

# The Quarterly Journal



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## It's Time to Kiss the Church Hello Returning to the Simple Truths of God's Design for His People

by Gary E. Gilley

By now the details about Joshua Harris' divorce and apostasy are old news and every cheesy pun associated with his best-selling book, *I Kissed Dating Goodbye*, has been trotted out ad nauseam. But perhaps a positive pun is in order — "It's time to kiss the church hello" — because I think ultimately the focus is on the wrong issue.

Harris experienced the world of evangelical celebrity early in life. As a youth, he assisted his parents in their leadership in the homeschooling movement, traveling to home school conferences, and selling his father's materials. Still in his teens, Harris was speaking at these conferences and produced a magazine for homeschoolers called *New Attitude*. At age 21, he published his signature book, which not only sold over a million copies, but also launched a campaign sometimes called the "purity

culture" movement, although defining "purity culture" has proven elusive.



There are several issues that merit attention: First, at 21, Harris had no business writing a book telling people how to date — or not to date — and whom to marry. Second, his publisher, Multnomah Books, was culpable for publishing such a book. And third, Christian leaders who promoted the book were guilty of not protecting the sheep. All of this seems to have gone unnoticed to a gullible readership anxious for a manual that might aid in the cause of purity.

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# Editorials

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## THE NOAHIDE MESSAGE OF UNIVERSALISM

In presenting his important argument about Abraham's faith, the Apostle Paul wrote, "But that no one is justified by the law in the sight of God is evident, for 'the just shall live by faith'" (Galatians 3:11).

Nearly four decades ago, Stuart Briscoe wrote a small paperback commentary on the book of Ezekiel. He titled it, *All Things Weird and Wonderful*. From a different angle, the title of Briscoe's book aptly describes the world of cults and aberrant teachers. They feed on the mystical, the weird, and what seems to their devoted followers, deep spirituality. Their messages and claims are purported to be direct from God. And their shenanigans know no bounds.

Under the guise of the supernatural, these leaders spew out myths of weird and wonderful experiences. C. S. Lewis said it well, "Of all bad men religious bad men are the worst" (*Reflections on the Psalms*, pg. 27).

That brings us to a little known, up-and-coming religious cult called the Noahides. The Noahides seem to fit well Paul's description in 1 Timothy 1:7, of those "desiring to be teachers of the law, understanding neither what they say nor the things which they affirm."

The word Noahide almost sounds like some kind of animal skin, but it's not. Or maybe a board game comes

to mind. Noahides are actually a religious group. The name can be translated "Noah's children." It can also mean "Noah's sons." On the surface it sounds biblical (the name Noah), but is it biblical?

Of all things the name of the group indicates, at the forefront is that salvation is not found in Jesus, but rather in some connection to Noah or Noah's teaching. This will startle the well-informed believer. Noah is known in the Old Testament in relation to the worldwide flood (Genesis 6-10). The references in the New Testament (by Jesus) to the days of Noah point to the continuing and increasing depravity of mankind. However, as Scripture declares, Noah "found grace in the eyes of the LORD" (Genesis 6:8).

It is claimed that there are about 20,000 Noahides throughout the world. Their first worldwide gathering took place about 30 years ago. They are a young sect of Judaism. Large clusters of Noahides are, of all places, in the Philippines. They hold to a covenant for Jews and a covenant for Gentiles through Noah. This is another form of what is called "Dual Covenant" teaching.

There are many theories as to the origins of Noahide belief, which have developed over centuries. No one founder stands out. One driving factor seems to be a desire to create a Dual Covenant to pave the way for all to enter heaven. It is a form of near-Universalism, which teaches that most everyone will make it to heaven in the end. Maybe not Hitler, but most.

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## FAMILY RADIO RELOCATES

Calling it “a fresh start,” Family Radio is moving from its Alameda, Calif., headquarters to Nashville, Tenn. The ministry’s relocation is expected to occur early this year. According to *The Christian Post*, a spokesman for Family Radio told the news website “that the move came ‘after considerable prayer and discussion’ and came in large part because of the operating expenses in California.”

Additional changes for the radio network included the selling of several stations that were losing money. Last fall the ministry went to the airwave to raise funds, the first such fundraising effort in over 30 years.

Family Radio was founded by Harold Camping and two others in 1959. During the 1990s, Camping opened himself and the network to ridicule and scorn when he began teaching that Jesus would return on Sept. 6, 1994. Years later, he set the date as May 21, 2011, and when that failed, he moved the date five months to Oct. 21. Other bizarre teachings by Camping brought additional criticism upon the organization.

Camping suffered a stroke in June 2011. He died Dec. 15, 2013.

In September 2018, Family Radio removed all of Camping’s recorded programs that were available on its network. More recently, the ministry says it has “repented from many of [its] former positions, date-setting the end of the world and all that, as well as the condemnation of the church,” the *Post* reported.

—MKG

## APPEALS COURT UPHOLDS VERDICT AGAINST TBN

Last September, a California appellate court upheld a \$900,000 judgment awarded to Carra Crouch, granddaughter of Paul and Jan Crouch, the late founders of the Trinity Broadcasting Network. In 2017, Carra was initially awarded a \$2 million settlement by an Orange County Superior Court jury for intentional infliction of emotional distress [IIED]. The court later reduced the amount to \$900,000.

Carra had sued Trinity Christian Center, the corporation which owns TBN, following an incident in April

2006 when she said she was drugged and raped by a 30-year-old ministry employee while in Atlanta with her grandmother during a network-sponsored telethon fundraiser. Carra was 13 at the time. After returning to California, Carra and her mother informed Jan of the sexual assault. According to the *Orange County Register*, “When Carra Crouch’s mother explained what happened, Jan Crouch ‘flew into a tirade’ and blamed Carra, telling her ‘she was the one who allowed it to happen,’ the appeals judges wrote. Carra Crouch was left devastated, the judges added.”

The judges, from the Fourth District Court of Appeal, further said in their decision, “We conclude that Jan Crouch’s behavior toward Carra was sufficiently extreme and outrageous to impose liability for IIED. Yelling at [a] 13-year-old girl who had been drugged and raped that she was stupid and she was at fault exceeds all possible bounds of decency. By telling Carra she was at fault, Jan Crouch displayed a reckless disregard for the almost certain emotional distress Carra would, and did, suffer.”

Justice Richard D. Fybel wrote that because “Jan Crouch was acting in her capacity as an officer or director on April 24, 2006, her behavior on that day was not merely part of a family squabble.”

Jan died May 31, 2016, nearly four years after Carra had filed her lawsuit in June 2012. Paul Crouch died in November 2013.

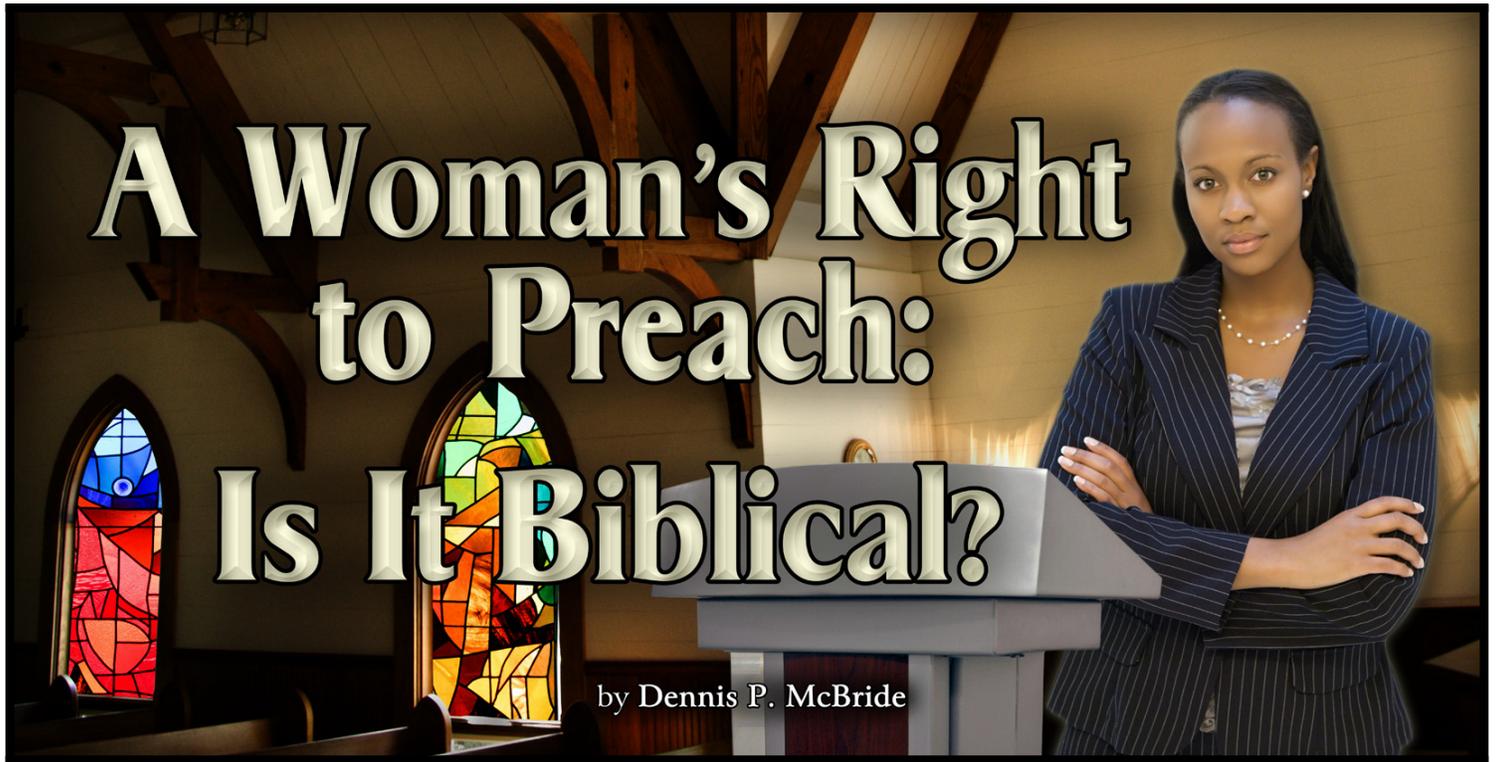
—MKG

## BENNY HINN RENOUNCES PROSPERITY GOSPEL

In September, faith healer Benny Hinn again got the attention of the news media “for seemingly renouncing the prosperity gospel on which he built his ministry,” according to the Religious News Service. The news agency cited a recent broadcast by the controversial televangelist where he stated, “I’m sorry to say that prosperity has gone a little crazy, and I’m correcting my own theology, because when I read the Bible now I don’t see the Bible in the same eyes I saw the Bible 20 years ago.”

Hinn went on to repudiate the give-to-get, “seed money” strategy used by prosperity teachers. “If you are not giving because you love Jesus, don’t bother giving. I think giving has become such a gimmick. It’s making me

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The role of women with respect to teaching and preaching in the local church has long been a topic of discussion and debate, with views ranging from full involvement to total prohibition. The contemporary trend is toward equal ministry roles for men and women, as evidenced by the increasing number of women attending seminaries and being ordained to the pastorate. More recently, the subject has piqued the interest of many believers by way of the news articles about and the social media postings by Beth Moore, Paula White, and others. One report stated, "The Church has become the primary campaign grounds for anti-biblical feminism and functional egalitarianism — and Beth Moore is now the premier agitator for change."<sup>1</sup>

We believe that women's ministries in general, when conducted within biblical parameters, are vital to the overall spiritual health of the church. Further, we believe that church leaders should encourage women to minister their spiritual gifts and should provide opportunities for them to do so.

More specifically, we believe that Scripture permits women to pray or

prophesy within biblical guidelines and with a proper attitude of submission (1 Corinthians 11:3-5; Acts 21:9), to witness to women or men in public, to pray with believers or non-believers in a non-leadership role, and to teach children and other women (Titus 2:3-4; 1 Timothy 5:16).

However, we also believe that Scripture does not permit women to preach or teach in the corporate gathering of the local assembly, to hold authoritative leadership roles in the church (pastor or elder), or in any other way to exercise authority over men.

#### PRIMARY TEXTS AND ARGUMENTS

There are a handful of primary biblical texts that are often used to support a woman's right to preach. The primary verses used in the complementarianism/egalitarianism<sup>2</sup> debate include Joel 2:28-29; Acts 2:17-18; Galatians 3:28; 1 Corinthians 11:4-5; 1 Corinthians 14:34-35; and 1 Timothy 2:12-13. Alongside those Bible texts, several logical or pragmatic reasons are offered as evidence for a woman's right to preach. We will first examine those reasons and then move

on to Scripture used to support the position. The first reason we will consider is a woman's natural qualifications. The reasoning goes like this:

By God's design, women are naturally well-suited for public speaking in general and pulpit preaching. Therefore, they should not be prevented from or criticized for ministering in those capacities. For example, Catherine Booth, the wife of Gen. William Booth, founder of The Salvation Army, maintained:

"... we cannot discover anything either unnatural or immodest in a Christian woman, becomingly attired, appearing on a platform or in a pulpit. By *nature* she seems fitted to grace either. God has given to woman a graceful form and attitude, winning manners, persuasive speech, and, above all, a finely-toned emotional nature, all of which appear to us eminent *natural* qualifications for public speaking."<sup>3</sup>

In that quote, Booth is addressing not only the role of women in the pulpit, but also women in public speaking roles in general, which was

a significant issue in her day. Her rationale for both roles is the same.

If, however, a woman's right to preach were simply a matter of natural abilities such as form, attitude, manners, persuasive speech, or a finely tuned emotional nature, this argument would carry weight. But the issue is one of biblical role distinctions and spiritual qualifications, not natural abilities or physical appearance. Despite the many graces and abilities God has given to women, our only concern here is whether or not He has given her the right to preach. Booth's comment that "we cannot discover anything either unnatural or immodest in a Christian woman, becomingly attired, appearing on a platform or in a pulpit" misses the point. The question is whether the practice is biblical, not whether it's natural or modest.

Moreover, even among men, natural abilities do not determine the right to preach. The right to preach is not based on natural abilities, but rather on biblical authority and God's sovereign design for His church. Therefore, the appeal to natural abilities must be rejected.

## EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATORS

Many argue that because there are female preachers who are more effective communicators than some of their male counterparts, it makes no sense to silence the more effective for the sake of the less. While it may be true that the communication skills of some female preachers are superior to some male preachers, the right to preach isn't determined by superior performance. God can use weak and faltering messengers such as Moses (Exodus 4:10-16) and eloquent messengers such as Apollos (Acts 18:24). The Holy Spirit's power and blessing are the keys to truly effective preaching, not superior communication skills. Therefore, biblical guidelines alone must decide the question of a woman's right to preach.

## INTELLECTUAL PURSUITS

Another reason expressed is that of intellectual and moral pursuits. In

other words, women should not be restricted to domestic duties any more than men are restricted in their occupations and pursuits. We agree, because in Scripture women aren't confined exclusively to domestic duties. The Bible portrays domestic duties as a woman's *primary* role, but not her *only* role. It gives examples of godly women whose pursuits went beyond the home — in some cases augmenting her domestic duties (the Proverbs 31 woman); in others no direct correlation between her work outside the home and her domestic duties is evident (Deborah, a judge; Lydia, a businesswoman). Similarly, Scripture gives examples of a variety of roles for men beyond farming or shop work (educator, pastor, physician, fisherman, businessman). Whether a woman works inside or outside the home, God expects her to fully develop her natural capabilities. Intellectual and moral pursuits are as appropriate for women as for men, but our point is that the parameters in which those capabilities are to function within the local church need to be governed by Scripture.

Women, like their male counterparts, do have the right to break out of their original sphere of labor and pursue intellectual and moral interests, yet that relates more to a woman's role in society than to the pulpit. Many intelligent and morally refined men aren't gifted, qualified, or called to preach. The freedom for intellectual and moral pursuits is a separate issue from the right to preach.

So why would God give a woman the ability to preach if He never intended her to do so? Such a question implies that preaching is the only expression available to a woman for the intelligence and communication skills God has given to her. Clearly that is not the case. Many opportunities are available for godly women to minister their spiritual gifts and natural abilities. It is not a woman's communication skills that God limits, only the context in which she can exercise them. And having the ability to do something doesn't guarantee the

right to do it. Scripture is replete with examples of people who had the ability to do things God didn't permit them to do.

For example, Saul had the ability, but not the right, to offer a sacrifice (1 Samuel 13). Women had the ability, but not the right, to pray and prophesy with their heads uncovered (1 Corinthians 11:5). The Corinthians had the ability, but not the right, to exercise their spiritual gifts freely in the corporate assembly (1 Corinthians 14). And many men have the ability, but not the right, to serve as leaders in the church (1 Timothy 3).

Similarly, a woman may have the ability and opportunity to pursue a public preaching ministry, but that doesn't guarantee her God's permission or authority to do so. God gives every good and perfect gift and has the right to govern them as He pleases. That's why His Word, not natural abilities or opportunities, must be the final authority in this matter. And it is when women minister within their God-given parameters that they minister most effectively for the glory of God and the benefit of their fellow Christians.

## HISTORICAL PRECEDENCE

A third reason enlists support from historical precedence. For example, Booth writes:

"Who would dare to charge the sainted Madame Guyon, Lady Maxwell, the talented mother of the Wesleys, Mrs. Fletcher, Mrs. Elizabeth Fry, Mrs. Smith, Mrs. Whiteman, or Miss Marsh with being unwomanly or ambitious. ... Yet these were all more or less public women, every one of them expounding and exhorting from the Scriptures to mixed companies of men and women."<sup>4</sup>

And:

"Now, if the Word of God forbids female ministry, we would ask how it happens that so many of the most devoted handmaidens of the Lord have felt themselves constrained by the Holy

Ghost to exercise it? Surely there must be some mistake somewhere, for the Word and the Spirit cannot contradict each other. Either the Word does not condemn women preaching, or these confessedly holy women have been deceived. Will anyone venture to assert that such women as Mrs. Elizabeth Fry, Mrs. Fletcher of Madeley, have been deceived with respect to their call to deliver the Gospel messages to their fellow-creatures?"<sup>5</sup>

Booth maintains that all the godly women who have preached over the years can't be mistaken about their calling. We respectfully disagree. They most certainly *can* be mistaken. And if our conclusions are correct, they *are* mistaken. For example, a man may feel "urged" or "called" by the Holy Spirit to be an elder in a church. Further, he may have a strong desire to serve in that capacity. Although it is a good thing he desires to do (1 Timothy 3:1), he must also meet the objective qualifications listed in verses 2-7 (and in Titus 1:6-9). If he doesn't meet those qualifications, God has not called him to be an elder, no matter how strongly he may desire to serve.

Similarly, if Scripture doesn't permit women to preach, the Holy Spirit will never urge them to do so, regardless of how strongly a woman may feel called to that ministry. The Holy Spirit never prompts a Christian to behave contrary to God's Word and the Spirit is never at odds with the Word. However, being "constrained by the Holy Ghost" is subjective, so if there is a conflict between His apparent urging and what Scripture teaches, those involved must search the Scriptures more diligently to understand God's will more clearly. And Scripture, which is God's objective and authoritative counsel, must have the final say in the matter.

One of the challenges in resolving this issue is that some of the Bible passages addressing it are not easy to interpret. But it is every Christian's responsibility to be a diligent student

of the Word and to yield to its authority as he or she gains more understanding. That is especially true of anyone desiring to be a preacher or teacher (James 3:1). However, we should not assume that every woman who preaches does so from convictions shaped by a careful study of the applicable Bible passages. Their reasons may be far more subjective.

The fact that many godly women have apparently been used mightily of God in public preaching ministries seems to be a strong argument in support of women preachers. But it is also a pragmatic argument. However, the apparent success of a preaching ministry is not the key issue here. Ministering within biblical parameters is the issue and therein is true success.

Even when the Lord is pleased to honor His Word through preaching, that doesn't necessarily mean He is pleased with the preacher or that He is honoring disobedience. That's clear from Philippians 1:15-18, which speaks of men who preached simply to cause the Apostle Paul grief, yet Paul rejoiced because the Gospel was being proclaimed. If God can honor His Word through sinful men with impure motives, surely He can honor it through godly women with pure motives. But it is always best to minister within biblical parameters and never to presume upon God's grace.

Likewise, a woman's right to preach isn't determined on the basis of how many women do it or who those women are. Equally godly and gifted women as those listed by Booth, for example, disagree with her position and would never minister from the pulpit. However, God's will in this matter isn't determined by majority vote, personal experience, or subjective call. It is determined by Scripture alone.

Questioning the behavior of sincere women who feel called to preach can seem judgmental or divisive. However, Christians doing something doesn't automatically make it a scriptural thing to do. Even godly Peter

was rebuked by Paul for inappropriate behavior (Galatians 2:11-14).

Questioning a woman's right to preach doesn't automatically impugn the motives of women preachers. Motives are important but our discussion concerns methods. Sometimes Christians with the best of motives will do something unwise or unstudied. Questioning their behavior doesn't necessarily question their motives. We hasten to add, however, that motives and overall doctrinal integrity are key factors in evaluating whether or not a preacher's ministry is of the Lord. For example, some of today's most well-known television preachers proclaim Christ, but represent theological systems that are clearly unbiblical. Therefore, even though their audiences may number in the millions, they should not be preaching.

### SCRIPTURAL SUPPORT?

In addition to the logical and pragmatic appeals cited above in support of women preachers, there are also appeals to Scripture. The first of such appeals cites Joel 2:28-29 and Acts 2:17-18 and maintains that according to the Apostle Peter the events in Acts 2:1-12 are the fulfillment of Joel 2:28-29, which says that women as well as men will prophesy. Women did, in fact, prophesy at Pentecost and Scripture indicates that they will continue to do so throughout the church age. Accordingly, Booth writes:

"It seems truly astonishing that Bible students, with the second chapter of the Acts before them, should not see that an imperative decree has gone forth from God, the execution of which women cannot escape; whether they like or not, they 'shall' prophesy throughout the whole course of this dispensation; and they have been doing so, though they and their blessed labours are not much noticed."<sup>6</sup>

However, what occurred in Acts 2 is not the total fulfillment of Joel's prophecy and it does not teach that women will preach throughout the church age. Peter quotes from Joel to explain the phenomena that occurred

on the Day of Pentecost and declares that it was the fulfillment of Joel's prophecy (cf. Joel 2:28-29). Yet some aspects of Joel's extended prophecy were not fulfilled on the Day of Pentecost. For example, verses 30-31 speak of blood, fire, pillars of smoke, the sun turning dark, and the moon turning to blood. Therefore, we believe that Pentecost was only a partial fulfillment of Joel's prophecy, which will be completed after Israel's future repentance and restoration in connection with the Second Coming of Christ (Zechariah 12:10; 13:1).

Pentecost was a pre-fulfillment of Joel's prophecy rather than its fulfillment. The Holy Spirit was poured out upon some of the "sons and daughters" of Israel at that time, but a time is coming when He will be poured out upon all of Israel. We agree that, according to Joel's prophecy, women as well as men were to prophesy and that some women did prophesy in the early church. But we disagree that women will prophesy throughout the church age. We agree with those who teach that Joel's prophecy refers to a time "immediately preceding the return of Christ, when all the particulars (e.g., v. 20 and Rev. 6:12) of the prophecy will come to pass. Peter reminded his hearers that, knowing Joel's prophecy, they should have recognized what they were seeing as a work of the Spirit, not a result of drunkenness"<sup>7</sup>

Pentecost was a foretaste of what is to come: a partial fulfillment of Joel's prophecy, which will be completed "after Israel's future repentance and restoration (Zech. 12:10; 13:1) in connection with the second advent of Christ ... The Holy Spirit will then be poured out on all classes in Israel who belong to the believing remnant."<sup>8</sup>

Along that line, Booth offers:

"The scriptural idea ... of the terms preach and prophesy, stands so inseparably connected as one and the same thing, that we should find it difficult to get aside from the fact that women did preach, or, in other words,

prophesy, in the early ages of Christianity, and have continued to do so down to the present time to just the degree that the spirit of the Christian dispensation had been recognised."<sup>9</sup>

We, however, disagree that "prophesy" in the verses from Joel and Acts are synonymous with preaching. Joel mentions prophesy in connection with dreams and visions, which implies that it had a revelatory element to it. That's the character Paul gives prophesy in 1 Corinthians 14:29-33. The Greek word translated "prophesy" is *prophemi*, which literally means "forth" (*pro*) "to speak" (*phemi*) or "to speak forth." It comprised a predictive element (to speak forth in relation to time — prior to an event) and a preaching element (to speak forth to a group of people, to preach, to proclaim, etc.). It was God speaking through individuals for the purpose of edification, exhortation, and consolation (1 Corinthians 14:3).

New Testament prophets didn't always speak predictively; they often reiterated and applied prior revelation. But New Testament prophets always had a predictive element to their ministries even though every prophecy they delivered wasn't necessarily predictive. For example, Agabus "showed by the Spirit" a great famine (Acts 11:28) and Paul's arrest in Jerusalem (Acts 21:11). Under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, the New Testament writers recorded past, present, and future elements of God's redemptive plan.

The revelatory and predictive elements of New Testament prophecies are what distinguish them from teaching and preaching. Prophets received direct revelation from God; teachers reiterate what has already been revealed. Linguist William E. Vine tells us:

"With the completion of the canon of Scripture prophecy apparently passed away, 1 Cor. 13:8, 9. In his measure the teacher has taken the place of the prophet, cf. the significant change in 2 Pet. 2:1. The differ-

ence is that, whereas the message of the prophet was a direct revelation of the mind of God for the occasion, the message of the teacher is gathered from the completed revelation contained in the Scriptures."<sup>10</sup>

However we define prophecy in Joel and Acts, we must remember that Acts is a book of transitions. In chapter two Peter explains the initial prophetic utterances prompted by the coming of the Holy Spirit in partial fulfillment of Joel's prophecy, but he does not give guidelines for prophetic utterances in the church. Those are given in the epistles, which are not transitional, but normative and instructional for the church.

In the pastoral epistles (1-2 Timothy and Titus) great emphasis is placed on elders knowing, teaching, and guarding "the faithful Word which is in accordance with the teaching" (Titus 1:9, NASB). However, nothing is said of prophecy or additional revelations. Teachers and preachers have replaced prophets in the church; teaching and preaching have replaced prophecy in the church.

### GALATIANS 3:28

A second scriptural appeal in support of women preaching comes from Galatians 3:28 which states, in part, "there is neither male nor female; for you are all one in Christ Jesus." The argument is proposed that because there is no distinction between male and female in Christ, neither should there be any distinction in the pulpit or any other ministry. To prohibit women from preaching is to elevate men over women, thereby violating their equality in Christ.

In addressing that passage from Galatians, Austin H. Stouffer writes:

"The baptized Greek, clothed with the all-sufficiency of Christ, is as much a son of God as is the previously preferred Jew. Similarly, the emancipated slave of early America, once clothed with Christ, met all qualifications for any church office — contrary to the convictions of many church

teachers of that era. Any dissection of this passage that offers less to women than other categories would suggest a prejudiced exegesis."<sup>11</sup>

However, in Galatians 3:28 Paul illustrates unity in Christ by contrasting it with three prominent points of diversity of his day (Jew and Greek = nationality/religion; slave and free = social status; male and female = gender). The apostle's point is the *spiritual* equality of believers, not their *functional* equality. The right to preach and teach is a matter of function, not spiritual equality or inequality. Thus, the context of this verse is salvation, not spiritual gifts or spiritual ministries.

All who are in Christ came to Him through faith and are spiritual equals. Yet not everyone functions the same within the Body of Christ because the Holy Spirit distributes gifts and responsibilities according to His sovereign will (1 Corinthians 12:11). Everyone's role is important, but everyone's role isn't the same. That's the principle Paul argues in 1 Corinthians 12.

That point is commonly misunderstood. Authority and submission don't imply personal superiority or inferiority. It's a functional distinction intended to maintain harmony and order within human institutions such as society and the family. The church is no exception (Hebrews 13:17; 1 Peter 5:1-2). Jesus Himself submitted to the Father without diminishing His nature, character, or personal value in any way (1 Corinthians 11:3; Philippians 2:5-11). Therefore, God does not violate spiritual equality or diminish His high calling for woman when He places her under man's authority in the church. On the contrary, He shelters her by providing an environment in which she can achieve her highest spiritual potential without undue vulnerability.

### 1 CORINTHIANS 11:4-5

The third "scriptural" argument cites 1 Corinthians 11:4-5 which, according to Booth, "seems to prove beyond the possibility of dispute that

in the *early* times women were permitted to speak [prophecy] to the 'edification and comfort' of Christians, and that the Lord graciously endowed them with grace and gifts for this service."<sup>12</sup>

Regarding these verses and a woman's right to preach, we face an apparent contradiction between Paul's teaching here (a woman should cover her head when praying or prophesying), 1 Corinthians 14:34-35 (women are not permitted to speak in the church), and 1 Timothy 2:12-13 (women are not permitted to teach or exercise authority over a man, but to remain quiet). Obviously, if praying and prophesying involve verbal communication, a woman can't do it and remain silent at the same time. So, resolving this apparent contradiction is the key to understanding whether a woman has the right to preach and any conclusions we draw must harmonize all three passages. Toward that end we must determine whether 1 Corinthians 11:4-5 is the key to understanding the other two passages or if the other two passages are the key to understanding this passage. Our conclusion is that 1 Corinthians 14:34-35 and 1 Timothy 2:12-13 are the clearer statements and therefore shed light on 1 Corinthians 11:4-5.

We agree that in the early church women were permitted to speak to the edification and comfort of Christians within certain boundaries. We disagree, however, that they were permitted to do so from the pulpit or pew in the corporate assembly. And we also disagree with those who maintain that Paul is addressing a specific cultural situation in Corinth that doesn't apply to the church in general.

Moreover, it is not conclusive that in 1 Corinthians 11:4-5 Paul had the public assembly in mind. His point is that whenever and wherever it is appropriate for men and/or women to pray or prophecy, they should do so with the proper symbols of submission, so the male/female distinctions aren't blurred. In 1 Corinthians 14 he gives guidelines for the appro-

priate use of tongues and prophecy when the church gathers for worship and there forbids women to participate (see also 1 Timothy 2:12). As John MacArthur observes:

"Paul does not establish the setting as the official service of worship in the church. It is likely he was referring to praying or prophesying in places other than the church gathering. That would certainly fit with the very clear directives in 1 Corinthians 14:34 and 1 Timothy 2:12. ... The New Testament places no restrictions on a woman's witnessing in public to others, even to a man. Nor does it prohibit women from taking non-leadership roles of praying with believers or for unbelievers. Likewise there are no prohibitions against teaching children and other women (cf. Titus 2:3-4; 1 Tim. 5:16). Women may have the gift of prophecy, as did Philip's four daughters (Acts 21:9), but they are not to prophesy in the meetings of the church where men are present."<sup>13</sup>

Yet some commentators maintain that the context of 1 Corinthians 11:4-5 is the public assembly and prophesying refers to the broad sense of speaking forth for God, which could simply be a word of praise or a song, not preaching or teaching (1 Chronicles 25:1; Psalm 68:24-26; Luke 2:36-38). But that position is weak because Paul addresses men as well as women and there is no reason to suppose that prophesying on the part of men was restricted to praise or song.

Others, like Charles Ryrie, believe, "In the light of what he says in 14:34-35, it is doubtful that Paul approved of those activities by the women at Corinth. He simply acknowledges that these were unauthorized practices."<sup>14</sup> But if that were the case, it seems that Paul would have stopped the practice altogether rather than merely regulating it.

One additional view that attempts to harmonize Paul's instructions in 1 Corinthians 11 and 1 Timothy 2

teaches that he permitted women to pray and prophecy in public services as long as they did so with the appropriate symbol of submission, but did not permit them to teach or exercise authority over a man. That view recognizes a difference between prophecy and preaching or teaching.

Therefore, if our conclusions are correct that women are not to be teachers in the public assembly of the church and that the gift of prophecy has ceased, neither women nor men have a prophetic ministry today. Therefore, the only thing remaining to determine is to what extent women may pray in public worship services. In that regard Paul assigns the leadership role to men (1 Timothy 2:1-8), but there is New Testament precedence for women participating in prayer meetings (Acts 1:13-14).

### 1 CORINTHIANS 14:34-35

The next argument from Scripture appeals to 1 Corinthians 14:34-35, "Let the women keep silent in the churches; for they are not permitted to speak, but let them subject themselves, just as the Law also says. And if they desire to learn anything, let them ask their own husbands at home; for it is improper for a woman to speak in church" (NASB).

Some maintain that 1 Corinthians 11:4-5 is the interpretive key to this passage. It is not. To interpret this passage on the basis of 1 Corinthians 11:4-5 violates the hermeneutical principle of allowing a clearer or more specific passage of Scripture to shed light on a vague or more general passage. In this passage the context of the public church service is clear; that is not the case in the early verses of chapter 11.

It is said that Paul is addressing a cultural issue unique to the early church, with no long-term application intended. For example, J. Glenn Gould writes:

"It is believed that these rigorous strictures were occasioned by the fact that many in the Corinthian church were recent converts from paganism, and that the new free-

dom which they enjoyed in Christ had led to certain extravagances which were unseemly and irreverent. It is at least possible that a similar reason afforded occasion for these admonitions to Timothy [1 Timothy 2:11-15], who pastored a church hewn out of the heathenism of Ephesus. We cannot accept the idea that even at Corinth the stipulations [Paul gives] were to be applied in every case."<sup>15</sup>

But this, too, is wrong. Obviously the role of women in the church was an issue in the Corinthian culture, but Paul's solution went far beyond that culture, giving God's standard for all churches in every culture. Paul bases the role of women on God's Law (vs. 34) and the order of creation (1 Corinthians 11:1-16; 1 Timothy 2:12-14), not cultural considerations.

Another approach, espoused by some, says the heart of this passage is the Greek verb *lalein*, which is translated "to speak," but may mean something different from mere speaking. That being the case, using this word in a prohibition does not imply that absolute silence is enjoined, but rather an improper kind of speaking. In line with this, it is offered that Paul may be restricting only women who chatter or ask inappropriate questions during the worship service, which says nothing about women exercising their spiritual gifts. Booth says it this way:

"Now, 'the context' shows that it was not *silence* which was imposed upon women in the Church, but only a refraining from such speaking as was inconsistent with the words, 'they are commanded to be under obedience,' or, more literally, 'to be obedient,' that is, they were to refrain from such questionings, dogmatic assertions, and disputations which would bring them into collision with the men, ruffle their tempers, and occasion an unamiable volubility of speech."<sup>16</sup>

And Bible commentator Gordon Fee summarizes:

"The most commonly held view [of vv. 34-35] is that which sees the problem as *some form of disruptive speech*. Support is found in v. 35, that if the women wish to learn anything, they should ask their own husbands at home. Various scenarios are proposed: that the setting was something like the Jewish synagogue, with women on one side and men on the other and the women shouting out disruptive questions about what was being said in a prophecy or tongue; or that they were asking questions of men other than their own husbands; or that they were simply 'chattering' so loudly that it had a disruptive effect. The biggest difficulty with this view is that it assumes a 'church service' of a more 'orderly' sort than the rest of this argument presupposes. If the basic problem is with their 'all speaking in tongues' in some way ... in such disarray how can mere 'chatter' have a disruptive effect? The suggestion that the early house churches assumed a synagogue pattern is pure speculation; it seems remote at best."<sup>17</sup>

But linguist Vine tells us:

"... the command prohibiting women from speaking in a church gathering, vv. 34, 35, is regarded by some as an injunction against chattering, a meaning which is absent from the use of the verb everywhere else in the NT; it is to be understood in the same sense as in vv. 2, 3-6, 9, 11, 13, 18, 19, 21, 23, 27-29, 39."<sup>18</sup>

It is true that *lalein* has various shades of meaning depending on its context and that its precise meaning in 1 Corinthians 14 must be consistent with Paul's development of thought. Yet the definitions cited by Booth and others favor the meaning they wish to assign to *lalein*, but doesn't favor the context.

Therefore, a better choice is that verse 34 prohibits women from speaking in tongues and prophesying in the corporate worship service. Verse 35

## 1 TIMOTHY 2:12-13

prohibits them from asking inappropriate or disruptive questions, as some apparently were doing. Rather than simply rebuking them, Paul gives the appropriate alternative: "If they desire to learn anything, let them ask their own husbands at home; for it is improper for a woman to speak in church." That corrects the problem and places on husbands the responsibility of knowing God's Word and instructing their wives as God intended. Paul's solution was for those who were out of line to ask their husbands (or other men in their extended family) at home rather than disrupting the service.

Whatever the specific issue is in this passage, Paul isn't prohibiting women from every form of speaking in the church service and we agree that Paul doesn't preclude women from ever speaking in the assembly. The context of chapter 14 is tongues and prophecy in the public worship service, which he forbade women to practice, along with asking inappropriate questions. In the case of tongues and prophecy however (the issues being addressed by Paul), we believe that both gifts were temporary and ceased with the passing of the apostolic era. Therefore, modern application isn't an issue.

However, the broader principles of exercising spiritual gifts appropriately and maintaining order in worship services still apply because they transcend tongues, prophecy, and the specific Corinthian situation. Also, the role of women in the church still applies because, as noted above, Paul bases it on God's Law (1 Corinthians 14:34) and the order of creation (1 Corinthians 11:1-16; 1 Timothy 2:12-14), not cultural considerations.

Admittedly there are many today who believe that tongues and prophecy still exist in the church. We would expect those people to adhere closely to all of Paul's instructions in chapter 14. But, ironically, most denominations promoting modern tongues and prophecy also promote women in the pulpit, in blatant contradiction of Paul's instructions for them to remain silent.

A final "scriptural" argument is drawn from 1 Timothy 2:12-13, "And I do not permit a woman to teach or to have authority over a man, but to be in silence. For Adam was formed first, then Eve."

Those who espouse an egalitarian position argue that the context of this passage is the home, not the church. Therefore, they say, it has nothing whatsoever to do with women speaking in public services. For example, Booth writes in her booklet:

"It [1 Timothy 2:12-13] is primarily an injunction ... respecting her personal behaviour at home. It stands in connection with precepts respecting her apparel and her domestic position; especially her relation to her husband."<sup>19</sup>

And:

"This prohibition ... refers exclusively to the private life and domestic character of woman, and simply means that an ignorant or unruly woman is not to force her opinions on the man whether he will or no. It has no reference whatever to good women living in obedience to God and their husbands, or to women sent out to preach the Gospel by the call of the Holy Spirit."<sup>20</sup>

We disagree with those who teach that the context of those verses from 1 Timothy 2 are the home, not the church and that Paul's instructions simply govern a woman's domestic position, especially in relation to her husband, but have nothing to do with her role in the church. The language of the text indicates that Paul has men and women in mind, not just husbands and wives.

Admittedly, the Greek words translated "woman" and "man" in this passage are the same words used elsewhere by Paul and others for "husband" and "wife." But no English translation we've seen translates them as such in this passage because the context gives no indication that

Paul is limiting his comments to husbands and wives.

In verse 9 he begins a series of instructions for women, which contrasts to men by use of "in like manner." Paul changes subjects as he moves from verse 8 to verse 9 (men to women; prayer to proper adornment), but he doesn't change contexts (church to home or vice versa).

Therefore, if Paul's instructions to women in verses 9-12 refer exclusively to the home, his instructions to men in verse 8 must also apply exclusively to the home. But Paul doesn't restrict prayer to the home or to husbands only — neither does he restrict proper clothing and quiet submission to the home or to wives only. The language of the chapter clearly indicates that Paul has the local assembly in mind.

Even if the context of this passage were the home, the principle of a woman's submission is based on creation and confirmed by the fall (vv. 1-14), not on domestic, cultural, or even ecclesiastical considerations. Therefore, the principle transcends the home and most certainly applies in the church as well. We know that's the case from Paul's parallel teaching in 1 Corinthians 14:34-35, where clearly the church service is in view. As MacArthur instructs:

"Christians affirm the leadership of men in the church because it is established by Creation and confirmed by the Fall. The headship of man, then, was part of God's design from the beginning. The tragic experience of the Fall confirmed the wisdom of that design. No daughter of Eve should follow her path and enter the forbidden territory of rulership intended for men."<sup>21</sup>

Yet others, while admitting the context is the church, maintain that Paul is addressing a cultural issue unique to his day. In other words, he does not intend for the prohibition to extend to *every* church in *every* age. They teach that Paul's prohibition against women teaching was appropriate because most women of that

day were inferior to men in education and understanding. If such women “publicly raised questions regarding doctrines and cases of conscience and disputed these points with the men who led the worship services, it would not only be [improper] but also hinder the spirit of worship. Their discussions on such matters with their husbands would be in order in their own homes (cf. I Cor. 14:35).”<sup>22</sup>

We disagree that Paul is addressing a cultural issue only. However, if the context is the church and if the command “to be in silence” is taken literally and applied to the entire church age, it appears women would never be permitted to speak in a church service. What then of those churches that forbid women to preach but permit them to pray, testify, and/or sing in public services? How can they condemn the first while condoning the second?

We agree that Paul does not require absolute silence from women in church services, but we disagree that permitting women to pray, testify, or sing violates this passage. Paul didn’t forbid all talking in the church. Verse 12 explains what Paul meant by women remaining silent in the church: “I do not permit a woman to teach or to have authority over a man.” The context is the church, but Paul doesn’t forbid all teaching by women, but only teaching that usurps the authority of a man. In 1 Corinthians 14:35 he also prohibits inappropriate or disruptive questions.

Concerning Paul’s directive, Booth teaches:

“No one will suppose that the Apostle forbids a woman to ‘teach’ absolutely and universally. Even objectors would allow her to teach her own sex in private; they would let her teach her servants and children, and, perhaps, her husband too. If he were ignorant of the Saviour, might she not teach him the way to Christ? ... The ‘teaching,’ therefore which is forbidden by the Apostle, is not every kind of teaching ... but it is such teaching

as is domineering, and as involves the usurpation of authority over the man. This is the only teaching forbidden by St. Paul in the passage under consideration.”<sup>23</sup>

And adds:

“This passage should be rendered ‘I suffer not a woman to teach *by* usurping authority over the man.’ This rendering removes all the difficulties and contradictions involved in the ordinary reading and evidently gives the meaning of the Apostle.”<sup>24</sup>

But here, too, we disagree that Paul forbids only teaching that usurps the authority of a man or authority that is abusive or destructive. The phrase “have authority over” translates the Greek word *authenthein*, which appears only here in the New Testament, so there are no other passages from which to formulate a precise definition. However, in extrabiblical usage the common meaning of “have authority over” doesn’t designate a particular kind of authority, but is more general in nature. Paul uses it to forbid women to exercise any type of authority over men in the church, including teaching.

As we’ve already seen, Paul gave similar instructions to the Corinthians: “As in all the congregations of the saints, women should remain silent in the churches. They are not allowed to speak, but must be in submission, as the Law says. If they want to inquire about something, they should ask their own husbands at home; for it is disgraceful for a woman to speak in the church” (1 Corinthians 14:33-35, NIV).

Still a further interpretation offers that women who preach in assemblies assume no personal authority over others and therefore do not violate this passage. Booth writes:

“Women who speak in assemblies for worship under the influence of the Holy Spirit, assume thereby no personal authority over others; they simply deliver

the messages of the Gospel, which imply obedience, subjection, and responsibility, rather than authority and power.”<sup>25</sup>

Here, too, we disagree with the assumption that women who preach in public worship services assume no personal authority over others. While no church leader or minister of the Gospel assumes personal authority over others, Scripture is clear that all who minister the Word do so with great authority — delegated by Christ Himself. Additionally, Scripture itself is inherently authoritative and those who teach and preach it must apply its authority in calling their hearers to obedience. Therefore, it is inconsistent to argue for a woman’s right to preach while maintaining that she would do so without exercising authority in the church.

Ministers of the Word are to “Preach the word! Be ready in season and out of season. Convince, rebuke, exhort, with all longsuffering and teaching” (2 Timothy 4:2); “[hold] fast the faithful word as he has been taught, that he may be able, by sound doctrine, both to exhort and convict those who contradict” (Titus 1:9); and “Speak these things, exhort and rebuke with all authority. Let no one despise you” (Titus 2:15).

Despite any disclaimers by Booth or others, women preachers historically have exercised significant authority in their respective churches. For example, in Booth’s own organization, The Salvation Army, women officers who oversee a Salvation Army church or installation are called “commanding officers” because they do just that: they command! And they do so with authority. Moreover, at various times The Salvation Army has had a woman as its general and international leader and every Salvation Army officer in the world (both male and female) was under her authority.<sup>26</sup>

Two more observations by egalitarians in an attempt to explain Paul’s directive in 1 Timothy 2 are offered. First, it is claimed that women who preach or teach with their elders’ permission do not violate this passage

because they are under the authority of men, not exercising authority over men. And, second, Paul is simply prohibiting women who were not properly instructed from teaching.

In response to the first assumption, that scenario is foreign to the context, which speaks of receiving instruction with submission, not giving it with submission. If Scripture forbids women to preach, elders do not have the authority to disregard its restriction. And, concerning the second supposition, it is likewise inconsistent with the context. Why would Paul single out women when presumably there were plenty of improperly instructed men as well? The context is much broader than a certain class of women. It addresses all women, as verses 13-15 clearly indicate.

### BIBLICAL PRECEDENCE

Having examined the logical and pragmatic arguments, as well as the scriptural citations said to support egalitarianism, we will now consider two final arguments often proposed: the argument from biblical precedence and from the church fathers. The argument from biblical precedence claims that whatever Paul may have had in mind when he penned the restrictions in 1 Corinthians 14 and 1 Timothy 2, he wasn't forbidding women to lead and preach in the church. It is said that we know this because elsewhere he not only acknowledges that certain women did, in fact, minister in those capacities, but he also commends them for doing so.

One such example is Phoebe from Romans 16:1-2, which states:

"I commend to you Phoebe our sister, who is a servant of the church in Cenchrea, that you may receive her in the Lord in a manner worthy of the saints and assist her in whatever business she has need of you; for indeed she has been a helper of many and of myself also."

Regarding those verses, Booth comments:

"I would draw attention to the fact that Phoebe, a Christian

woman whom we find in our version of the Scripture (Romans xvi: 1) spoken of only as any common servant attached to a congregation, was nothing less than one of those gifted by the Holy Spirit for *publishing the glad tidings, or preaching the Gospel*. The manner in which the Apostle (whose only care was the propagation of evangelical truth) speaks of her, shows that she was what he in Greek styled her, a deacon or preacher of the Word."<sup>27</sup>

Booth suggests that the phrase "a helper of many" (v. 2) refers to one who is a leader in the congregation. Phoebe was a special woman whom Paul commended in a special way. But to extend to her the role of leader of the church in Cenchrea is without biblical warrant. If Paul had called Phoebe an "overseer" or "elder," or commended her for faithfully preaching the Word, that would be a different story. But he commended her in a more general way, using the same term that is commonly used of every faithful servant of the Lord, regardless of their specific ministry.

The Greek word translated "servant" in the NKJV or as "deaconess" in the RSV is *diakonos*. It is the same word translated "deacon" elsewhere (1 Timothy 3:8-12). Paul commended Phoebe as a woman who served the Cenchrean church — perhaps as a deaconess — and specifically calls her a deacon. *Diakonos* has no female form in the Greek language.

Moreover, the nature of her ministry is speculative because Paul isn't specific. To argue from *diakonos* that she was a preacher of the Word in a local assembly or perhaps in several churches, not only stretches the text, but also reads an implication into the word that isn't necessarily there. George Knight offers this helpful observation:

"... even if for argument's sake we say that Phoebe is a 'deacon,' the apostle's prohibition is not overturned. The very distinction in the New Testament between

the official deacon and elder (or bishop) is that an elder holds the teaching or ruling office, while the deacon is in the serving office, one not inherently involving teaching or ruling. Thus even if we grant that Phoebe is a church deacon, the New Testament has still not placed her in the ruling or teaching office."<sup>28</sup>

Paul sometimes uses *diakonos* in reference to himself and others who preached and taught in local assemblies (1 Corinthians 3:5), but he also uses it of those for whom we have no record of any such ministry (Ephesians 6:21; Colossians 4:7; 1 Timothy 3:11). Because Romans 16:1-2 is general in nature, we can't know the specific nature of Phoebe's ministry. We do know that Paul trusted her explicitly, knowing she would never make inappropriate requests. She would have understood any boundaries Paul may have placed on women in ministry (1 Corinthians 14:34-35; 1 Timothy 2:12-13). To argue for the absence of boundaries based on Paul's commendation of her service is to go beyond what the text says. Therefore, the idea that "a helper of many" (v. 2) refers to a leader in the congregation, should be rejected.

Similar is the appeal to Priscilla from the next two verses in Romans. Both Priscilla and her husband, Aquila, worked with Paul and, according to Acts 18:26, both instructed Apollos in the Gospel ("they took him aside and explained to him the way of God more accurately"). It is suggested that Priscilla was more dynamic than Aquila, her husband, and that together they functioned as a husband-wife pastoral team.

While it can be acknowledged that Priscilla shared ministry responsibilities with her husband, the precise nature and extent of her ministries are not known. We agree that she exercised a teaching ministry of some sort, because on the occasion cited above from Acts, she assisted her husband in thoroughly explaining the way of God to Apollos. However, that meeting took place in private and therefore

did not violate Paul's prohibition against women teaching or exercising authority over a man in the public meeting of the assembly (1 Corinthians 14:34-35; 1 Timothy 2:12-13). There is no biblical support for the view that she appears to have been more dynamic than her husband. But even if that were true, it would have no bearing on the issue at hand. Sharing the title of "fellow worker" with her husband does not mean she functioned in the same role as Aquila, but that they both were outstanding in the roles they filled.

Another example, again from the personal greetings that Paul makes in Romans 16, is that of Junia (or Junias). Verse 7 reads, "Greet Andronicus and Junia, my countrymen and my fellow prisoners, who are of note among the apostles, who also were in Christ before me." Some contend that Andronicus and Junia were a married couple and that they were both apostles. However, this is a difficult passage to interpret precisely because, first, Junia could have been either a male or female name and secondly the phrase "who are of note among the apostles" is ambiguous. New Testament scholar William Hendriksen believes that both are men and understands them to have been apostles in the looser sense of the word: messengers, which is the literal meaning of "apostle."

While not addressing Junia's gender, theologian John Murray shares Hendriksen's conclusion regarding their supposed apostleship:

"Of note among the apostles' may mean that they were apostles themselves. If so then the word 'apostles' would be used in a more general sense of messenger (*cf.* II Cor. 8:23; Phil. 2:25). Since, however, the term has usually in Paul the more restricted sense, it is more probable that the sense is that these persons were well known to the apostles and were distinguished for their faith and service. The explanation is ready at hand; they were Christians before Paul

and, no doubt, were associated with the circle of apostles in Judea if not in Jerusalem."<sup>29</sup>

Or "who are of note among the apostles" may mean that the pair simply performed outstanding service in the Lord's work while working among or in service to some of the ordained apostles, such as Peter or Paul. Thus, we conclude that there appears to be no compelling reason from the verse to regard Junia as a female apostle.

It is also suggested that Euodia and Syntyche (Philippians 4:2-3) held positions of leadership which were influential in the church. To all appearances, these women ministered in significant ways and were apparently held in high esteem by Paul and others in the church at Philippi. To have shared Paul's struggle in the cause of the Gospel speaks very highly of their loyalty and commitment, but does not necessarily mean they taught, preached, or held positions of authority over men in the church.

Many of those who affirm a woman's right to preach assume that when Paul commends a woman as a fellow-worker, as he did to Euodia and Syntyche, he is indicating that they did the same things he did: evangelize, preach, teach, and administer in the local church. But Christian ministry is broad, and Paul was concerned with more than preaching the Gospel. He taught the whole counsel of God and his epistles cover virtually every aspect of ministry and church life. If Paul is specific about a person's ministry (2 Timothy 4), then we can draw specific conclusions. But when he uses more general terms, we must be careful not to read more into his words than he intended to convey.

And in regard to biblical precedence there is our final brief example of Philip's daughters from Acts 21:9, "Now this man [Philip the evangelist] had four virgin daughters who prophesied." We agree that these women prophesied. But we have no record of the context in which they exercised their prophetic gifts. Of interest here

is whether they preached or prophesied in the public assembly and there is no clear indication that they did.

We do not wish in any way to diminish the godly character or significant contributions of the women mentioned above — or of countless other faithful women throughout history who have rendered exemplary service to the Lord. We simply point out that the examples cited above, which are used in support of a women's right to preach, give no clear example of a woman in the role of pastor, elder, preacher, or teacher in a local congregation.

## CHURCH FATHERS

The final argument sometimes offered appeals to the writings of the early church fathers and proffers that some of their writings tell of dynamic women who preached (prophesied) in the early church. For example, Booth appeals to three such church fathers: Justin Martyr, Irenaeus, and Eusebius. She writes:

"Justin Martyr, who lived till about A.D. 150, says, in his dialogue with Trypho, the Jew, that 'both men and women were seen among them who had the extraordinary gifts of the Spirit of God, according as the prophet Joel had foretold, by which he endeavoured to convince the Jews that the latter days were come.'"<sup>30</sup>

"Dodwell, in his dissertations of Irenaeus says, 'that the gift of the spirit of prophecy was given to others besides the Apostles: and that not only in first and second, but in the third century — even to the time of Constantine — all sorts and ranks of men had these gifts; yea, and *women* too.'"<sup>31</sup>

"Eusebius speaks of Potomania Ammias, a prophetess, in Philadelphia, and others, 'who were equally distinguished for their love and zeal in the cause of Christ.'"<sup>32</sup>

Like the argument from biblical precedence, this argument appeals to

the record of godly women who served the Lord with distinction. However, none of the sources cited by Booth relate the context in which these women ministered and therefore do not directly support the view that women preached and/or held leadership positions in the early church.

## CONCLUSION

Of necessity we have dwelt on the few prohibitions Scripture places on women in ministry and have concluded that women are not to preach or teach in the corporate gathering of the local assembly or hold authoritative leadership roles in the church or in any other way to exercise authority over men.

Those prohibitions must be taken seriously, but they should never overshadow the many other ministries available to women, in which godly women have served faithfully throughout church history.

What must be understood — and has been expressed throughout this article — is that the limitations Scripture places on women regarding leadership roles in the church do not mean there is a disparity in their quality, importance, or value. Scripture declares that men and women are equal in value in the sight of God (Galatians 3:28). A women's intellect, ability, or desire is not the issue here, only her role within the church. In that regard God has specified different roles for men and women regarding church leadership. The functional hierarchy within the church is clearly established in 1 Timothy 3:1-7 and Titus 1:5-9. Those verses exclusively use male pronouns in speaking of elders (including that an elder be the husband of one wife). And although egalitarianists claim otherwise, there is no clear occurrence of a woman holding the office of an elder or pastor in the New Testament.

It is our sincere prayer that every Christian woman will experience the joy and satisfaction that come with ministering her spiritual gifts within biblical guidelines to the glory of

Christ and for the edification of His church.

**Editor's Note:** Dennis McBride is pastor of Bethany Bible Church in Lake Havasu City, Ariz., where he has served since January 2012. His pastoral ministry experience also includes eight years as an Associate Pastor at Grace Community Church in Sun Valley, Calif., with Dr. John MacArthur, and four years as Chaplain and Publications Editor at "Grace to You" in Valencia, Calif. The above article presenting a response to egalitarianism is adapted from a longer work he published on the subject.

## Endnotes:

1. Jeff Maples, "Beth Moore Launches Tirade Against Biblical Womanhood," from the Reformation Charlotte website, posted May 9, 2019. Document accessed at: <https://reformationcharlotte.org/2019/05/09/beth-moore-launches-tirade-against-biblical-womanhood/>.
2. Complementarianism and egalitarianism are the two primary views which define the role of women in the local church. Complementarianism holds that women are limited in regard to leadership positions within the church (e.g., pastor or elder). The opposing view, egalitarianism, contends that women are permitted to serve in every capacity of church leadership, including pastors and elders.
3. Catherine Booth, *Female Ministry; or, Woman's Right to Preach the Gospel*. New York: The Salvation Army, 1975, pg. 5, italics in original. The text of this 23-page out-of-print booklet is available on various websites including The Gospel Truth ([www.gospeltruth.net/booth/cath\\_booth/practical\\_religion/cbooth\\_prac\\_rel\\_pap7.htm](http://www.gospeltruth.net/booth/cath_booth/practical_religion/cbooth_prac_rel_pap7.htm)). Note: Booth was theologically astute, articulate, and one of the primary voices for women's ministries in her day. We quote extensively from her booklet because for more than 100 years it has stood as the definitive word on female ministry for millions of Salvationists and others committed to egalitarianism which hold to equal ministry roles for men and women.
4. *Ibid.*, pg. 6.
5. *Ibid.*, pp. 17-18.
6. Unnamed source identified as a "lawyer" cited in *ibid.*, pg. 8, italic in original.
7. Charles Caldwell Ryrie, *The Ryrie Study Bible*. Chicago: Moody Press, 1976, pp. 1646-1647, study note on Acts 2:16-21.
8. *Ibid.*, pg. 1355, study note on Joel 2:28.
9. Phoebe W. Palmer cited in *Female Ministry*, op. cit., pp. 11-12.
10. W.E. Vine, *Vine's Complete Expository*

*Dictionary of Old and New Testament Words*. Nashville: Thomas Nelson Publishers, 1984, pg. 492.

11. Austin H. Stouffer, "The Ordination of Women: YES," *Christianity Today*, February 20, 1981, pg. 13.
12. Unnamed source identified as a "lawyer" cited in *Female Ministry*, op. cit., pg. 8, italic in original.
13. John MacArthur, *Different by Design*. Wheaton, Ill.: Victor Books, 1996, pg. 39.
14. *The Ryrie Study Bible*, op. cit., pg. 1741, study note on 1 Corinthians 11:5.
15. J. Glenn Gould, *Beacon Bible Commentary*, Volume IX. Kansas City, Mo.: Beacon Hill Press, 1965, pg. 576.
16. *Female Ministry*, op. cit., pg. 9, italic in original.
17. Gordon D. Fee, *The First Epistle to the Corinthians*. Grand Rapids, Mich.: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1987, pg. 703, italics in original.
18. *Vine's Complete Expository Dictionary of Old and New Testament Words*, op. cit., pg. 590.
19. Rev. J. H. Robinson, cited in *Female Ministry*, op. cit., pg. 12.
20. Unnamed source identified as "before-mentioned lawyer" cited in *ibid.*, pg. 13.
21. *Different by Design*, op. cit., pg. 142.
22. Roy S. Nicholson, "The Pastoral Epistles" (1 Timothy) in Charles W. Carter, et al., *The Wesleyan Bible Commentaries*, Romans-Philemon, Volume 5. Grand Rapids, Mich.: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1965, pg. 585.
23. Rev. J. H. Robinson, cited in *Female Ministry*, op. cit., pg. 12.
24. Rev. Dr. Taft cited in *ibid.*, pg. 13, italic in original.
25. Unnamed source identified as "a talented writer" cited in *ibid.*, pg. 6.
26. The Salvation Army website has a list of its past generals and among the entries is Evangeline Booth who served from 1934 until 1939. The webpage states: "'Eva' Booth was the first female leader of The Salvation Army and daughter of William and Catherine Booth; prior to her leadership she commanded The Salvation Army in the USA and in Canada. During 1928-1929 she played a determining role in changing the method of appointment for future Salvation Army leaders" (document accessed at: [www.salvationarmy.org.uk/history-generals](http://www.salvationarmy.org.uk/history-generals)).
27. *Female Ministry*, op. cit., pg. 10, italics in original.
28. George W. Knight III, "The Ordination of Women: NO," *Christianity Today*, February 20, 1981, pg. 19.
29. John Murray, *The Epistle to the Romans*. Grand Rapids, Mich.: Wm. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1968, pp. 229-230.
30. *Female Ministry*, op. cit., pg. 11.
31. *Ibid.*, italic in original.
32. *Ibid.*



By 1997, Harris was a superstar and caught the attention of an older “A” list Christian celebrity, C.J. Mahaney. Mahaney had founded Sovereign Grace Ministries, a rapidly growing denomination of churches known for New Calvinism<sup>1</sup> which co-mingles Reformed theology with Charismatic practices and music. New Calvinism was riding a wave at the time, and Sovereign Grace with its theology and music was setting the pace. Mahaney saw in Harris a potential and eventual replacement for himself as lead pastor of the Sovereign Grace flagship megachurch, Covenant Life Church in Gaithersburg, Md., which would free him to pursue other interests.

The year Harris turned 30 he was installed as the pastor of this huge congregation, which led a growing denomination, all without theological education and proper pastoral training. It was a big task for any young man, but to add to the difficulty was a brewing sex scandal at Sovereign Grace. The scandal, the roots of which go back at least to the early 1990s, alleges not only sexual abuse within the various congregations and among some staff, but also abuses that were known to upper-level staff and Mahaney himself, but which were covered up. While no one has been found guilty of sexual abuse, due largely to the statute of limitation laws, and while Mahaney, Harris, and others have claimed their innocence throughout the years, the accusations will not go away and have recently been revived.

In this environment Harris began his ministry as a megachurch senior pastor. In hindsight, evidence of the strain on Harris’ life and ministry is clear. In 2012, he removed his congregation from Sovereign Grace, no doubt due at least partially to the scandals. Then in 2015, after pastoring Covenant Life for about a decade, Harris stepped down at age 40 to attend seminary at Regent College. This is an almost unheard-of step for a megachurch pastor and probably was prompted by Harris’ realization of his lack of theological training for

ministry (something neither he nor Mahaney had seen as necessary in the past).

Throughout this process, Harris began to realize that the book that had made him famous was both damaging to the lives of many and partially unbiblical. By 2018, he publically denounced the book and participated in a documentary called *I Survived I Kissed Dating Goodbye*.

Recently, he left the ministry entirely and opened a communications consulting business. Then in July 2019, the bombshell hit when he wrote on Instagram that he and his wife, Shannon, were getting a divorce. Given his past writings on dating and marriage, such an announcement was both unexpected and shocking to the Christian world. But it did not compare to the follow-up announcement a few days later in which Harris wrote:

“The information that was left out of our announcement is that I have undergone a massive shift in regard to my faith in Jesus. ... By all the measurements that I have for defining a Christian, I am not a Christian. Many people tell me that there is a different way to practice faith and I want to remain open to this, but I’m not there now.”<sup>2</sup>

He continued by repenting of some of his previously held views:

“I have lived in repentance for the past several years — repenting of my self-righteousness, my fear-based approach to life, the teaching of my books, my views of women in the church, and my approach to parenting to name a few. But I specifically want to add to this list now: to the LGBTQ+ community, I want to say that I am sorry for the views that I taught in my books and as a pastor regarding sexuality. I regret standing against marriage equality, for not affirming you and your place in the church, and for any ways that my writing and speaking contributed to a culture of exclusion and bigotry. I hope you can forgive me.”<sup>3</sup>

While not as vocal with her denouncement of the Christian faith, Harris’ future ex-wife, Shannon, a Christian singer known professionally as Shannon Bonne, wrote on her Instagram account last June a rather telling comment, “Nearly a decade ruminating over my time in a place called church.”<sup>4</sup> The following month she was using the hashtag “#exvangelical,” which is a term used among those who have left evangelicalism, and wrote:

“My fundamentalist conservative Christianity experience taught me to ignore my inner voice. It’s not possible to unpack this in one post, using one scripture or angle. But early on, I learned to distrust and override myself out of fear in an environment where those in authority held tremendous control over leaders and members. For those out there who can relate, what was your experience? Did you learn to ignore your inner voice ... your mind, body or spirit?”<sup>5</sup>

It is likely that Shannon is following the same trajectory as Josh, but time will tell. As a final blow, while asking for privacy, Josh indicated he will soon begin a podcast to discuss his doubts and uncertainties.

While any Christian can become entangled in sin, how does one of evangelicalism’s shining stars fall so far as to apostatize? The biblical answer is that Harris was never a Christian, for as John warns us, “They went out from us, but they were not of us; for if they had been of us, they would have continued with us; but they went out that they might be made manifest, that none of them were of us” (1 John 2:19). But how does a man fool himself and the church at large for 20 years to such a degree? These are probably unanswerable questions, but a couple of thoughts are worth exploring.

### THE NATURE OF THE MODERN CHURCH

A number of years ago I wrote a book entitled *This Little Church Went to Market*, in which I biblically

critiqued several of the methods and even the message that is being proclaimed in many evangelical churches. The seeker-sensitive or attractional church that appeared in the 1970s did not materialize out of thin air. A fundamental shift took place within Christianity in the mid-1960s with the rise of the hippie movement and the sexual revolution. A new generation of young people was swamping the American scene, especially in California. A philosophy was being created and embraced that resisted all things traditional, including the church, especially its music, its community, its theology, its emphasis on separation and purity, and its whole approach to “doing” church.

The book *God’s Forever Family* tells the story of the rise, development, and influence of some saved out of this environment. They became known as Jesus People or “Jesus Freaks” as they were often referred to at the time. The actual movement was short-lived, arising immediately after the 1967 “Summer of Love” in Haight-Ashbury and fading into history by 1975. But much happened during that decade.

As the hippies flocked to San Francisco to smoke weed, take LSD, engage in immorality, and live on the streets, the Christian community began to seek ways to reach those young people for Christ. Initially, a few who were saved out of the hippie culture began to form ministries, joined by a new brand of churches such as Calvary Chapel. As many hippies came to Christ, the efforts to reach them snowballed and the methods became more creative. It was determined early on that hippies would most effectively respond if the conservative methodology of the church was abandoned and music, messages, and programming that mirrored the hippie lifestyle were adopted.

Hence rock music was introduced to the worship times of the church. Christian communes and coffeehouses popped up everywhere. Teaching and sermons were mostly simple, superficial, and Pentecostal. As a result,

when the Jesus People movement faded from the scene a mere ten years or so later, left behind was a radically changed evangelical church. The seeker-sensitive church was born out of the ashes of the 1967-1975 Jesus People subculture, picking up where the efforts to reach “Jesus Freaks” had begun. Sermons in such churches were short on Scripture and long on experience. Contemporary Christian music (CCM) was born and became a staple in many congregations. Pentecostal theology and practice were spread through the Charismatic movement as the Jesus People became part of the church and as Pentecostal music flooded the scene. Several cults, such as The Children of God, The Way International, and The Church of Armageddon (Love Family), preyed on these poorly taught converts.

The Jesus People have subsequently shaped modern evangelism in ways that most people do not realize. If a conservative Christian went into a coma in 1966 and woke up in 1976, the transformation they would have observed in the evangelical church would have made Rip Van Winkle’s shock after his 20-year nap seem mild. Modern Christianity cannot even begin to comprehend evangelicalism today without a thorough understanding of the Jesus People movement.

Today, for the first time in church history, Christians have disregarded prohibitions against popular culture and seek to see how closely they can cozy up to the world around them. The seeker movement, contemporary Christian music, and much of the spread of Pentecostalism all owe their existence to the Jesus People era.

It was Bill Hybels and his Willow Creek church and association that most effectively transferred the methods drawn from outreach to the Jesus People into the American church scene. Claiming to change the methods but not the message of Christianity, Hybels in reality did both. The message, including the Gospel, was softened to make it less offensive and more palatable to the unregenerate. The Gospel was no longer the good news about how sinful people can be

reconciled to a holy God and how God’s wrath against sin could be satisfied, but how Jesus could provide us with success, purpose, good self-images, wonderful marriages, and meet a whole range of felt needs.

This message seemed to “work” as thousands flocked to megachurches employing this new self-focused gospel, which, by-the-way, is drawn from marketing techniques, surveys, and psychological anthropology rather than from Scripture. Discipleship was not spared, either. A therapeutic model of Christian living began to infiltrate the church’s approach to sanctification. Emphasis shifted from careful Bible study and theology to small groups and sermons focused on how to feel better about ourselves, rather than on how to glorify God and be holy.

Before long, the traditional, time-honored and biblical means of church life fell out of vogue and seemed hopelessly out-of-date. Trendy new techniques were needed to draw the masses and keep them coming. The pragmatic church began to employ methods drawn from the entertainment world, because, well, the methods worked. The attractional church became performance-oriented with bigger and better bands, musical groups, light shows, videos, dramas, and motivational sermons taking center stage.

Excellence in performance replaced serious, exegetically sound teaching of God’s Word and Christ-honoring music. Many megachurches minimized teaching and centered their attention on the weekend “celebration” and performance-laced meetings, along with small groups that were largely relational. Gone were the old-fashioned Sunday schools, in-depth Bible studies, and theological training. They were replaced by a good show and “relevant” and “authentic” gatherings, often unrelated to the study of the Word.

The church assembled, which according to the New Testament is a gathering of the body of Christ composed of true believers who come

together for corporate worship, prayer, communion, and biblical teaching, now became centered on drawing unbelievers to hear exciting music and pep rally sermons. While many churches employing such methods claimed that in-depth Bible teaching took place at other times throughout the week, the truth was such studies and teaching became rare. Thus, the majority of almost two generations of American Evangelicals (however that term is defined) have become biblically illiterate and have never experienced how a New Testament church is to function.

This is all being purposefully painted with a broad brush. By God's grace, there are many exceptions to this portrait, in churches of all sizes. But these exceptions are becoming increasingly uncommon, as churches imbibe the latest trends in church growth and church life. This is frustrating.

Despite the regular parade of fallen church superstars, moral and financial scandals, and admissions by megachurch empires such as Willow Creek that they are failing to produce disciples, most Christians either shrug off these reports or simply don't care. Part of the problem is that the understanding of what constitutes a church has been so deformed by attractional church leaders that few understand God's design for His church. Possibly over half of all evangelical Christians attend churches that do not match God's definition for a church and these folks have never known any other kind of Christian congregation. They are not necessarily insincere or even naive, they simply do not realize that another model for the church, one patterned after the Scriptures, exists. The churches they attend have become entertainment centers, proclaiming a therapeutic message and propagating a social justice/missional ministry, while neglecting the essentials of church life found in the New Testament.

As a result, I fear that many church members are not truly saved, even while they are convinced they are, because they have never heard the

true Gospel. The biblical Gospel tends to offend and repel the unregenerate (1 Corinthians 1:18) and it is difficult to build church empires by proclaiming an offensive message. It is grievous to consider how many precious souls have been deceived by this pragmatic message found in many modern churches. And those who have come to Christ often do not move on to maturity because discipleship takes place through the proclamation of the Word which too often today takes a backseat to everything else.

Careful biblical study and theological training simply don't draw the masses. Light shows, professional music, me-centered sermonettes, and massive programs do. Consequently, while discipleship is the primary purpose of the biblical church, relatively few have experienced it.

### A NEW TESTAMENT CHURCH

If one has just moved to another part of the country and is searching for a new church, what should one look for? I recently checked out the websites of two churches in different parts of the country that friends from my past had attended. My friends had not progressed in Christ for decades and I was curious about the churches they had chosen to attend over the years. The two websites were very similar. They highlighted huge weekend performance-type services, had virtually no listed teaching ministries, and offered a full roster of programs of every kind which showcased their 12-step ministries and small groups. As expected, their doctrinal statements were minimalistic, general, and reduced to five or six short statements. A fuller statement of faith did not seem to be available. Both churches were large and growing. Both had adopted the multi-campus paradigm that has become increasingly popular in an effort to spread their brand. Both had an appearance of life and excitement, but neither showed any evidence that making disciples was the reason for their existence.

If none of the things listed above, as found on the websites of these churches, constitutes a biblical church,

what does? What should the child of God, who is seeking to grow in Christ within the context of a true church, look for in a local fellowship? Here are some of the basics:

Let's begin with the *glory of God* and the *centrality of Christ*. The church is Christ's church; He is its head (Colossians 1:18) and all that we individually and corporately do is to be done for God's glory (1 Corinthians 10:31). God has declared that He will not share His glory with another (Isaiah 42:8) and our task is to magnify Christ, not anyone or anything else (Philippians 1:20). When Christian leaders are unduly exalted, it is obvious that something is out of alignment. When we say (insert famous name)'s church is doing such and such, we know that the emphasis is wrong. Celebrity culture is anathema to the cause of Christ. While in context John the Baptist's famous statement was unique, he certainly nailed the correct attitude by claiming that "He [Jesus] must increase, but I must decrease" (John 3:30).

Next, the *proclamation of the Word* is at the core of what a biblical church does. The early church gathered for the express purpose of being instructed by the apostles' teaching (Acts 2:42). Paul's final directive to Timothy was to "preach the Word" (2 Timothy 4:2). And the church is the "pillar and ground of the truth" (1 Timothy 3:15). A congregation that is not dedicated to teaching and applying the Scriptures may be many things, but it is not the church.

*Prayer*, both individual and corporate, is essential to the body of Christ. A prayerless church is composed of people who do not see the need for the power and energy of the Holy Spirit. Prayer is one of the four components that comprised the gatherings of the first church, according to Acts 2:42. Men are to lead in public prayer (1 Timothy 2:8). Conflicts are resolved through prayer (Philippians 4:6). Christians are to be constantly in prayer (1 Thessalonians 5:17). Prayer meetings often draw small crowds, but they draw the most important witness, God Himself.

*Fellowship* is big today. Local churches often refer to themselves as communities and recognize the need for community. But our fellowship must be wrapped around Christ not simply common secular interests. When the first church gathered for fellowship, they did so because they had something in common (Christ) and they desperately needed each other. Churches today may foster this fellowship through various means, but it is essential to remember that at the heart of our fellowship is Christ's love for us and ours for Him, which is fleshed out in love for one another (1 John 3:16).

Practicing the *ordinances of both baptism and communion* is incumbent on the church. Many, now and throughout church history, have distorted the meaning of both. Sadly, some have taught that both are essential to salvation and the church needs clear teaching from the Word concerning their true purpose. Water baptism symbolizes our union with Christ through Spirit baptism and our identity with Christ before the world. The Lord's Supper reminds us of Christ's sacrificial death for us, His present ministry, and His future coming. Together, they are essential signposts of what it means to be a Christian.

*Church discipline* is about as unattractive as anything the church is called to do. Few, if any, church growth conferences list discipline as a means of drawing great crowds. Yet, the New Testament is clear that the church corrects its own for the purpose of restoration of the fallen ones and the purity of the church itself (1 Corinthians 5; Galatians 6:1-2). When God's people do not take sin seriously, it becomes a "dirty" church that is unable to reflect the glory of God and unintentionally teaches that sinful living does not matter to the Lord. The people of God are called to be holy (1 Peter 1:15-16) and discipline is one of the means of effecting holiness within the body of Christ. As Kurt Goedelman has emphasized:

"Ultimately, the purpose and goal of the ministry of address-

ing sin and church discipline is to glorify God (1 Peter 2:12; 1 Corinthians 10:31), restore and rebuild relationships between brothers and sisters in Christ (Romans 12:18; Colossians 3:13-16), lead us to a life of godliness and holiness (1 Peter 1:15-16; Leviticus 11:44), and preserve the purity and unity of His Church (2 Peter 3:14; Philippians 1:9-10; Ephesians 5:27)."<sup>6</sup>

A biblical church is *led by spiritually qualified men* who meet character requirements identified in texts such as 1 Timothy 3 and Titus 1. Too often today, churches look for guidance from men and women with magnetic personalities, impressive leadership abilities, and great communication skills. Never mind that many do not meet the biblical qualification of an elder. This practice is a recipe for disaster.

While all the marks of the New Testament church so far have been intramural, *evangelism* reaches out to those not yet part of the body of Christ. The first church was formed when 3,000 souls came to Christ in one day and many followed later (Acts 2:41). The church has always been evangelistic and there is no greater privilege than to "proclaim the praises of Him who called you out of darkness into His marvelous light" (1 Peter 2:9).

No doubt, a few other items could be added to this list, but these are the core essentials. Unfortunately, few are examining or seeking to be part of churches that understand and live by these essentials. In an article about Josh Harris, entitled "Time to Kiss New Calvinism Goodbye," R. Scott Clark writes:

"The first question most evangelicals ask about church is whether it has a youth group or a singles ministry? The second question is how fast is the church growing, is it popular? Does it have the right kind of (contemporary) worship? Neither the New Testament nor the historic Christian church knows anything of the Modern evangelical marks.

Jesus said, 'feed my lambs' (John 21:15), not 'be popular.' The Joshua Harris episode is a wake-up call to Evangelicals. It comes after the scandalous behavior of fellow 'New Calvinist' James MacDonald and before him Mark Driscoll and somewhere in there Tullian Tchividjian. Entrepreneurism is a great virtue in business but the church is no business. It is an authorized embassy for King Jesus. We serve him, at his pleasure, with his message, according to his Word."<sup>7</sup>

Clark has a point. All the blame cannot be placed on the church universal or local. Personal choices have been made and sins committed. And even in the best of churches, some Christians have fallen into grievous sins and always will. In this case, Josh Harris apparently was not a Christian at all, although he played the game extremely well. But I do believe the modern attractational church has created a culture that is destroying people like Harris, Tchividjian, Driscoll, and MacDonald. As tragic as their stories are, they are merely the tip of the iceberg.

For every Josh Harris who stumbles and receives headlines in the process, there are thousands of unnamed people who have been chewed up and spit out by this system. When true Christians are being entertained to death rather than being trained by the Word, when performance is more important than exegesis, when programs replace ministry, when the crowd replaces the body, when the Gospel is reduced to prosperity formulas, when discipleship holds little value, then the people of God have no basis to understand what true, authentic, Christ-honoring living is like. As the above quotation states, maybe Josh Harris and many others can provide a wakeup call. Maybe it is time to rethink church by returning to the design God has already given us.

## AN APPLICATIONAL CONCLUSION

One of the last conversations Jesus had with His disciples took place on the banks of the Sea of Galilee. After a

breakfast of bread and fish, Jesus turned to Peter and asked him if he loved Him. Three times Jesus asked the same question and three times Peter affirmed his love for his Lord. With each affirmation, Jesus told His struggling apostle that if this were the case, he was to “feed (or tend) His sheep (or lambs)” (John 21:15-17).

What the sheep (the regenerate children of God) needed was tending and feeding and they still do. The critical modern cliché still rings true: “The Lord has tasked the church to feed the sheep, not entertain the goats.” Somewhere along the way much of the modern church has missed this memo. The name of the “game” seems to be developing methods to draw crowds, to keep the sheep happy and pacified, and to offer a superficial feel-good Christianity-lite.

Jesus’ mandate to His disciples was not to offer performance-oriented services and to draw large crowds to join churches and sit on the sidelines. His mandate was to make disciples — learners and followers of Christ (Matthew 28:19-20). Day one of church history found the newly regenerated believers gathering in droves to absorb the apostles’ teachings (Acts 2:42). These early believers knew that life was to be found in these teachings. They understood that if they wanted truly to follow their new Master, they would have to do so according to His revelation that the apostles were now disseminating. Those doctrines were later inscripturated in the New Testament and serve today as the inspired message from the Holy Spirit that God uses to form disciples. There is no substitute for the Word of God in the disciple-making process. Lives are not transformed except through the Holy Spirit-empowered Scriptures.

Much of the modern evangelical church has done the world a disservice. By offering an anemic and often faulty gospel message, many people have prayed a prayer, walked an aisle, entered the baptismal waters, joined the church, and truly believed they have met the requirement for

salvation, and yet they have not. How heartbreaking to find lifetime church members who have no concept of the Gospel.

Many others have been born again but do not understand what it means to be a disciple or how to become one. They think that because they are on a worship team, attend a celebration service regularly, have joined a small group, take mission trips, or serve in a soup kitchen, that they are followers of Christ. Yet, Jesus said, “You are My friends if you do whatever I command you” (John 15:14). First John 5:3 continues, “For this is the love of God, that we keep His commandments. And His commandments are not burdensome.”

When the Word of God is not seriously, systematically, and carefully taught in the local church, believers have two deficiencies: they do not know the will of God and therefore they cannot live the will of God. They cannot obey God because they do not know His commandments. How tragic to attend a local church and never be taught the ways and requirements of God.

Paul informs us that the Scriptures are profitable for four things: teaching, reproof, correction, and training in righteousness. The Scriptures teach us what is true and the ways of God; they tell us where and how we have left the path; they correct us and bring us back to the path; over time they train us in the path of righteousness. When the work of Divine Revelation is done, it enables the people of God to be adequate and equipped for every good work (2 Timothy 3:16-17).

Immediately following this pronouncement about the Word, Paul charges Timothy to devote his life to preaching and teaching it (2 Timothy 4:1-2). Nothing else has the ability to transform lives. For the unbeliever, the Gospel message is “the power of God to salvation for everyone who believes” (Romans 1:16). For the believer, the teaching of the Word is what equips them to be what God wants them to be. Ministries and programs that are not directly linked

to the proclamation of the Word cannot transform lives. Marketing strategies, business techniques, charismatic leaders, an abundance of programs, world-class music, and entertainment can all be used to build big congregations. But only the inspired Scriptures, empowered by the Holy Spirit, can transform lives and develop disciples.

Because it is our Christ-given task to make disciples, with virtually no scriptural reference about drawing great crowds, building leader-centered dynasties, or being successful, it is incumbent upon us to be about the Master’s business rather than our own. Could the massive fall-out of so many from the local church in recent days, including the fall and defection of some of its “superstars,” be due at least in part to ignoring these simple truths? Let the church do what only the church can do — glorify God through the proclamation of the transformative power of the Word. Maybe it is time to kiss the God-designed church hello — once again.

#### Endnotes:

1. See further, Gary E. Gilley, “The New Calvinists — Engaging the Hearts and Minds of Youthful Believers,” *The Quarterly Journal*, July-September 2018, pp. 4-11.
2. Harris from Instagram post cited in Megan Briggs, “Josh Harris Says He’s ‘fallen away’ From Faith,” from Church Leaders website, July 26, 2019. Document accessed at: <https://churchleaders.com/news/356178-josh-harris-says-hes-fallen-away-from-faith.html>.
3. Ibid.
4. Shannon Harris, shannon.bonne Instagram post, June 24, 2019. Document accessed at: [www.instagram.com/p/Bzx1nuUK/](http://www.instagram.com/p/Bzx1nuUK/).
5. Shannon Harris, shannon.bonne Instagram post, July 5, 2019, ellipsis in original. Document accessed at: [www.instagram.com/p/BzjiPWdnJsN/](http://www.instagram.com/p/BzjiPWdnJsN/).
6. M. Kurt Goedelman, “Church Discipline and the Ministry of Biblical Reconciliation,” Southern Baptist Association of Biblical Counselors Quarterly Newsletter, January-March 2003, pg. 1.
7. R. Scott Clark, “Time To Kiss New Calvinism Goodbye,” from Abounding Grace Radio website, July 20, 2019. Document accessed at: [www.agradio.org/time-to-kiss-new-calvinism-goodbye.html](http://www.agradio.org/time-to-kiss-new-calvinism-goodbye.html).



Noahides believe that life in the world to come is gained by keeping seven specific laws. These laws forbid murder, adultery, eating the flesh of a living animal, stealing, cursing God, sexual immorality, and, on a positive note, setting up courts for justice. Of course, the world would be a better place if all practiced these things, but they are not a ticket to heaven. There certainly are many other sinful behaviors that could be mentioned along with the seven. In addition to the sons of Noah, Noahides further claim these seven laws were given to Adam and Eve. There is nothing in the Bible to back these claims.

One theory of origins for the seven laws of the Noahides is oral tradition. It simply was handed down from one generation to the next by word of mouth, so we are told. Rabbi David Novak has delved into a range of theories as to the origins of the Noahides, even tossing in Hittite law.

Before his death in 1994, Rabbi Menachem Schneerson challenged his followers to be vigorous in sharing the seven laws with Gentiles. President Ronald Reagan, in a 1982 speech, mentioned the seven laws as being foundational to America. The bottom line is that no one really knows the origin or originator. As far as presidents affirming Noahide laws, it seems benign. Presidents can affirm many things and in this case it is a shared ethic or a shared morality.

Noahides work closely with Orthodox rabbis in Israel teaching that Jews find salvation in the Mosaic Law and the Talmud while Gentiles must come under the seven laws of Noah for eternal life. The seven laws can be found in the Jewish Talmud long after Jesus' time. It is claimed that they were given to all of mankind.

Additionally, as to origins, it is suggested by some that the Jewish Book of Jubilees (second century B.C.) may be a partial and earlier copy of the seven Noahide laws. The Book of Jubilees was long lost and then discovered in both Latin and Ethiopian in the 1800s. It is part commentary and largely a chronology of Genesis and some of Exodus.

A small number of scholars who offer theories for the origin of the seven laws even include Acts 15:29. However, the Acts passage — with four laws or directives — is more about removing stumbling blocks to witnessing than anything else. Being against sin can sometimes open doors.

One of the better-known and quirky Noahides was Vendyl Jones, a former Baptist minister who died in December 2010. He is buried in Israel. Jones claimed to be an archaeologist extraordinaire, but was a joke among credentialed archaeologists. He made outlandish claims, but never produced any facts or artifacts. He boasted of

finding anointing oil and incense from Herod's Temple and claimed to know the location of the Ark of the Covenant. He was long on tales and short on any evidence whatsoever. Boast and blather was his forte and not much else.

Then of all things, Jones (around 2004) created a stir when he and an ad hoc group of Noahides, which included some Israeli Orthodox Jews, gathered in Tiberias to proclaim themselves the New Sanhedrin.

The word Sanhedrin comes from the Greek and can be translated literally to "sit together as in a council or assembly." The Sanhedrin in the days of Jesus numbered 71; seventy men and the high priest. The number 70 was arrived at from Numbers 11:16-17 (Moses' advisers).

The current emerging Sanhedrin has no historical connection to the first century, and it is not considered any kind of legal body. Members have no status with the Israeli government and are not recognized as having any authority. They are self-proclaimed and self-elected. Most Israelis see them as a fringe cult.

There are no end times prophecies about a re-established Sanhedrin. They are really of no importance except in their own minds. There are, however, some fringe groups that see the New Sanhedrin connected to the New World Order of the end times. In their scenario the Noahides will enforce the seven laws with beheadings. So why this excites extremist prophecy teachers is hard to say.

What is really strange is that the names of most of the New Sanhedrin are being withheld at this point. Why? How many of them are Noahides? To date only seven names are known. The public line is that to publish all the names would bring undue pressure from critics of a New Sanhedrin. This reveals non-acceptance by the Israeli public. For example, a refutation of the New Sanhedrin written by a Messianic Jew is available online through Kehila News Israel. (See "The Sanhedrin Seduction and the Third Temple Temptations — A Warning to Christians!" by Ron Cantor available at: <https://news.kehila.org/the-sanhedrin-seduction-and-third-temple-temptations-a-warning-to-christians/>.)

But beware — there is a whole radical mythology on the Internet claiming that Noahides will soon be beheading Christians. Some connect the New Sanhedrin to the beheadings. This is nothing but fear mongering, paranoia, and craziness.

So now you have met the Noahides. They may be weird or wonderful depending on whom you ask. You might be hearing more of them and more of their self-promotion. Their message of salvation by laws plays well in an age of self-salvation. Dust off the book of Galatians. It is the perfect antidote for legalism and the Noahide message of Universalism.

—GRF

sick to my stomach. And I've been sick for a while too. I just couldn't say it. And now the lid is off. I've had it. You know why? I don't want to get to heaven and be rebuked," Hinn asserted on his broadcast.

But for Hinn, it's just another claim of theological change that he has repeatedly made over the past several decades. In 1993, Hinn confessed, "Unless changes are made now, this ministry won't last another three years. I'm telling you what the Holy Ghost told me."

In line with the current reform, *Christianity Today* said that "longtime observers are not ready to take his word on faith." The magazine noted that "Hinn rejected the prosperity gospel for the first time in the late 1980s and again in the early '90s, and there were reports at the time that he had really changed. He went on to preach prosperity again." And cited was Charles Self, professor of church history at the Assemblies of God Theological Seminary, who said, "I'm taking a wait-and-see perspective, because we've been down this road before."

And one year before Hinn took to the airwaves to denounce the prosperity teaching, *Charisma* magazine was saying "Benny Hinn's view of biblical prosperity has changed." That report, in August 2018, was tentative at best. "We get attacked for teaching prosperity. Well, it's in the Bible, but I think some have gone to the extreme with it, sadly. And it's not God's Word [that] is taught. I think I'm as guilty as others," the magazine reported Hinn as saying.

Hinn's on-and-off associations with the health and wealth factions, along with his shifting aberrant and heretical beliefs, are the reason that published works which evaluate him have borne such titles as *The Confusing World of Benny Hinn* and *The Many Faces of Benny Hinn*.

This supposed new road for Hinn is really one he's been down time and again. For the faith healer, it appears old habits die hard. Despite his current renunciation, his exorbitant lifestyle will continue by way of those whom he has enticed into giving to his ministry with his employment of the prosperity gospel teachings. Additionally, there will still be his royalties coming to him from all his books and resources where he is proclaiming the health and wealth gospel.

In the broadcast, Hinn made no mention that his critics were correct for all those years they were challenging his errant teachings. In the past, Hinn repeatedly denounced and cursed those who challenged his teachings, even to the point of wanting a "Holy Ghost machine gun" to blow their heads off. Moreover, as he often taught the prosperity gospel, he did so claiming that it was a message he was receiving directly from God.

—MKG

## JAMES MACDONALD RETURNS TO MINISTRY

Embattled former megachurch pastor James MacDonald may be making his way back into public ministry. In February 2019, following years of accusations of impropriety on personal and ministerial levels, MacDonald was fired from Harvest Bible Chapel, the church he founded. Last October it was reported that MacDonald taught at a men's retreat sponsored by New Life Covenant Church, another megachurch in the Chicago area.

The disclosure of MacDonald's participation in the men's event was published in an online post by reporter Julie Roys. Roys has been a staunch critic of MacDonald, regularly reporting on what she saw as the moral and ethical misconduct by the pastor. In 2018, MacDonald and HBC sued Roys, alleging she published false information about the pastor and his church. A few months later, the lawsuit was dropped after a court denied the church's attempt to keep subpoenaed documents private.

In her blog, Roys wrote, "I reached out to New Life Covenant Senior Pastor Wilfredo 'Choco' DeJesus for comment, as well as several other pastors at the church, but no one responded. I also texted MacDonald, who did not respond either. I contacted the leadership at Harvest Bible Chapel, asking whether anyone at the church knew about MacDonald's speaking engagement. Harvest Lead Ministry Pastor Greg Bradshaw responded, 'We were unaware of this event and have had no contact with New Life Covenant about it.'"

Roys and other critics, including former HBC members and staff, have accused MacDonald of a range of sinful conduct, including the misuse of church funds for personal expenditures along with a pattern of inappropriate language, anger, and domineering behavior.

—MKG

## WATCHTOWER APPEALS SEXUAL ABUSE VERDICT

The Watchtower has asked the Montana Supreme Court to reverse a \$35 million verdict against its national organization and one of its local congregations. In September 2018, a jury awarded \$4 million in compensation and \$31 million in punitive damages to a Jehovah's Witness who said she was sexually abused repeatedly by an elder in the Thompson Falls, Mont., congregation and that the abuse was covered up by the organization. The Watchtower has been widely criticized by both members and detractors for its ongoing practice of failing to report criminal behavior of its leaders.

The accuser, now 22, said for more than a decade — from the 1990s into the early 2000s — that she was sexually molested and raped by Jehovah’s Witness elder Max Reyes. When the abuse was reported to other elders in the congregation, local leaders, after contacting the organization’s headquarters, handled the matter themselves and did not report the abuse to any local or state agency. According to the Associated Press, “The lawsuit claimed the local and national Jehovah’s Witnesses organizations were negligent and violated a Montana law that requires them to report abuse to outside authorities.”

The AP report also revealed that the lawsuit stated that the local body of elders “expelled the abuser from the congregation in 2004 then reinstated him the next year.”

In making its appeal to have the verdict overturned, Watchtower attorney Joel Taylor argued, “that church elders handled the allegations internally in accordance with church practices.” He also maintained that, “State law exempts clergy from reporting if church doctrine or practice requires confidentiality.”

Additionally, in the Watchtower’s favor, “The jury’s \$35 million verdict goes against a Montana law that caps punitive damage awards at \$10 million or 3% of a company’s net worth, whichever is less,” the AP said in its news story. However, the attorney for the victim is asking the Montana Supreme Court to rule against the limit as unconstitutional.

—MKG

## **JOHN MACARTHUR TELLS BETH MOORE TO “GO HOME”**

At the Truth Matters Conference last October, popular pastor and author John MacArthur added fuel to the complementarianism/egalitarianism debate with his comments aimed at women Bible teachers Beth Moore and Paula White. During a panel discussion at the event, MacArthur was asked his thoughts about Moore, to which he said she should “Go home” and added, “There is no case that can be made biblically for a woman preacher.”

He also included White in his response saying, “I think the church is caving in to women preachers. Just the other day the same thing happened with Paula White. A whole bunch of leading evangelicals endorsed her new book. She’s a heretic and a prosperity preacher, three times married. What are they thinking?” MacArthur’s remarks were based upon endorsements of White’s new book, *Something Greater*, by several evangelical leaders including Robert Jeffress, Jerry Falwell Jr., and Franklin Graham.

MacArthur stressed the importance of his position, saying, “This is not a minor issue. When you literally overturn the clear teaching of Scripture to empower people who want power, you have given up biblical authority. This is not a small issue.”

As MacArthur’s comments were reported by the media, several Christian leaders came to Moore’s defense, including Kay Warren who called Moore “a class act” and Southern Baptist Convention president J.D. Greear who told Moore, “you’re welcome in our home any time.” In her own response, Moore took to social media tweeting, “I did not surrender to a calling of man when I was 18 years old. I surrendered to a calling of God. It never occurs to me for a second to not fulfill it. I will follow Jesus — and Jesus alone — all the way home. And I will see His beautiful face and proclaim, Worthy is the Lamb!”

—MKG

## **PETER POPOFF PROGRAM BANNED IN UK**

In the United States, televangelists and faith healers are able to take to the airwaves with unbridled boasts of supernatural anointings and claims of miraculous healings. But in the United Kingdom, not so much.

Last October, it was announced that satellite television service provider Greener Technology Limited was fined £25,000 (US\$32,250) by Ofcom for its failure to comply with broadcasting rules. The fine resulted from a January 2018 broadcast of a Peter Popoff Ministries program where “free miracle spring water” was offered and featured “a number of testimonies from individuals who claimed, or strongly implied, using the water had cured serious illnesses, including cancer.”

Ofcom is the Office of Communications in the UK and is the government-approved regulatory for the broadcast, telecommunications, and postal industries of the United Kingdom. The organization’s website states, “We also help to make sure people don’t get scammed and are protected from bad practices.”

In a 14-page document, dated Oct. 15, 2019, Ofcom laid out its decision in a series of 99 points and stated that, “Mr. Popoff repeated and/or clarified the claims made by these participants” who alleged the water’s healing properties. And further stated that, “viewers were likely to have understood from the testimonies broadcast in the programme that serious medical conditions could be cured by drinking the ‘miracle spring water’ and that conventional treatment may not be necessary.”

In support of its charge that the broadcasting code had been “breached,” Ofcom cited three of its rules which were violated including “Rule 4.6,” which specifies,

“Religious programmes must not improperly exploit the susceptibilities of the audience.”

In addition to the fine, the decision stipulated that GTL is not allowed to replay the program and must broadcast a statement of Ofcom’s findings.

—MKG

## **WATCHTOWER ELDERS CONTINUE TO BE TOLD TO DESTROY RECORDS**

Internal and private instructions from the Watchtower hierarchy to its local leaders often find their way into public view. Last September, two Australasian news agencies obtained an internal letter, dated Aug. 28, 2019, from the Christian Congregation of Jehovah’s Witnesses (Australasia) which was sent to its local congregations.

According to INQ, an independent news publication in Australia, “A body representing the Jehovah’s Witnesses in Australia has written to all elders of the group ordering them to destroy confidential records, including notes taken by elders investigating child sexual abuse, in an instruction that has enraged survivors of abuse inside the secretive Christian sect.”

Radio New Zealand also reported on the letter, saying, “Jehovah’s Witnesses church elders in New Zealand have been told to destroy documents, and child sex abuse

survivors fear that will lead to the cover up of cases.”

In the confidential letter, elders were instructed that if brief personal notes are taken during a judicial hearing “they **should be destroyed** once a summation of the hearing has been prepared” (emphasis in original), and asked that “each elder check his personal computer, or hard copy files, and even his meeting bag, to ensure that no confidential correspondence is retained outside the congregation’s confidential file.”

Additionally, RNZ reported, “Elders are required to sign a form saying they have destroyed all electronic and hard copy documents, except one official one, when they expel a believer for sinning.”

The recent letter is another of the embarrassing leaks of private communications concerning its policies of how the organization handles wrongdoing by its leaders and members. In 2018, the *Philadelphia Inquirer* published a report based upon a leaked video of a Jehovah’s Witness official delivering a message to a group of elders in Britain informing them that record-keeping policies were being re-examined and that “handwritten notes and drafts of internal documents needed to be destroyed because of the potential legal harm they posed to the organization.”

The INQ article further said, “A spokesperson for the Jehovah’s Witnesses declined to answer questions. In a statement he said records relating to child abuse were ‘retained in harmony with all legal requirements’.”

—MKG

### **Personal Freedom Outreach – Statement of Belief**

- I. The Bible as the divinely inspired, inerrant Word of God: It is in its entirety the sole authority for all matters of Christian belief and practice.
- II. The one true God. In the one true God there exist three persons, being: The Father, The Son Jesus Christ, and The Holy Spirit.
- III. Jesus Christ: His deity, humanity, virgin birth, sinlessness, death and bodily resurrection; who will personally and visibly return again to earth.
- IV. The personality and deity of the Holy Spirit.
- V. The existence and personality of Satan, his total opposition to God, and his power over the unregenerate.
- VI. The complete and total depravity of all men which makes them hopelessly lost without the new birth obtainable through faith in Jesus Christ.
- VII. The final estate of man: for the saved, everlasting life in the presence of God and for the unsaved, everlasting punishment because of their unbelief.
- VIII. The Gospel by which we are saved being summed in the death, burial and resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ.
- IX. The Church being the Body of Christ, united in the Holy Spirit, consisting of those who have received Jesus Christ as Savior. A local church is an organized assembly of believers united for the purpose of carrying out the Great Commission of Christ.
- X. The Great Commission of Christ being to preach the Gospel to all men, baptizing and discipling those who have believed.



# Books in Review

## GOD BREATHED

by Josh McDowell

Shiloh Run Press, 224 pages, \$16.99

Renowned apologist and author Josh McDowell provides an excellent overview of “the undeniable power and reliability of Scripture,” which is the subtitle of his book, *God Breathed*. His basic premise is, “if the Bible is not a reliable document of history, then everything it says about God and the Christian faith is in question” (pg. 17). To this end, in the pages that follow, McDowell offers much supporting evidence to the one considering or skeptical of the Christian faith, or for the believer who wants to gain a better understanding why he or she can confidently trust the Bible as the inspired, inerrant Word of God. The book is easy to read, but that doesn’t mean it’s short on scholarly detail or evidences.

In line with the volume’s subtitle, it features two sections. The first examines the *power* of Scripture, and the second explores the *reliability* of Scripture. The first half of the book considers such important topics as how we correctly interpret Scripture, why we believe the Bible to be divinely inspired, who decided which books would become Scripture, and how were they selected. That section is written on a more personal level, interwoven with particulars of McDowell’s own life experiences and applications. Here McDowell tells us that in *cracking the code of interpretation*, “At first glance, this may seem a daunting challenge; but it won’t be if we follow a proven process of determining the meaning of the Bible” (pg. 57).

In addressing how the Bible is personally relevant, McDowell states, “Everyone has a worldview, whether or not we know what it is, because everything we think and do is filtered through our assumptions about how life works. Most people acquire these assumptions from a variety of sources, such as Darwinism, Enlightenment philosophy, Eastern religions, materialism, or postmodernism. Here I want to make a bold statement: None of these philosophies or religions provides a worldview that fits together perfectly and without gaping holes. None of them explains the world we find in our actual experience. In fact, there is only one worldview source that provides complete and satisfying explanations for the world as we experience it: the Bible” (pg. 72).

McDowell also touches upon the Apocrypha and Gnostic writings and why these are not considered as Scripture. He informs, “All of these added spiritual writings were rejected by the early church and were, in part, why the church fathers established a set of rules in the first place for recognizing which writings were truly inspired by God” (pg. 108).

In the latter half of the book, the historical reliability of both the Old and New Testaments are carefully examined. In the chapter, “Before the Printing Press,” the painstaking and exhaustive procedures employed by Old Testament scribes are described. This chapter also contains several photos of Hebrew text to better explain the intricacies involved in copying Scripture.

Most chapters in the second section review the principles or tests that determine the reliability of a historical record. These tests are applied to the Old and New Testaments and include the bibliographical test (Has the record been transmitted correctly?), the external evidence test (Is the record verified by outside data such as archaeology?), and the internal evidence test (Is the record consistent within itself?). McDowell demonstrates that the Bible is thoroughly successful in passing each of these tests.

In considering the internal evidence test, the matter of alleged errors and contradictions in the Bible is explored. McDowell sets forth six interpretive principles that help clear many of the supposed errors or contradiction some Bible critics point out. These include: the unexplained is not necessarily unexplainable; the context of the passage controls the meaning; clear passages illuminate cloudy ones; the Bible is a book for humans with human characteristics; an incomplete report is not a false report; and errors in copies do not equate to errors in the originals (pp. 185-187).

In the next to last chapter McDowell considers whether writings from other religions should be regarded as Scripture. His focus in this chapter is the Qur’an and The Book of Mormon (along with the other “Scriptures” and revelations of the Mormon church). The final chapter moves from the verification of the previous 14 chapters to application — how the Bible can come alive in the reader’s life.

This book will equip you to give a defense that the Bible is indeed God-breathed.

—MKG

**Editor’s Note:** The publications featured in PFO’s *Books in Review* section are available from **Personal Freedom Outreach** (P.O. Box 26062, Saint Louis, Missouri 63136). Please add \$3.00 to the price listed for shipping and handling. Due to occasional price changes by the publishers, the retail amounts listed are subject to change without notice. These publications are also available to those who help to financially support the work of PFO. Please see our funds appeal flyer for details.