doctrine of God and the like. Now, in the case of, for example, the Kragers' reconstruction of the culture of Ephesus, I used "slippery", "in error" and a number of other things because demonstratively at the merely factual level they are. And I am quite happy to work through with you in the primary sources in this regard. Nor am I a sort of right-wing bigot who is applying these epithets to them in fundamentalist glory. The strongest critiques of them in the reviews have come out of feminist egalitarian circles. Incidentally the term "egalitarian" is worn as a badge of honour in most feminist circles. So I did not use in any slighting way. The strongest critiques have come out of circles which say that the Kragers are damaging their cause. But the intriguing thing is that the Kragers are often viewed in evangelical circles as the banner leaders of the movement. Now it seems to me that it is important for fellow evangelicals to say where there is bad exegesis. And it is bad exegesis at the level of mere fact. So in all fairness, I think, on more than one point you have taken words I have used in certain contexts and strung them together as if I have applied them universally to all feminists of all description in every context everywhere. I just don't think in all fairness that that is what I have done. But if you heard me doing that, then I am sorry I did not make the point more clearly.

Question: The question relates to the different responsibilities of men and women within the church and the family. Does that also apply in the secular world?

Answer: That is an extremely important question, and it is tied to a whole lot of other things. I cannot give you a full answer in 30 seconds, but let me summarise in this way. At one level I care not a whit if Hannah Grey is the President of the University of Chicago. She just retired. But the fundamental issue in scripture it seems to me, is not the church recognised teaching authority over men but rather the husband/wife relationship. It is a set of relations in the family it seems to me that is structured most profoundly into the entire biblical theology. As that works out in the church where husband and wife both are, there are entailments. Now, I would be worried if Hannah Grey's husband were an Assistant Professor of Modern English at the University of Chicago and she was trying to rule him in some area connected with university policy that jeopardised their marriage at home. I would begin to have some Christian problems about that. But to argue that she shouldn't be a university president, or should be an engineer or space scientist, or astronaut, or garbage collector for that matter, I really don't care. And I would then want to argue that there is a certain Christian leadership responsibility to encourage as many women as possible to live up to as many fulfilling and godly and Christ-honouring activities and achievements as possible. So in other words, I do not want to hold up a model in which we appear to be saying, "Women can be anything they like but can't teach men in the church." It just is not the way the Bible is put together. And to present the most thoughtful defences of a biblical theology in this area, as if that is what it is, as is sometimes done, is in my view profoundly mistaken. It is bound up in the first instance with the marriage relationship, with entailments about how you view children, how you view each other and then entailments also about how the church is structured, for your whole vision of society, of God, of God in covenantal relationship with his people, and out of that framework then 1 Tim 2 pops up as sticking

out of this iceberg. Now, to ignore the whole iceberg and say that the traditionalist position is that, it seems to me is sometimes the result of traditionalists arguing about the wrong things or presenting their case badly, or presenting it merely as a judicial pronouncement instead of working it out of an entire biblical theological structure. Does that to begin to answer?

Question: The question relates to whether we should refer to God as Father or is parent a better word?

Answer: There are not some liturgical books in America, I don't know if they have blessed these fair shores or not, where one is no longer permitted to speak of "Father, Son and Holy Spirit" but "Parent, Child and Holy Spirit". The issue is twofold. First, it is related to the kind of matter I brought up in my example of sheep and swine, pigs. It is not just whether there is a parental connection or an analogous parental connection between God and his people that you find in society. It is whether or not the Father/Child or Father/Son language is so embedded in structure after structure after structure of biblical thought that you start losing some massive dimensions of the doctrine of God if you sacrifice the specificity too quickly.

You see, I would want to argue that there is some language in scripture that is culture laden and with no heavy theological implications. For example, "Greet one another with a holy kiss." Now, you found a church in Moslem societies and that's just not going to happen from men to women, it will happen from men to men. But if you do men to men in an evangelical church in San Fransico in this regard you are telling them something else. Now, the question becomes this: is kissing in scripture a theological category intertwined with massive structures of thought such that you must obey this injunction with concrete kisses or you are disobeying God. Or is this the culture laden expression for a theme that is integrally related with all of biblical thought, namely, loving one another, accepting one another, greeting one another warmly so on. So the J. B. Phillips translation dares to say, "Give a hearty handshake all round." Now, that's culture laden too. I ran international conferences for quite a while and the most amusing part of it was just watching people come into the room. The Germans have a hearty handshake all round, the Latins came "kiss, kiss", the Arabs "kiss, kiss, kiss" three times,

and I never remembered which side you had to begin with. There was Roger Beck, bless his heart, in the corner in a tweed jacket with hands behind his back, "I kid you not, have we been introduced?" And then in came an American Ed Clowney and said "Hi, sorry I'm late." Now, are they all disobeying the word of God except the kissers. We all agree that because the Bible has been spoken in context of historical particularity there are some culture laden features that don't work out in explicit mandates. How can you tell which is which? Well, in fact I think there are many, many characteristics and criteria there, I have only mentioned one. And that one is this: If the specificity is in fact not integrally tied in its superficial form to the whole structure of biblical thought, then you don't worry about as a form. But what that kiss signifies is extremely important. Namely, whether or not Christians are excepting one another and greeting each warmly and so on and so forth.

Now, you come to the fatherhood of God and I would want to argue that the notions of fatherhood are not based on stereotypes of false paternity but the notion of the fatherhood of God is so heavily loaded a male term that in fact there is no place in scripture where God is addressed as mother. Metaphors and similes are occasionally used to liken God to a nurse, to a mother. God is never addressed that way. And then you start working out how it is related. The Father/Son language for example with respect both his people and with respect to the Son, par excellence, the Lord Jesus, is bound up with an ancient model in which most sons learn the trade of their fathers. So when Jesus says, for example, "that he does everything the Father gives him to do" or when Jesus says, even of us, "Blessed are the peacemakers for they shall be called the sons of God." Not as in the Authorised Versions, "the children of God". "The sons of God." The model is being operated here, "most farmers become farmers because their fathers were farmers"; "most bakers become bakers because their fathers were bakers". They learn everything from their fathers. And thus, if God is the supreme peacemaker and we become peacemakers then

we are like God, we are sons of God. Now, it is worked out of this kind of patriarchal society. That is just one element. In my view you have the doctrine of the Trinity worked out of this, entire systems of ethics, the nature of the relationship between Father and Son, and a number of other things that are so important, that at the end of the day you cannot change Father into Parent without introducing some massive wobbles in your theology. It cannot be done. Now that does not mean that every notion of fatherhood that society cooks up should not therefore be read back into God. You see, if a woman has been abused by her father and she has horrible mental visions of fatherhood and then she hears that God is a father. What do you do? Well, God really isn't a father, he's sort of like a mother. Or "he's really a parent". Or do you finally, besides all the other sort of gospel help and support you must give, you finally have to say, "You had a wicked father in this respect. But that is not the model of fatherhood that is now being read back into God. Here is a Father who is your sovereign, you bow your knee to him, you owe him respect and he loves you." Now surely what you must do is change her notion of fatherhood, not deny that there is a biblical notion of fatherhood.

Now, the second element in all of this, is that the notion of fatherhood in scripture is connected particularly for the relationship between God and his covenant people. Not, except by allusion to the notion of the Creator over the entire human race, which was the classic liberal credo at the turn of the century - God is our Father and all of us are his children, Amen. In fact, fatherhood of God is regularly worked out in the context of a covenantal relationship between God and his redeemed people. That has got to be factored into there somewhere too, which brings you into a whole other notion of covenant and authority and so on and so on and so on. And you are going to lose that if you start introducing notions of motherhood in there. That is the truth.