“BIBLICAL MASCULINITY”:
UNDERSTANDING BIBLICAL MASCULINITY

By

Joseph Olan Stubbs

A Thesis
Submitted to the Faculty
of Reformed Theological Seminary
In Fulfillment of the Requirements
For the Degree of Masters of Arts

Approved:

Thesis Advisor: _____________________________
Rev. Kenneth McMullen

RTS/Virtual President: _____________________________
Dr. Andrew Peterson

August 2006
# TABLE OF CONTENTS

Chapter 1: Introduction 4

- The Problem 4
- Thesis 7
- Equality and Headship Together 8
- Differences in the Laws of Nature and Creation 10
- Physiological Issues 14

Chapter 2: Bible 17

- Overview 17
- Genesis 1-3 18
- 1 Corinthians 11 22
- Ephesians 5 27
- 1 Timothy 2 30
- 1 Peter 3:7 36

Chapter 3: Literature Review 38

Chapter 4: Systematic Theology 42

Chapter 5: History 46

Chapter 6: Practical Implications 53

- Significance 55
- The World’s Perversions 57
- The Christian Solution 58
- The Source of the Difference 59
CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

THE PROBLEM

In researching Biblical masculinity, I have read many commentaries, journals, and books on topics ranging from manhood, raising boys, sexual differences, leadership, and more. I have listened to several series of tapes and talked to many different people about this subject. Every book, tape, and person agreed on at least one thing in regard to masculinity: we are currently in a crisis. Even feminists would agree with this statement, although they see the crisis from a different direction. They seek to diminish the understanding of masculinity, but they still see a huge problem. No one spoke lightly of the issue. Some may have exaggerated it, but none downplayed it. We are in a crisis in regard to Biblical masculinity. Many say that this is the greatest problem facing our country, churches, and families today. Most attach the blame for many other problems to the lack of masculinity. Some go as far as to blame all other problems on the problem of failed masculinity. I will not go into the lists of statistics that record the failures of our culture because so many others have done this so well. Margaret Mead asserts, “The central problem of every society is to define appropriate roles for the men.”1 I will simply agree that there is a problem that is probably much greater than most of us know. This is a large reason for this paper.

“Men and women are created differently in every cell of their bodies.”

“Sexuality permeates one’s individual being to its very depth. It conditions every facet of one’s life as a person.”

“Though [the difference between the sexes] has a sexual basis, its actuality covers all aspects of personal life.”

Masculinity and femininity are not primarily issues of a, “biological fact but a matter of personhood and relational dynamics…Sexuality has to do with our whole personhood.”

There is great consensus that human sexuality has to do with much more than mere physical differences. Our sexuality is a huge issue that affects most if not all areas of our lives. The goal of this paper is to bring greater clarity to the differences between the sexes, focusing on masculinity. What is the nature of true masculinity at its root?

John Stott concludes a chapter on this subject by saying, “further theological reflection is needed…How should we define the created complementarities of the sexes (including the notions of ‘headship’ and ‘submission’), not just physically and physiologically, certainly not culturally (in terms of popular gender stereotypes), but psychologically, and in particular Biblically? What does Scripture teach about the essence (permanent and universal) of our created maleness and femaleness? This question must be at the top of our agenda for debate, since whatever creation has established culture can express but not destroy.”

These are the kinds of questions we will be addressing.

The topic of masculinity is incredibly broad. I want to be clear on the intention of this paper. My goal is not to list all of the attributes of man. My aim is not to lay out a perfect plan for training and teaching a man. The goal is not to refute every feminist
argument. My search is defined by one concern. What is Biblical masculinity? How does the Bible define masculinity? What is the essential difference between men and women in their souls? When one speaks of masculinity, what should one mean? What does it mean to be a man? This will be my pursuit. I am interested in what makes the essence of a man different from the essence of a woman. My one main goal is to understand what God means for men to be. It is clear that men and women have been given different roles by God, but what are the qualitative differences in men that uniquely qualify them for these Biblical roles?

One important note should be made. I believe and am assuming in this paper that men and woman are equal children of God. Men are not implicitly better or more spiritual than women and neither are women better than men. Certainly men are naturally better at some tasks than women and the same is true of women, in regards to men. My paper seeks only to define the differences and not find a superior sex because I believe that though our roles are different, we are created equally in the image of God.

What is the fundamental difference between men and women? We are not searching for the physical differences. These are clear. We are looking for the difference that God has placed in the soul. The fact that there are physical differences leads us to believe that there are distinctions at a deeper level. “Our sexuality penetrates to the deepest metaphysical ground of our personality. As a result, the physical differences between the man and the woman are a parable of psychological and spiritual differences of a more ultimate nature.”\(^7\) “The natural fitness of man and woman for each other in marriage is

---

\(^7\) Emil Bruner, *Das Gebel und die Ordungen* (Tuebingeni J.C.B. Mohr, 1933), p.358.
rooted in something more than anatomy. There is a profound female and male personhood portrayed in our differing bodies.\textsuperscript{8}

THESIS

While the Bible clearly states that the men and women are created equally in God’s image, it also clearly states that just as our physical bodies have distinct differences, there are distinct differences in the roles men and women are supposed to fulfill and our abilities to carry out those roles. The Bible shows that the main roles that men are to play that differs from women’s roles is that of male headship and leadership. We want to understand how the Bible defines this headship and leadership role. The easiest way to sum it up is to say that the essential difference between men and women is one of responsibility. Men and women both have responsibility before God because God created them. But, men clearly have more responsibility for the tasks, people, and institutions that God has given them. Men are uniquely created to bear leadership responsibility in all of creation but especially in the church and the family. John Piper has defined Biblical masculinity like this, “At the heart of mature masculinity is a sense of benevolent responsibility to lead, provide for and protect women in ways appropriate to a man’s differing relationships.”\textsuperscript{9}

\textsuperscript{9} John Piper, \textit{What’s the Difference} (Wheaton, IL: Crossways, 1990), p. 19
EQUALITY AND HEADSHIP TOGETHER

This paper will say a lot about male headship, but nothing that we say in any way takes away from the equality of women. We must start by whole-heartedly affirming that the Bible teaches the equality of the sexes. But we must also clarify what is meant by this statement. As far as one’s spiritual worth and value to God, which is and should be the most important factor, men and women are fully equal. Nothing in the Bible even hints that this is not so although many ancient culture treated women as slaves, as property, and as inferior. Galatians 3:28 is the favorite verse on this issue stating that, “there is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free man, there is neither male nor female, for all are one in Christ Jesus.” “Paul states the basic principle…if restrictions on it are found elsewhere…they are to be understood in relation to Galatians 3:28.”10 All people, regardless of race, class, or gender are equal in importance in Christ. Furthermore, race, class, nor sex makes one more ready or able for salvation. We are all equal in Him. But this does not mean that we are exactly alike. If so, Paul would have written much more to abolish the practice of slavery but he never did. He instructed slaves and masters how to work together in Christ. If you took Galatians 3:28 as far as you could, out of context, you could justify homosexual marriages because there would be no distinction whatsoever between the sexes.11 Certainly this is not Paul’s intent.

Being equal in worth does not infer exact replicas. We must learn to distinguish between equal persons and different roles. John Stott quotes Yoder as saying, “Equality

---

of worth is not identity of role. Two men in the army have an equal worth to their Creator but a different rank and different roles in the army. Just because a private submits to and obeys his captain does not mean that he has less intrinsic worth than the officer. Players on an athletic team follow their coach and their team captain, but this does not mean that they are less significant than the leaders. A new born baby and a 16 year old child are identical in their personal worth before God. But it is ridiculous to infer from this that they are equal in their abilities. There are clear and obvious differences in their height but also great differences in their emotional maturity and how their mind functions in thinking about an issue. Thus it is with men and women. It is obvious to anyone with the ability to see that men and women have very distinct differences in their bodies, if only in their sexual organs. I am arguing that there are also differences in their minds, emotions, and abilities as well. We can see all around us in creation that God does not value equality in intellect, aesthetic beauty, finances, talents, or opportunities, so why would he value exact equality in the ability to handle responsibility and fulfill leadership roles.

The Bible presents a complementarian view of, “both equality and beneficial differences.” Men are certainly better at some things and women better at other things. Men are almost always stronger than women and can run faster. Only a woman’s body can sustain an unborn child in her womb and produce milk for an infant to drink. We have been made for different purposes but these purposes are not in opposition or competition. Rather, they truly complement each other.

---

It is dangerous to put negative values on the so-called weaknesses that each of us has. God intends for all the ‘weaknesses’ that characteristically belong to man to call forth and highlight women’s strengths. And God intends for all the ‘weaknesses that characteristically belong to woman to call forth and highlight man’s strengths… Men and women, as God created us, are different in hundreds of ways. Being created equally in the image of God means at least this: that when the so-called weakness and strength columns for manhood and for womanhood are added up, the value at the bottom is going to be the same for each. And when you take those two columns and put them on top of each other, God intends them to be the perfect complement to each other.\textsuperscript{15}

\textbf{DIFFERENCES IN THE LAWS OF NATURE AND CREATION}

So many of our unique roles are defined not in a vacuum but in relation to one another. So we need to spend some time examining men’s and women’s roles in relation to one another. We have already established that our physical differences point to the deeper differences. Men are made strong with broad shoulders to bear the weight of responsibility.\textsuperscript{16} Men are made physically stronger so that they can work hard to provide for their wives and families and to fight and protect them when need be. Men’s bodies are made to move out and toward a woman in sex as initiator. This too is a picture of a man’s role in relating to women.

Women’s bodies are uniquely crafted to create life and sustain it. Women are naturally crafted to be nurturers and homemakers. This does not mean that this is all they can do or that men cannot help with nurturing kids. But women are experts in this field and even the way men provide nurture is often very different from the way women nurture. Women are made sexually to be more of a receiver and a responder and these

\textsuperscript{15} Ibid., p.73.
\textsuperscript{16} Barbara K. Mouser, \textit{Five Aspects of Woman} (Waxahachie, TX: International Council for Gender Studies, 1992) p. 5.3.
are typically the best roles for her. In marriage and the church, the women should primarily be characterized as sensitive, delicate, trusting, responding, revering, and admiring. She should be dependent on the man, showing her need for leadership, protection and provision.\textsuperscript{17}

It is very foolish for a man to desire to have a woman’s body rather than his own. It is also foolish to desire to fulfill the role of another as well. It would be ridiculous if men complained that they were not allowed to be angels and fulfill the roles of the heavenly messengers. They have not been created for that purpose and it is impossible for them to fulfill that role properly. It is equally foolish for women to complain that they cannot be men and fulfill the roles that God has ordained for them.

Men have primarily been given the role of leader, initiator, and decision maker in life. Women have primarily been given the role of responder, follower, and adviser. God has mandated in Scripture that this be so in the family and in the church. But these roles are often mirrored in every part of society. Steven Goldberg, a sociologist, has written a book, \textit{The Inevitability of Patriarchy}, to use empirical data to prove the truth of the title. A quote from the book cover by Margaret Meed sums up his conclusions well; “All the claims so glibly made about societies ruled by women are nonsense. We have no reason to believe they ever existed.”\textsuperscript{18} “In no society, anywhere or at any time, have these realities been absent… In every society that has ever existed one finds patriarchy (males fill the overwhelming percentage of upper hierarchal positions and all other hierarchies), male attainment (males attain the high-status roles, whatever these may be in any given society), and male dominance (both males and females feel that dominance in male-

\textsuperscript{17} Ibid., p. 5.5.
\textsuperscript{18} Steven Goldberg, \textit{The Inevitability of Patriarchy} (Manria, Britain: Temple Smith, 1977).
female encounters and relationships resides in the male, and society and authority systems reflect this.)”

Men typically see themselves maturing as they grow in courage and independence. Women typically see themselves maturing as they grow in interdependence with others. Men are made more to rule and their thinking processes line up with this. Women are made more to cultivate and their thinking process lines up with this. This should infer nothing negative about women. In many ways it is a strength. Women are gifted as supporters. They have unique wisdom to counsel, console, nurture, and petition man in his role as a ruler. A woman is her strongest when she is supporting a man. She is also safest here. When the Bible speaks of women submitting to their husbands it means for them to, “honor and affirm her husband's leadership and help carry it through according to her gifts.” It does not mean that she is an insignificant helper. It was the sin of the devil to covet a role that was not his. We must not follow him in this sin. This seems to be the main problem with so-called Evangelical feminism. Their main attack is against man’s unique headship role, especially in the church. Stott makes the excellent point that if feminists want to abandon submission in marriage, then why not also abandon submission of children to parents and subjects to kings and congregations to pastors. All of society would break down. It is an illogical goal. To emphasize partnership in marriage is fine as long as we remember that there are distinctions and differences in what is offered by each sex. Men find themselves in being men and women find themselves in being women. “A man just by virtue of his manhood, is called to lead for

---

19 Ibid., pp. 62-63.
21 Ibid., p. xiii.
God. A woman, just by virtue of her womanhood, is called to help for God.”

Perhaps James Montgomery Boice has summed it up best by saying, “A man is absolutely superior to a woman at being a man. A woman is absolutely superior to a man at being a woman.”

When one tries to take the other’s role, it leads to disaster.

Rather than letting our God-ordained differences divide and lead to strife, they should lead to joy and blessing. God has ordained that humans interact like this because it is the best. Men and women both have important roles to play in life that will bring them personal satisfaction.

Men bear a primary (not solitary) responsibility for leadership and protection and provision in the human race…This unique calling is a responsibility to bear in sacrificial love, not a right to seize in dominating power. Where it is embraced with servant like, Christ-honoring courage, and supported by women with faith-filled, fearless, intelligent joy, the best harmony of man and woman prevails.

Just like all members of the body of Christ have different roles in the church so men and women have different roles in marriage. There is no reason for jealousy or coveting.

This is not to say that women have no abilities to lead and rule and initiate. They do have some of these abilities and will sometimes be called on to use them. When dad is not at home, the mother leads. If there is no male to rule, the female rules. A wise husband will often seek his wife’s advice and often choose to follow it, but the final decision rests with him. A wife has incredible influence over her husband often more so than any other person. The accountant of a business will know more about the details of the financial books than the president of the company will. The president makes final business decisions but will often follow the advice of his accountant. This is no way

---

usurps a president’s or a husband’s leadership role. Any leading that fosters immature, weak, insecure wives through, “excessive control, supervision, or oppressive domination,” is wrong.26

PHYSIOLOGICAL ISSUES

It seems foolish to think that God commands men to fill the roles of head and leader and would not specially create them to be able to fulfill these roles. John Stott says, “Masculinity and femininity represent a profound distinction which is psychological as well as physiological.”27 What specifically has God put in men’s minds to prepare them for their God given roles? Robert Lewis says that all men have an inbred aggressiveness that is psychological and physical. It is not learned.28 It is hard wired into our DNA.

God has especially designed us for accomplishing tasks. Richard Fugate lists the following characteristics, “that are scientifically most specific to men… in general: aggressive, competitive nature, analytical, logical, linear thinking, single minded, specialized, strong concentration, less distractible.”29 One author sums up men’s giftedness of leadership and headship by noting that men are more muscular and taller. They have greater stamina. They are aggressive, dominant, competitive, and task oriented. They are abstract, exploratory and linear in their thinking and they are more oriented to hierarchical organization. 30 Men are obviously and especially gifted to

---

26 Wayne Grudem and John Piper, *Recovering Biblical Manhood and Womanhood*, p.64.
fulfill this role of leadership that God gives them. Fugate further explains that, “Men have the drive and ability to be leaders due to their long-range vision, objective orientation, and proclivity to plan. A leader understands that some decisions in life must be made that result in pain and/or sacrifice for today in order to accomplish what is right or best in the future.”

Testosterone tends to make men more aggressive, physically active, and competitive. Men also tend to approach their problems analytically and abstractly while women often personalize. The male brain is specialized. One side works on spatial problems, while the other side addresses verbal and word problems. In a woman’s brain, both sides work together. There are pros and cons in this for both men and women. Neither sex is smarter. But, typically men can analyze a problem more accurately and make a decision objectively better than women can. This helps them in their leadership roles.

Steven Goldberg sums it up by saying that there are other factors, but masculinity is mainly rooted in a drive for dominance. He goes further to say that the, “dominance tendency is primarily a result of hormonal development and not primarily of anatomy, gender identity or the socialization that reflects anatomy and gender identity.” Male dominance has a physiological cause. Goldberg calls this “aggression” or “dominance tendency.” He says that it is “neuron-endocrinological” in origin. The hypothesis at the core of his theory is, “that there are neuron-endocrinological differences between men and women that engender different male and female responses to the environment and

31 Fugate, What the Bible says About Being a Man, p. 105.
33 Ibid., p. 22.
34 Steven Goldberg, The Inevitability of Patriarchy, p. 81.
therefore, different male and female behavior.”\textsuperscript{35} From the beginning of their lives, men are affected by hormones to prepare them to fulfill the roles of leadership and headship. Men are “created generally to be physically, constitutionally, and emotionally stronger.”\textsuperscript{36}

\textsuperscript{35} Ibid., p. 121.
CHAPTER 2: BIBLE

OVERVIEW

The Bible affirms this unique headship role. All of the Old Testament kings and priests were men. All of the Prophets with a public ministry were male. All the authors of the Bible were male. All of the twelve disciples and probably the seventy were men. All elders in the church were male. In Deuteronomy 16:16-17 only males were required to come to the assembly. Paul makes it clear that only men are to be elders today. Paul only allowed women widows to be put on the list to receive support from the church. Why not provide such a ministry for men? Douglas Wilson lists several Biblical passages that clearly mock the idea of female warriors and rulers (Numbers 1:2-3, Nehemiah 3:13, Isaiah 3:12 and 19:16-17, Jeremiah 50:36-37 and 51:29-30). Men are made to fulfill these roles and women are not. God is always referred to with masculine pronouns rather than feminine. When God became human, He became a man, not a woman. There are over one hundred pictures of God as a male such as a king or a warrior or a husband. God is mainly depicted as a male. This means masculinity, “reflects the revealed reality of God in a way that a female cannot.” There are only three images that might be taken as feminine of God (Psalm 131 and Isaiah 66:13). But this does not disprove our case. Paul refers to himself as a mother twice (Galatians 4:19,

37 Douglas Wilson, Federal Husband (Moscow, Iowa: Cannon Press, 1999), pp. 77-82.
1 Thessalonians 2:7). But Paul is not a woman. Some say that forcing masculinity on God limits our conception of Him. But we are not forcing a masculine concept upon God. God has impressed His own masculinity down on us in creation. It is nearer to the truth to say that God is male, rather than female. Man got God’s image in a direct way, woman in an indirect, derived way. All men point to God in a special way that women do not.\textsuperscript{39} Jesus never said anything against male headship.\textsuperscript{40} “If someone can read the Bible and seriously question God’s masculinity, he has already resisted, ignored or discounted far more proof than any apologist could possibly assemble.”\textsuperscript{41}

There are many opportunities in the church and the home for women to lead as long as men fulfill their role of headship by bearing, “responsibility for the overall pattern of life.”\textsuperscript{42} The issue of a woman’s role in the church and family is not one of competency, intelligence, wisdom or education. The primary issue for women is how they relate to male headship.\textsuperscript{43} A church member and an elder can achieve the same amount of significance, but the elder must be in the leadership role.\textsuperscript{44}

GENESIS 1-3

We must search the Bible to define the real differences. The best place to start is Genesis where man and woman are created. The definition of manhood is best discovered not in a vacuum but when compared to man’s counterpart, woman. In the

\textsuperscript{39} Mouser, \textit{Five Aspects of Man}, p. 5.26.
\textsuperscript{40} Grudem and Piper, \textit{Recovering Biblical Manhood and Womanhood}, p. 67.
\textsuperscript{41} Mouser, \textit{Five Aspects of Man}, p. 5.12.
\textsuperscript{42} Grudem and Piper, \textit{Recovering Biblical Manhood and Womanhood}, p. 64.
\textsuperscript{43} Ibid., p. 71.
\textsuperscript{44} Outland, “Male-Female Equality and Male Headship,” p. 95.
creation account, we see that God created Adam first and that God first spoke to him about a job. He gave him a task. He gave him the animals to name, a garden to tend, and a world to tame. Adam set about his God given task. Then the Lord said that it was not good for man to be alone. Out of man’s rib, He created another like him yet different, a woman. She was brought to Adam to be his ‘helper’ or ‘help meet.’ She was created to be strong where Adam was weak and to help him in those areas. The word for ‘helper’ in Genesis 2:18 often means strong, military helper and is often applied to God. This by no means implies that woman or her role is an invalid.  

She was brought into the relationship under man’s headship.

Headship is not a result of the fall. It existed in God’s original design. Man was created directly from the Godhead while man was a part of creating Eve. She reflects the beauty of creation. She is clothed with the glory of being human. “All elements of creaturely nature are highlighted in woman: weakness, fragility, responsiveness, fruitbearing.” Man is first and alone. He comes from God and reflects God’s glory even though he is separate and distinct from God. Woman comes from the masculine and reflects his glory but she is separate from him. She is a helper, a companion, a fruit bearer and a glorifier. Male and female are both a complete image of God alone. But they each image and glorify God in different ways.

Immediately we can notice is that Adam was created first. The next thing is that they seem to be created for a different purpose. Obviously, both are created to serve and

46 Mouser, Five Aspects of Woman, p. 4.5.
47 Ibid., p. 5.7.
48 Ibid., p. 6.13.
49 Ibid., p. 6.7.
50 Ibid., p. 6.22.
glorify God. But Adam is created and immediately given a job to do. He is given
dominion over the earth and that implies responsibility. 51 Man is made from the earth
and for the earth in a sense. He is directed towards the earth, to work it and subdue it.
Woman is created and immediately given a man to help and support. She is made from
the man and for the man. Man is made for the task, woman for the man. Man is oriented
more to the duty, woman more to the relationship. From this we often find that man finds
his significance so much in his work while woman finds her significance in her marriage.
Because of the way they were created, William Hendriksen says it is natural for a
husband to lead, be aggressive and invent. It is natural for women to follow, receive, and
use tools he invents. The “tendency to follow was embedded in Eve’s very soul as she
came forth from the hand of her Creator.” Any attempt to change the created order
grieves God. When she understands her body and her name, that she came from man, she
can be a blessing and, “can exert a gracious, very powerful, and beneficent influence
upon him,” and promote both of their happiness. 52

We all know the story of the fall in Genesis three. Eve sinned first. She then led
Adam into sin into which he willfully followed her. They realized they were naked and
were then ashamed and then hid. When God called after them, He was not asking where
they were physically. He knew this. He was asking where they were spiritually. Where
had they gone from His presence? They had fallen from perfection into sin. Notice in
Genesis 3:9 that God did not call after them together. He called to the man. He sought
out the man. He interrogated the man first because of his sin. Later in the Bible, in
places such as Romans 5, the fall of mankind is not attributed to Eve, but to Adam.

51 Boice, Genesis, p. 95.
Adam made the fateful choice. He was to blame. He sinned. He was responsible. God laid the sin initially at Adam’s feet. Even the ground was cursed because of Adam’s sin and not because of Eve’s (Genesis 3:17). Even in the curse differences are seen in how God dealt with men and women. The man’s curse dealt with his job responsibilities. The woman’s curse dealt with childbearing and her relationship to her husband. This shows us that men are primarily to provide for the family and women are made primarily to nurture the children. Part of the woman’s curse is that she will have a greater dependence and psychological need for man. Women typically get a larger share of her identity, psychologically from her husband. This is shown in the fact that she takes his name. The fact that Adam initially named Eve is a sign of his authority over her. Some think that Eve’s submission to Adam increased after the fall.

In these first three chapters of the Bible, the qualitative difference between men and women is laid out. God places more responsibility on the man. Certainly woman has responsibility for her own life and sin before God. The distinction is that man has more responsibility. In fact, he bears responsibility for his wife, and for his whole family. In his book, Federal Husband, Douglas Wilson says that responsibility is at the very heart of the covenant relationship of marriage. It is the core meaning of federal headship upon which God’s plan for marriage, the family, government, the church and salvation are all based. At the heart of what it means to be a man are the issues of responsibility and leadership. Men have more responsibility and more of a leadership role placed on

---

54 Grudem and Piper, Recovering Biblical Manhood and Womanhood, p.43.
55 Boice, Genesis, p.222.
56 Ibid., p. 229.
58 Wilson, Federal Husband, p. 11.
them than women do. All that God calls men to be as a Christian, He calls women to also be at least in some degree. Even woman bear some responsibility and some leadership roles in God’s creation. But, the essential difference is that men have more responsibility in God’s eyes. Men have more leadership responsibility forced upon them by God’s design. Men are more responsible for the tasks and people and institutions that God has given them, than are the woman that they live with.

1 CORINTHIANS 11

Some women in Paul’s day had taken his teaching about the equality between the sexes in places such as Galatians 3:28 too far. They believed the effects of the fall had been fully undone. They wrongly associated the social bounds of submission totally with the fall and thus they sought to throw off male headship. Paul is careful to curb this trend in the churches. Some commentaries go out of their way to basically make it sound as though Paul is not teaching that women should submit to their husbands in Corinthians.

Paul addresses the issue of head coverings in this passage but there is a deeper issue. The way that men and women dress should reflect their appropriate gender roles in that culture. Paul’s basis for these roles does not ultimately rest in culture but in the Trinity and in the creation order. Paul teaches that Christ is the head of man and that man is the head of woman. There has been much debate about the word ‘head’ and its meaning. Leon Morris says that ‘head’ mainly means source. Alan Johnson teaches that ‘head’

means honored source in this context and that it has no patriarchal overtones and does not
mean authority. But even he says that, “Paul could be himself creating a new live
metaphorical sense for the word in certain contexts.” This seems to cast doubt on his
interpretation. The International Standard Bible encyclopedia says that ‘head’ does
usually mean a position leadership and authority. Knox Chamblin says that ‘head’
means ‘rule.’ Maybe it is best to say that the word implies source as well as authority.

Paul is passionate to portray the importance of a society and especially the church
holding firm to the differing roles that God has given to men and women. Hats and hair
lengths may be cultural issues, but male headship is not. It would not be appropriate for a
man to wear a skirt or a kilt to church today in America, but it would have been expected
in Scotland a few hundred years ago. The issue is not clothing but fulfilling God’s design
for us. In the culture of Corinth of that day, women’s long hair and veils symbolized
submission to the authority of their husbands. It was also a sign of their need for
protection and rule. When women did not wear a veil, it made them look like a slave or
an adulteress and they became a distraction in worship.

Verse seven may be the most radical text in the entire Bible addressing the differences
between men and women. Genesis tells us that men and women are both created in the
image of God. But Paul tells us that while man is the glory of God, woman is the glory
of man. Both men and women glorify God but we do it in differing ways. “As image
bearers, man and woman are the same; they are both in the image of God. As glory-

---

bearers, they differ.” God alone created man and gets all the credit but man was used in creating woman. One way to think about it is that God is so complex that He exists in three persons. When He creates mankind in His image, He makes His image reside in two distinct, yet complementary genders. His glory is so strong and deep that even its reflection, man, has an equally strong reflection, woman.

Man is uniquely created to bear the image of God as a ruler, who is given a sphere of sovereignty…The male was given the domain and authority over God’s created world, and is by that fact the glory of God…man is to represent God in authority and rulership, thus being the glory of God…Woman was made to manifest man’s authority and will as man was made to manifest God’s authority and will. The woman is vice regent, who rules in the stead of man or carries out man’s will, just as man is God’s vice regent…The woman shines not so much with the direct light of God as with the derived light from men. Man is both the image and glory of God while woman is only the image of God (Gen. 1:27) and not the image of man, and the glory of man, not the glory of God. The point is that man shows how magnificent a creature God can create from Himself, while woman shows how magnificent a creature God can make from a man (Gen. 2:21-22).

Woman has her place but it is not man’s. “Man shows forth God’s glory as does nothing else…She stands in such a relation to man as does nothing else, and thus she is called the glory of man.” The glory of man, woman, must be veiled in God’s presence so man is not glorified, but only God is.

What does it mean to be the glory of another? Glory refers to beauty, splendor, significance, the outshining of one’s worth. There are two main ways to glorify another. First by simply being who you were made to be. Secondly in doing the things you were made to do. Mankind is the pinnacle of God’s creation. Looking at man tells us

---

65 Mouser, *Five Aspects of Woman*, p. 5.5.
69 Mouser, *Five Aspects of Woman*, p. 5.4.
glorious things about God’s power and wisdom and goodness. Man shows off the best things about God. Woman is the best thing about man. She is his greatest good and his crowning virtue. “The image of God is, therefore, to be seen only in the full complementarity of male and female.”

Men directly reflect the glory of God and directly receive the image of God. Man is the only creature with another being made fully in God’s image tailored for Him, from Him. All animals were made from the ground. This is a special glory for humans that not even angels receive. Woman receive the image of God indirectly through man and indirectly glorify God. Woman in the Bible is compared to the bride, the church, the Son, and creation. “Man glorifies God by displaying His masculine nature and roles, and by emulating Christ’s headship. Woman glorifies God by magnifying the faith and fruitfulness of the creation, and by emulating the Church.” Women reflect the glory of God through reflecting the glory of His glorious creation. Women should not take offense at this. Calvin says, “Christ holds the second place...Inasmuch as he has in our flesh made himself subject to the Father, for, apart from this, being of one essence with the Father, he is equal.” If there is a proper way to speak of Christ, the Lord of glory, being second, why does anyone have a problem referring to women taking a secondary role in the family and home. Calvin says, “The woman derives her origin from the man, she is therefore inferior in rank.”

Paul is careful to make clear that men and women are interdependent and that men are not superior. Woman came from man in creation and now man comes from woman in

---

71 Mouser, *Five Aspects of Woman*, p. 5.6.
72 Ibid., p. 5.2.
74 Ibid., p. 357.
birth. 1 Corinthians 11:11-12 shows us that, “Things which either gender can do are done by them both in different ways, so that men and women in society are interdependent, but not interchangeable.”

Men and women should focus on this interdependence and their mutual debt and obligation to one another. They should not think of each other with indifference, but humbly fulfill the roles in marriage and society that God has given them. “Let them, therefore, be connected with each other by the bond of mutual duty…The man has no standing without the woman, for that would be the head severed from the body; nor has the woman without the man, for that were a body without a head.” One great example is that women are not to be teachers in the church, and yet they are often the most influential shapers of men as wives and mothers.

John MacArthur sums the passage up well. “If Christ had not submitted to the will of God, redemption for mankind would not have been possible.” If a man does not submit to Jesus, they are eternally lost. “If women do not submit to men, then the family and society as a whole are disrupted and destroyed.” This passage does have meaning for all aspects of society and all men and women and not just for those in marriage.

Men and women are equal in, “personal worth, abilities, intellect, … spirituality… as human beings and as Christians.” Some women are superior to men in certain qualities and abilities. “God established the principle of male authority and female subordination for the purpose of order and complementation, not on the basis of any innate superiority of males.” An employee may be smarter than his boss or a church member than an

---

75 Mouser, *Five Aspects of Woman*, p. 5.8.
76 Calvin, *1 Corinthians*, p. 360.
78 Ibid., p. 253.
79 Ibid., p. 254.
elder or a wife than a husband. But all three must still submit. The church, nor the family, nor a business can be run without submission. This is basic logic.

EPHESIANS 5

This is another hotly contested passage in the differences between men and women. Again, the meaning of the word ‘head’ is at the forefront of the argument. The debate is over whether the word means rulership or authority or simply source of origin. Some commentators portray Paul as a sexist while others say that he spoke more gloriously about women than anyone in the whole Bible.\(^8^{0}\) Klyne Snodgrass shows how in over 180 places where the idea of authority is present, ‘head’ is used only 16 times. But he goes on to say that head does mean “responsibility for,” and that wives should respect and recognize husbands’ role and responsibility.\(^8^{1}\) Simon Kistemaker tells us that Paul uses the word ‘head’ ten times figuratively. He usually uses the word in referring to Jesus as the head of the church or of all creation. This would certainly seem to contain the idea of ruler or authority.\(^8^{2}\) James B. Hurley points out that God created man to be in authority over all creation and specifically his wife. This is one of the ways that he reflects the image of God over creation and Jesus over the church.\(^8^{3}\) Because the husband is to serve as the protector of the wife, it does seem that some measure of authority should be in the word.\(^8^{4}\) Some feminists point out that Ephesians 5:21 is the beginning of the passage and

\(^8^{0}\) Lloyd-Jones, Life in the Spirit in Marriage, Home, and Work, p. 107.
\(^8^{1}\) Klyne Snodgrass, Ephesians (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1996), pp. 295-296.
\(^8^{4}\) F. F. Bruce, The Epistle to the Colossians, to Philemon and to the Ephesians (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1984), pp. 384-385
commands mutual submission. Some try to use this to explain away the rest of the passage. They try to say that Paul only commands submission so as not to offend the local culture.\textsuperscript{85} But, even if Paul means mutual submission, it is clear from the rest of the text that husband and wife do not submit to one another in equal ways. Head naturally means leader in this context. The head gives guidance and alertness and nourishment. It leads, protects, and provides.\textsuperscript{86} Whatever the meaning of head, it must include, “special responsibility,” like Jesus has for the church.\textsuperscript{87}

John Stott helps us qualify the nature of this headship and submission. He says that husbands’ responsibility should never be used selfishly.\textsuperscript{88} Paul’s basic point in the use of the word ‘head’ is to emphasize the responsibility placed on the husband rather than the subordination of the wife. Stott continues and says, “Headship expresses care rather than control, responsibility rather than rule.” This is made clear through the comparison in the text to Jesus as Savior. Jesus is the head of the church because he laid down His life for her benefit. Husbands should mimic Jesus in this. The character of the head is therefore, “not so much lordship as saviourhood.” Submission in this context is not demeaning because it is not, “unthinking obedience to his rule but rather a grateful acceptance of his care.”\textsuperscript{89} Men are to be saviors of their wives in that they are to preserve their lives. This submission is really a form of vital, loving, dependence.\textsuperscript{90} It is in all kindness to women that God put them under men. He puts the ultimate responsibility on the man as a way to bless and protect and cherish the wife.\textsuperscript{91}

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{85} Walter L. Liefeld, \textit{Ephesians}, (Downers Grove, IL: IVP, 1997). p. 143.
\item \textsuperscript{86} Grudem and Piper, \textit{Recovering Biblical Manhood and Womanhood}, pp. 62-63.
\item \textsuperscript{87} Liefeld, \textit{Ephesians}, p.145.
\item \textsuperscript{88} Stott, \textit{The Message of Ephesians}, p. 219.
\item \textsuperscript{89} Stott, \textit{The Message of Ephesians}, pp. 225-226.
\item \textsuperscript{90} Lloyd-Jones, \textit{Life in the Spirit in Marriage, Home and Word}, p. 119.
\item \textsuperscript{91} William Hendriksen, \textit{Exposition of Ephesians} (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker, 2002), p. 248.
\end{itemize}
Wives are to submit to their husbands as part of their submission to Christ, as a way to obey Him. The woman may be smarter or more capable of making decisions than her husband but the ultimate responsibility rests with him as far as God is concerned.

Headship is about responsibility, not privileges. It is characterized by love, sacrifice, and protection. God made woman to be under men and to need the protection of men and to need men’s strength.92

The manner in which this rule is carried out may be the most significant part of this passage. Husbands are never once commanded to rule their wives, but only to love them. Men submit to women by sacrificially giving their lives up for them.93 They submit and serve their wives by leading them.94 Nothing gives a wife more, “advantage or comfort,” than to be subject to husband. Husbands do have a similar authority over the wives as Christ does over the church. We should not think of these roles as an arbitrary appointment. God always has a reason.95

1 TIMOTHY 2

To understand this passage we must understand the background of the problem Paul is addressing. False teachers had infiltrated the church at Ephesus where Timothy was pastor. They taught an early form of Gnosticism and were teaching an over-realized eschatology (2 Timothy 2:18). They taught that the effects of the fall had been fully reversed and that roles that had been denied to women because of the fall were now open

93 Liefeld, Ephesians, p. 124.
94 Boice, Genesis, p. 141.
to women. These false teachers were pushing the women to take hold of these roles, mainly teaching and ruling in the church.\textsuperscript{96} There had been similar problems in the church that Titus presided over where Paul says that the heretics were preying on women. The heresy was triumphalistic. It was a local deception at Ephesus. Women were becoming teachers because they had been deceived by heretics.\textsuperscript{97} Silence had been expected in the synagogue. Heretics were exploiting the readiness of women to claim prominence for themselves. Teaching was, “tantamount to her wielding authority over a man.”\textsuperscript{98} The Gnostics were trying to teach that there were no essential differences between men and women.\textsuperscript{99}

The heretics were emphasizing the already of salvation over the not yet. All promises will be fulfilled in heaven. Some of the heretics were saying that the resurrection had already happened and so women and slaves should take authority. Some modern day teachers run with this line of thinking and teach that Galatians 3:28 has not been fully realized yet and cannot be fully experienced yet. If it had been, Paul would have fought for the abolition of slavery. “Paul and the New Testament writers seem to have viewed their world and its structures as a part of God’s design. They would encourage the church to ‘submit to’ the instruction of the world (1 Peter 2:13) and (as far as possible) through generally acceptable behaviors to make a redemptive impression on it. (1 Thessalonians 4:11-12; 1 Timothy 3:7, 6:1).”\textsuperscript{100} They also knew that evil men were in the world and they could not let the evil world fully dictate their policies. They do want

\textsuperscript{96} I. Howard Marshall, \textit{The Pastoral Epistles} (Edinburgh, Scotland: T and T Clark LTD, 1999), 459.
\textsuperscript{99} Donald Guthrie, \textit{The Pastoral Epistles} (Grand Rapids, IL: Eerdmans, 1990), p. 85.
\textsuperscript{100} Philip H. Towner, \textit{1 and 2 Timothy and Titus} (Downers Grove, IL: IVP, 1994), p. 73.
to have a peaceful co-exist with the world though. There is some truth in this
tory but it does not seem true that all of Paul’s teaching in this passage is culturally
conditioned. There are many different theories on this passage. Some say that this is just
Paul’s opinion and is not an authoritative teaching. Others say it only refers to women
submitting to their husbands. Some say women can teach as long as it is done in a quiet
manner.102

In 1 Timothy 2:11-14, Paul emphatically states that men are to be the leaders in the
church. They are to exercise the authority. His reasons for this are not cultural at all. He
appeals to two facts. First, man was created first. By this foundational event, Paul tells
us that God was making it clear to us that men are to be the leaders. Some commentators
say that women are prohibited from teaching because they did not have sufficient grasp
of the issues or proper instruction. But this is not the issue. Paul shows that the issue is
that mankind was made as a pair and Eve was made to be the companion of Adam, under
him.103 Men bear the weight of authority and of responsibility more than women.
Certainly in God’s infinite wisdom, He created men to be better suited for this role. Paul
views Adam and Eve as historical people but also as, “archetypes of the human race.
Their character and propensities were transmitted to their descendants, and in their
relationships can be seen foreshadowed the permanent relationship between man and
woman.” Paul clearly has Genesis 3:16 in mind as he makes his second argument.104

Paul proves his point through interpreting the fall. He shows that although man fell,
he was not deceived. The woman was. This may make man’s sin much worse than the

101 Ibid., pp. 74-75.
103 Guthrie, The Pastoral Epistles, p. 87.
104 Kelly, The Pastoral Epistles, p. 68.
woman’s. Even so, Paul uses the picture of the woman’s being deceived to, in some sense, imply that she is not fit with the duty of leading God’s people. This should not be taken as a terrible limitation on women. Many ancient cultures and religions did not allow women to be learners. Paul is commanding that they do so which was a huge privilege for women in that day.

There are several issues debated in this passage. What does Paul mean that women can not teach? What does he mean that they cannot have authority over men? What does he mean that they must remain silent? What does he mean by referring to the created order and the fact that Eve was deceived? What does he mean about women being saved through child-bearing? We must determine Paul’s non-negotiable principles from creation and negotiables based on culture.\(^{105}\) Some have said that the word for ‘authority’ has the negative idea of domineering and lording it over men and that this is all that Paul was prohibiting. But this does not fit. Teaching and authority are good things. They do not refer to ‘domineering’.\(^{106}\) Authority (\textit{authenteo}), “shows no inherent negative sense of grasping or usurping authority or of exercising it in a harsh or authoritative way, but simply means ‘to have or exercise authority.’”\(^{107}\) The word authority contains that ideas of, “right (Matthew 8:9) and power (Mark 1:27, 1 Corinthians 7:37) and responsibility (2 Corinthians 10:8, 13:10) to give direction to another.”\(^{108}\) Authority also contains the idea to build others up in the Lord. Responsibility is the most important idea.

\(^{105}\) Fee, \textit{1 and 2 Timothy and Titus}, p. 81.


\(^{107}\) George W. Knight, \textit{The Pastoral Epistles} (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1992), p. 141.

\(^{108}\) Grudem and Piper, \textit{Recovering Biblical Manhood and Womanhood}, p. 78
What does Paul mean when he says that a woman must learn in full submission (1 Timothy 2:11)? Marshall says that it can mean anything from practicing Christian humility to simply letting others lead. Towner says that submission can mean to submit completely to men or just when participating in social institutions. Knight says that Paul wants women to submit to men and, “not try to reverse sexual roles, but not necessarily refrain from teaching them.” There may be appropriate times for women to teach men if it is not in an authoritative way such as sharing a testimony.

What are Paul’s restrictions on women teaching in the church? Some go as far to say that women must not speak at all in church but this contradicts other passages in Corinthians 11 and 14 where Paul speaks of women praying and prophesying in church. There are appropriate ways for women to speak and even teach in the church. Paul is not against appropriate forms of teaching but against them fulfilling the authoritative role or office of teaching. Certainly prophetesses spoke in the church at times. But just because a prophetess with extraordinary gifts can speak that should not embolden ordinary women to want to teach regularly. Teaching is important because it is the primary place where headship is expressed. Women may teach as long as it is done under male headship. Some say that women’s greater weakness makes her more likely to teach error. Matthew Poole goes as far to say that because Eve sinned first and led Adam to stray, she ought to stay, “humble, in a low position of herself, and that lower order wherein God hath fixed her.” Marshall has a great summation thought that Paul’s

---

109 Marshall, The Pastoral Epistles, p. 454
109 Towner, 1 and 2 Timothy and Titus, p. 76
110 Knight, The Pastoral Epistles, p. 86.
114 Chamblin, Pauline Epistles, pp. 231-234.
prohibition on teaching for women actually encouraged subordination in all areas of life.\textsuperscript{116}

In light of this, why does Paul say that women must be silent? 1 Corinthians 11:5 shows this does not mean absolute silence in the service. Silence means do not take the lead. Do not teach authoritatively. Teaching and taking authority are two different roles, but are connected. Teaching is part of the authority.\textsuperscript{117}

“Women’s extra leadability makes her more susceptible to deception than man. Women are often more subjective in their judgments, depending more on how things seem (feelings, nuances, appearances).” Men tend to be more objective, logical and focused on facts.\textsuperscript{118} Men respond more in detachment. Women are more likely to be deceived because, “women tend to perceive things more as an entire person with mind, body, and emotions integrated. Their response is more immediate in time; they invest less in a distant analysis of a situation.”\textsuperscript{119} Marshall quotes Schriener as saying,

Generally speaking women are more relational and nurturing and men are more given to rational analysis and objectivity. Women are less prone than men to see the importance of doctrinal formations especially when it comes to the issue of identifying heresy and making a stand for the truth… What concerns [Paul is] the consequences of allowing women in the authoritative teaching office, for their gentler and kinder nature inhibit them from excluding people for doctrinal error.\textsuperscript{120}

It is important for men to remember not to domineer over women in their leading of them.\textsuperscript{121}

\textsuperscript{116} Ibid., p. 460.
\textsuperscript{117} Towner, \textit{1 and 2 Timothy and Titus}, p. 77.
\textsuperscript{118} Mouser, \textit{Five Aspects of Woman}, p. 4.27.
\textsuperscript{120} Marshall, \textit{The Pastoral Epistles}, p. 466.
\textsuperscript{121} Stott, \textit{The Message of 1 Timothy and Titus}, p. 86.
Verse fifteen may be the hardest verse in this passage to understand. Paul is emphasizing the duty of childbearing against the abstinence the heretics were teaching. The false teachers and the Gnostics had made marriage and child-bearing sin. Others point out that Paul is referring to the fact that Christ was born through a woman. In that view, the point would be to say that women are definitely not second class citizens in the church because their gender had the privilege of bringing the Savior of mankind into the world. It is most likely that Paul means that women will persevere to final salvation through faithfully keeping the role God has given her and not rebelling against it. Paul is pulling the women back to reality from the heretics. He is telling them that faithfulness to God in your role is the way to “work out your salvation.” Some of this passage could make us think that God is mad at women but he is not. He is pleased as women are faithful to submit in proper roles and not try to become teachers.

1 PETER 3:7

This verse is unique in that it places the differences and the equality side by side in one verse. Women are declared to be the weaker vessel and yet they are said to be common heirs of grace. They may be weaker in certain areas but in other, higher respects such as salvation, the highest respect of all, women are clearly equal to their husbands.

---

122 Guthrie, *The Pastoral Epistles*, p. 89.
123 Kelly, *The Pastoral Epistles*, p. 70.
124 Knight, *The Pastoral Epistles*, pp. 87-88.
126 Fee, 1 and 2 Timothy and Titus, p. 80.
The major debate about this verse centers around what Peter means in calling women the ‘weaker vessel.’ Most commentators think that it primarily refers to physical weakness, but there seems to be more here. Kistemaker says weaker means physical stamina and not intellectual, moral or spiritual weakness. But he goes on to say that man should, “shoulder the heavier burdens, protect his wife, and provide.” This verse does not mean that women are inherently weak but they are weak in comparison to men in certain respects. We should be aware of any kinds of weaknesses in the women around us and especially our wives. This word mainly refers to the physical weakness. It also probably refers to the fact that women do not have as much authority in life and marriage. It probably also refers to their emotional sensitivity. Every husband should become an expert in his wife’s weaknesses and needs, not to exploit them but to better love and serve them.

Even though the Bible says that women are the weaker vessel, this should not be taken as a demeaning thing. Calvin says that it is similar to the inexperience of children in certain affairs and you do not hold it against them. 1 Corinthians 12:23 reminds us that the weaker vessel gets honor and a privileged position. The Bible teaches godly submission not just for wives, but for Christians in all different roles of society where it is appropriate such as with children, church members, and employees. A wife’s weakness means that men must deal with their wives very sensitively. This covers many different areas. Particularly in the, “sexual union… the husband must dwell with his wife as one

---

who knows her needs, who recognizes the delicacy of her nature and feelings.”\(^{132}\)

Husbands submit to their wives by serving, caring for, protecting, and being sensitive to her needs. Her, “submission does not imply any moral, intellectual, or spiritual inferiority in the family, workplace or society in general. But it is necessary to mankind’s wellbeing.”\(^{133}\)


CHAPTER 3: LITERATURE REVIEW

Many modern scholars have attacked the idea of male headship in scholarly articles. One scholar began her article stating that modern thinkers refuse to think of God as male but as spirit only. She believes that none of the maleness attributed to God in the Bible should be taken literally. Another scholar tried to avoid the issue by making it simply one of gender. According to her, sexual differences are biological issues. But any gender differences merely have their root in culture. Another attacked Paul’s assertion that only men can teach and rule in the church. She asserted that rituals and traditions from the surrounding pagan cults in Ephesus were spilling into the church. One of these was that women teachers would teach in such a way as to make it known to all the men in the congregation that she was also available as a prostitute after the meeting was over. She asserts that female teachers in the church had begun to act this way and that this is all Paul is attacking. She does not make a very convincing case. If Paul had wanted only to attack women teachers selling sex why not just say so. Nothing in the passage mentions sex or promiscuity. Her logic seems very stretched on this issue.

Many articles support the idea of male headship through their exegesis of the Scriptures. Bruce Waltke shows that the creation account assumes ontological equality

---

between the sexes.\textsuperscript{137} Ann Bowman makes a great analogy between God’s creating Adam first and the rights of a first-born child in ancient cultures. Adam was the first created child so to speak. Therefore, he gets the leadership role and bears the responsibility as the eldest son would over a father’s inheritance.\textsuperscript{138} Susan Fob shows us the meaning of ‘desire’ in Genesis 3:16 is used in Genesis 4:7 as well. God tells Cain to be careful because sin desires to rule over him. When God curses Eve saying that her desire will be for her husband, He is saying that she will long to rule over him. This will lead to her rebellion against male authority. Sin corrupts her willing submission that she had in the garden. The curse has also corrupted men’s loving leadership. Now women want to rule over men and usurp their role.\textsuperscript{139}

Many articles have been written about 1 Corinthians 11. Alan Padgett believes that Paul means to say that men have a superior status as the image and glory of God.\textsuperscript{140} Another author affirms that ranking speaks not of dignity or worth. Rather, our differing positions have to do with only our, “job relationships, responsibilities to each other, and ultimately to God.”\textsuperscript{141}

M. D. Hooker shows that Jewish brides went bareheaded until marriage as a sign of freedom. When they were married they wore a veil to show that they were under the authority of their husbands.\textsuperscript{142} Paul borrows this imagery for the Christian church for women to find an appropriate way to show their submission to their husbands. For a

married woman in the church to not wear a veil was to usurp a man’s position and take the glory that God designed for man to have in creation.  

Many feminists claim that male headship should be abolished as an ancient cultural form that God never intended just as slavery was abolished. Waltke points out that Paul never founds slave-master relationships in creation as he does with husband-wife relationships. Rather Paul told slaves to be free if they could in 1 Corinthians 7:21. Paul never told women to seek freedom from their husbands’ authority.

Many scholars commented on Ephesians 5 as well. One scholar wrongly asserts that men and women were created equal in all senses in the beginning but that this equality was lost in the fall. But she agrees that Paul seems to put more responsibility in marriage on the man rather than the woman. Padgett shows how Paul uses the creation and the fall to back up his assertion of male headship in marriage. Another scholar makes a great point showing how equality of the sexes can still be seen even in their differing roles and duties in marriage. Men are called mainly to love their wives. Women are commanded to respect and to be subject to their husbands. Even in these two different commands we can see differing roles for men and women. But in one sense, to love and to be subject to, are very similar. Loving and submitting both have to do with putting the other first. Both have to do with giving ones life for the other, just in different manners.

143 Waltke, “1 Corinthians 11:2-16,” 51.
144 Ibid., p. 56
Many articles support the idea of male headship while many sought to tear it down in any way possible. Male headship is so impressed upon God’s creation that even its antagonists at times must pay homage to the reality. Jill Baumgertuer is not a huge fan of male headship but conceded that it exists in most if not all cultures. In those cultures emphasizing manhood she found that three things were important to the role of men: Impregnating women, protecting women and children from danger, and providing for the material needs of their children. All of these fit with the Biblical concept of male headship. Joseph A. Fitzmeyer backs the idea of ‘head’ having connotations of rulership and authority involved. Grudem has written an incredible article supporting and, I think conclusively, proving that headship carries the idea of authority with it.

CHAPTER 4: SYSTEMATIC THEOLOGY

Most systematic theologians had few comments on this issue. When they did address the issue, it was usually in reference to the Trinity, creation, or Christ’s headship as a picture of male headship. One interesting point is that every creed, confession, catechism or systematic theology that I looked at all referred to the three persons of the Godhead with male pronouns. This is not on accident. What does this tell us about male headship in human relationships?

Even in the perfect Triune Godhead, the principles of equality and headship exist side by side without conflict or ambiguity. The Bible and orthodox Christian confessions make it clear that the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost are equal in their importance and in their value (See John 14:9-10). The Bible and the creeds are also clear that the three equal members of the Trinity are distinct and have distinct roles. There is certainly overlap in their roles but there is also separation. There is no right way to say that the Father or the Spirit took on flesh and died for men’s sins. Only the Son fulfilled that role. There are times that the Scriptures seem to portray Jesus as second or almost inferior to the Father or at a minimum in a submissive role (See John 12:49-50). Certainly he is not less than the Father, but He certainly takes a submissive role. He submitted to the Father’s plan and obeyed the Father. There is a right way to speak of God the Father and God the Son as fully equal and yet to hold on to the fact that Jesus took what at times seems to be a secondary role. If we can speak of Jesus in this way, certainly we can
speak of women in this way as well. Are they of more value than Christ? If it does not
infringe upon Christ’s value or worth to submit to the Father, then why must it infringe
upon a woman’s value to submit to the man God has ordained for her?

Charles Hodge in speaking on the Nicene Creed says, “The creeds…assert…the
subordination of the Son to the Father, and of the Spirit to the Father and the Son, as the
mode of subsistence and operation. These are Scriptural facts, to which the creeds in
question add nothing; and it is in this sense they have been accepted by the Church
universal.”¹⁵¹ Many theologians attack the idea of subordination in the Trinity so that
they can attack the idea of male headship. One such theologian attacks any idea that
sounds like a “chain of command” in the Trinity.¹⁵² Others define the very nature of
subordination as requiring inferiority.¹⁵³ But these views are inconsistent with the
Biblical account. 1 Corinthians 11:3 speaks of God being the head of Christ. 1
Corinthians 15:28 says that Christ will be subject to the Father. Thomas Schreiner points
out that the difference in the Trinity is one of function and not of essence. One commits
Christological heresy if one assigns an ontological difference between Christ and the
Father. It is wrong to imply inferiority to Christ in comparison to the Father. It is not
wrong to notice the difference in their roles. In fact, it would be wrong not to
acknowledge these clear differences. Schreiner shows how evangelical feminists often
make the mistake of equating a difference in role or function necessarily imply a
difference in essence or significance.¹⁵⁴

¹⁵² G. Bilezikian, Beyond Sex Roles: A guide for the Study of Female Roles in the Bible (Grand Rapids, MI:
¹⁵⁴ Thomas Schreiner, “Head Coverings, Prophecies and the Trinity,” in Recovering Biblical Manhood and
Wayne Grudem points out that the Father has greater authority in the Trinity. In the creation account, God speaks and initiates and leads. Creation is carried out by the Son and sustained by the Holy Spirit.\textsuperscript{155} The three members of the Trinity are equal in value but there are different roles. None of the members are dissatisfied with their roles but rather fulfill them perfectly, even when the role includes submitting to the Father.

Grudem also points to many factors in the creation account that point to male headship and leadership. Woman is created to be man’s helper. The idea of being a helper is to help the one with the responsibility. Also, God named the human race ‘man’, signifying man’s ultimate authority, accountability, and responsibility for the human race. In the Fall, Satan reversed these roles and intentionally went after the woman first. Eve sinned first, but it is Adam who represents us in the original covenant.\textsuperscript{156} Adam is the one held responsible as the representative for all mankind, for plunging us into sin. Romans 5 tells us that all died in Adam, not in Eve. The fact that Adam is allowed to name Eve, as he did the animals is another sign that God put man in charge of the male-female relationship.

Louis Berkhof says that the use of ‘head’ in Ephesians 5 does have the idea of organic headship or source but that it also carries the idea of rulership.\textsuperscript{157} Herman Ridderbos agrees by saying that ‘head’ is metaphorical and means “rulership and authority,” arising from the nature of the relationship. Christ is the Preserver and Savior of the body. Head refers to priority, prominence, superiority, control, and rule. Christ’s relationship with the church started this way. He came first and the church came out of Him for Him. The

\textsuperscript{156} Ibid., p. 462-463.
woman came out of man, for man, to help man. The beginning of the relationship determines the rest of the relationship.  

Grudem also had some interesting ideas in reference to 1 Timothy 2:11-15. Many feminists claim that Paul did not allow women to teach because they were not properly educated or capable of teaching. The idea suggests that only men in that region were trained and educated. But Grudem points out that formal education was not the issue because most of the male leadership did not have it either. None of the original apostles had formal Bible training. If normal, secular education is meant the point still will not stand. Many women in Ephesus did have such training. It is highly likely that Priscilla was in Ephesus when 1 Timothy was written. Paul makes no exceptions for her to be able to teach. She was the one who had privately helped her husband instruct the great Apollos. She was a missionary companion with Paul. If any woman should teach or rule in the church, surely it was her. But alas, this was not the case.

Male teaching and authority in the church has to do solely with God’s design for men and their ability to lead, make decisions, and bear responsibility. It has nothing to do with educational or cultural issues. Grudem also points out that the word that Paul uses in Ephesians for women to submit to their husbands is the exact same word that he uses to tell children to submit to parents and citizens to the government.  

---

160 Ibid., p. 465.
CHAPTER 5: HISTORY

The consensus of church history is that man was to hold the leadership role in the church and the home. It was not until 1914 that any major denomination began to allow women to be ordained. Many still do not allow it. Our modern era has raised new questions and caused some to question the wisdom of the past. Vern Poythress sums up our modern situation well:

First, the Western church is deeply infected by theological modernism or liberalism...Second, the pace of technological and social change within post-industrial societies has made us reserved about the answers of previous generations, and our questioning extends to every aspect of society and church life. In addition, various changes in women’s education, the nature of housework, and the involvement of women in work outside the home have raised many new and difficult questions about the nature of men’s and women’s roles in both family and church. Third, radical philosophical and political egalitarianism, coupled with sin and envy, has generated hatred of all differences and differentiations among human beings...Such egalitarianism, when extended to the family and the church refuses to acknowledge any differences between men and women. Fourth, many people have become sincerely concerned about the past and present oppression of women and unnecessary strictures on the use of women’s gifts. Such evils do exist and should be opposed, but they do not justify radical egalitarian conclusions.

It is understandable in light of all these historical developments how many today question the church’s historic stand on male headship. Even in light of these modern realities, it is helpful to examine where the church has historically stood on these issues.

---

From the earliest days of the church, women have had a valued role in the community of faith. The Apostolic Tradition of Hippolytus (c. 210 A.D.) and the Didaskalia Apostolorum (Syria, c. 230 A.D.) and Origen and Tertullian and the Apostolic Church Order (Egypt, fourth century) all speak of a special, highly regarded group of widows that served the church greatly. They devoted themselves to prayer and assisting the bishops. They prepared women for baptism, did administrative work as well as instructed new female believers. They spent much of their time in hospitality, service and visiting other female members.

Later the Eastern church went even further. The Apostolic Constitutions (Syria, fourth century) and the Testament of Our Lord Jesus Christ (Syria, fifth century) show that there was an organized group of deaconesses. They were often listed with the bishops, elders and deacons. These women were an ordained part of the clergy until the twelfth century. Not until the nineteenth century was an order of deaconesses such as these re-established in Germany. 163

Irenaeus said in the 2nd Century, that when Miriam and Aaron both attempted to usurp Moses’ command, Miriam was punished more severely with leprosy. God did this because Miriam was guiltier. Aaron rebelled only against God’s law. Miriam rebelled doubly against Nature and Law because Nature and the Law, “place the woman in a subordinate condition to the man.” 164 Although some of the ancient commentators can be harsh in their description of a woman’s subordinate role, many also spoke incredibly about the equality of grace between men and women. Tertullian wrote a very tender

letter to his wife in which he clearly expresses the early church’s value of women as co-
heirs of the grace of Christ. “What kind of yoke is that of two believers, partakers of one
hope, one desire, one discipline, one and the same service? Both are brethren, both
fellow servants, no difference of spirit or of flesh; nay, they are truly ‘two in one flesh.’
Where the flesh is one, one is the spirit too. Together they pray, together they prostrate
themselves; together perform their fasts; mutually teaching, mutually exhorting; mutually
sustaining… Between the two echo psalms and hymns; and they mutually challenge each
other which shall better chant to their Lord. Such things when Christ sees and hears, He
joys.”165

Lactantius, in the 4th Century, said that no nation has ever existed so foolish as to put
women in warfare and man in the home.166 Today, the USA seems to have become that
country. The Apostolic Constitution from 390 AD referring to the concept of headship
states that it is, “not reasonable that the rest of the body should govern the head.”167 John
Chrysostom taught that husbands get the most pleasure from a wife who freely loves and
serves him rather than serving as a slave. The roles that men and women play in
marriage and the manner in which they play them has an effect on all of society.168

Many feminists today scorn the idea that woman was created from man. Augustine
did not view it this way but saw it as an entirely positive thing. In speaking on marriage
he pointed out that the fact that woman came from the man enhances their oneness in
marriage. They weren’t created as separate individuals with a wide gulf between them

Donaldson (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1956), 48.
166 Ibid., p. 693.
167 Ibid., p. 694.
but as one race. This is a sign of the strength of the connection between men and women.\(^{169}\)

Luther spoke often on the value of marriage as well. Many men of his day and today revolt against the idea of leading as a servant in the home. Luther understood this and addressed it forcefully. In one sermon entitled “The Estate of Marriage,” he encouraged husbands to embrace their leadership role by serving the family. He listed many specific ways to provide and care for one’s wife, many of which had to do with the hard tasks of raising children and taking care of their physical needs. He exhorted men to be servants in the home and to look upon, “all insignificant, distasteful and despised duties in the Spirit, and [be] aware that they are all adorned with divine approval as with the costliest gold and jewels.”\(^{170}\) Luther taught that women should not preach. But, he did say that if no man was present that a woman should preach.\(^{171}\)

All of the commentaries that I have read written by men further back in church history agree whole-heartedly with the idea of male headship. Some of them go much further in their assessment of the idea than even the conservatives of our day do and may speak too strongly on the issue.

Calvin says that woman was created as a “kind or appendage to the man…she was joined to the man on the express condition, that she should be at hand to render obedience to him (Genesis 2:21)...God did not create two chiefs of equal power but added to the man an inferior aid.”\(^{172}\) Quakers did believe that women could teach if the Holy Spirit


came on them in a very intense manner. They exalted experience over Scripture as their rule. John Wesley mainly stuck to the Biblical command but he too said that an “‘extraordinary impulse of the Spirit,’ suspends the apostolic regulation and allows a woman to speak in public.”

Matthew Henry says that man is called the glory of God because he is of the higher rank of creatures. He also says man is given the preeminence and by right of creation, the responsibility to lead and to govern. He generally has, “a superior wisdom and knowledge.” He should have this because as Jesus protects the church, so men are to protect their wives for their benefits.

Matthew Poole believes that man is superior in, “authority and dignity, as the head in the natural body, being the seat of reason and the foundation of sense and motion, is more excellent than the rest of the body.” Man ‘saves’ his wife by, “maintaining, protecting, and defending her.” Poole says that weaker means, “weaker in body and mind, as women usually are.” He emphasizes that women must be handled gently. Martyn Lloyd-Jones writes that women are, “weaker physically, anatomically, physiology, nervously, and in many different ways. Woman is constituted in a different manner.” He assures us that nothing derogatory is meant by this but that men and women are definitely, essentially different.

The consensus of all orthodox Christian history is that men are designed to fulfill the roles of leader, protector, and provider. Men were made to bear the weight of

---

174 Henry, Matthew Henry Commentary, p. 628.
175 Ibid., p. 670.
176 Matthew Poole, A Commentary on the Holy Bible, Volume 3 (Hendrickson Publishers), p. 578.
177 Ibid., p. 909.
responsibility in the home, the church, and all creation. But even they are careful to note the loving manner in which man’s rule is carried out.

In the modern church it is hard to find a consensus. Many go directly against the clear Biblical teaching. In 1993, the World Council of Churches conducted a series of meetings that directly targeted the Biblical idea of masculinity. Over 2000 women, coming from 32 mainline denominations spent time in goddess worship. They called the goddess Sophia after the Proverbs portrayal of wisdom. They even danced around an image of Sophia. “Voices of Sophia,” a PCUSA group from this conference adopted a statement expressing their differences with orthodox Biblical teaching. They called this document the “95 Illuminations.” Here are some excerpts of the ideas expressed in the “illuminations.” They declare that God-Sophia or Woman Wisdom created humans after her image. They refer to Jesus as Jesus-Sophia, wisdom incarnate. They believe that the female imagery of the Bible has been suppressed and that exclusively using male imagery of God is tantamount to idolatry. Unsurprisingly, they also have a political agenda to advance the cause of homosexual rights and abortion.  

CHAPTER 6: PRACTICAL IMPLICATIONS

In light of all that has been said so far, how are men to fulfill their roles? Paul’s exhortation in 1 Corinthians 16:13 sheds much light on our subject. “Be on the alert, stand firm in the faith, act like men, be strong.” Here he tells the men of the church to act like men. How can they do this? He gives them a few commands that provide a deeper understanding of the role of men that we are likewise to follow.

Be on the alert, which literally means to watch and give up sleep if necessary. Take your duties seriously. It is a military term implying do not quit.

The idea of firmness means being steady in all of life. It brings to mind the picture of soldiers holding spears, standing their ground courageously as the cavalry charges down on them. Men are to have a firm resolution and sound judgment. This exhortation applies to all of life, whether it is a case of church discipline or a literal physical war.

Strength is fortitude. It is similar to courage. Courage is being scared but you move ahead despite your fear. Courage is when you have a healthy fear of the danger ahead but you press on. Courage happens in those rare times when the desire to do right and the very real fear of the possible consequences collide and one chooses to do right in spite of fear. Eldredge quotes G. K. Chesterton on courage saying, “Courage is almost a contradiction in terms. It means a strong desire to live taking the form of a readiness to die… He must seek his life in a spirit of furious indifference to it; he desires life like
water and yet drinks death like wine."\textsuperscript{180} Masculine strength does not back down from the task of responsibility at hand.

Here are the words that define manhood: responsibility, leadership, authority, strength, courage, firmness, fortitude, alertness, readiness, initiative, proactive, bravery. True masculinity is against all passivity.

The bottom line is that God has given men a job to do. Each man has specific tasks and duties that the Lord is holding him responsible for. These may include, leading yourself, your wife, your children, your church, your nation, your business and much more. Biblical masculinity gets the job done. It does not fear responsibility. It embraces it. Douglas Wilson hammers home this point in \textit{Future Men} by saying that boys must be taught to never make excuses. Responsibility is so key to masculinity that young men must learn to accept responsibility whatever the circumstances. When they are wrong and fail they must admit it and not shirk the responsibility or pass the blame.\textsuperscript{181}

This does not mean being a superman who never fears or tires or fails. It does mean being faithful with the tasks God has given you. It means playing the role God has given you. Be faithful where he has placed you. Do your part. Take responsibility. Step up to the plate no matter what comes your way. Don’t leave your post because of hardship. Don’t just wait for responsibility to find you out. Seek it. Initiate and be proactive.

This does not mean to be a great man that you must have a task-oriented personality that is super aggressive and outgoing. Although it may be easier for those types to fulfill their duties at times, it does not make them more of a man. Be the man that God has made you. Do not be sheepish. Humbly, with the personality that he gave you, fulfill the

roles that He has specifically ordained for your life. Douglas Wilson quotes Douglas Jones as saying that masculinity is, “the collection of all those characteristics which flow from delighting in and sacrificing bodily strength for goodness.”

SIGNIFICANCE

Man’s significance is often tied up in his job. All men feel that their life must count for something. Lewis rightly tells us that, “Nothing grates on a man’s spirit quite like irrelevance.” Lewis defines a real man as one who: “rejects passivity, accepts responsibility, leads courageously, and expects the greater reward…God’s reward.” All this leading and getting the job done is ultimately about satisfaction and significance. I am seeking my joy and purpose in God’s purpose for me. In the end I will be rewarded for my faithfulness. This is what a man’s life is about. God has created us to govern, lead, and subdue his world and men have an initiate desire to be about this task.

Eldredge says that men’s significance is tied up in knowing that they are indeed a man, the man God made them to be. “It’s not a question, it’s the question, the one every boy and every man is longing to ask. Do I have what it takes? Am I powerful? Until a man knows he’s a man he will forever be trying to prove he is one.”

Patrick Morley makes this very clear in his book, What Husbands Wish Their Wives Knew About Men:

Your husband longs for his life to count, to matter. At the core of every man boils an intense desire ‘to do,’ to master his world, to shape the

---

182 Ibid., p. 13.
183 Lewis, Raising a Modern-Day Knight, p. 83.
184 Ibid., p. 60.
185 Eldredge, Wild At Heart, p. 62.
course of events. Your husband is made for the task. Yet, not merely task for task’s sake, but task with meaning. Listen between the lines to the yearning from responses to a survey in which we asked men to complete this sentence: ‘My greatest need in general is ___.’

- To live my life with purpose
- To make a difference
- To experience a feeling of worth
- To find more meaningful employment
- To have value in life
- To feel I am contributing to life
- To be used by Jesus every day
- To grow and develop every day
- To stay focused on God’s plan for my life
- To live the rest of my life for God’s will

In the heart of every man burns an intense desire to lead a more significant life. A man’s most innate need is his need to be significant – to find meaning and purpose to life, to make a difference, to accomplish something with his life.186

Surely this is the heart of a man; to find the task God has ordained for him and fulfill it well. In another book, Morley offers a similar list that includes the desires to, “have an impact… do something important… conquer, achieve, excel, prove myself, (and) to be somebody.” He says that all men struggle with the “questions, ‘Who am I?’ and ‘Why do I exist?’”187 Fugate explains that when a man has a healthy view of himself, “it is manifested by his self-confidence, courage, and decisiveness.”188 He furthermore states that when a man’s ego or self view has been properly developed the following qualities will be present: “leadership drive, confident, acceptance of responsibility, courageous, personal accountability, objective oriented, desire to succeed, protective.”189

188 Fugate, What the Bible says about … a Man, p. 153.
189 Ibid., p. 160.
THE WORLD’S PERVERSIONS

The devil, sin, and the world system have ruined the proper understanding of masculinity. Typically men are driven to one of two extremes. Today, we see many men who have been taught directly or indirectly that our understanding of masculinity is wrong and that they should be more like women. Many men believe this and have been emasculated. Today we are surrounded by men who cannot truly be called men. Our men today are more like women and our culture has trained them to be so. So many men have bought the lie that femininity holds the higher virtues and thus have become effeminate. These men become incredibly passive. They shirk tasks, responsibilities, and duties. They forsake and even fear their leadership roles and hope that women will take over. They have abandoned their post and the true nature of their being.

The other extreme of the world is that of the macho man. This man feels that he was created to be more than a wimpy male substitute for a woman. He reacts against the effeminate men that pervade our culture. His pride pushes him to be overbearing and angry and demanding. In some sense, he seems manlier because he often embraces the task and the leadership role. But he often does so as a dictator and a ruthless, heartless lord.

THE CHRISTIAN SOLUTION

Surely neither of these perversions are what our God desires for men. How is a Christian man different from a worldly leader? Many wicked men are great leaders in
their own right. They get the job done. Some have conquered large parts of the world.

What is the essential difference between the Christian man and the prideful macho man and the passive effeminate man?

The answer is that the Christian man is the perfect blend of toughness and tenderness. He can fight the enemy and cry with his wife. He can work long hours and play with his children. He is a true gentle-man. He is gentle when that is what the task at hand requires. But just as quickly he can be strong and rough when this is what the present role demands. The true man embraces each different role in a way that pleases the Lord, mingling love with courage and sensitivity with fortitude.

This is seen in 1 Corinthians 16. Immediately after verse 13 where Paul charges the men to be strong and alert, he says that all things must be done in love. God always gives us His perfect, mysterious balance. David is a great example of this blended man. He writes poetry and love songs to His God. He is a lover and weeps for his children’s pain. He is a great warrior who slays many. He cuts the giant’s head off as a young boy. He surrounds himself with men of battle famous for killing numerous men with their bare hands. He is a wise king who makes hard decisions and yet his heart is so tender to the Spirit’s leading.

The best example of all is the Lord Jesus Christ. With the harlot He is ever tender and patient. With the Pharisee He is direct and cold. With the blind man he offers healing while to the proud he offers condemnation. He weeps with those who weep and yet endures the greatest horror of all time out of love for His enemies. He is the perfect blend of toughness and tenderness, love and strength. We would do well to imitate His life.
THE SOURCE OF THE DIFFERENCE

What is the source of the difference between these worldly men and the Christian man? It is the source of his strength. Where does his confidence lie? The worldly man seeks his strength in himself. If he feels that he has it, he becomes the prideful, macho man. If he feels that he lacks it, he becomes the effeminate weakling.

The Christian, regardless of his personality, should find his strength and hope in the Lord. Therein lays his great confidence. He needs to prove himself to no one. His power rests outside of himself with another who is literally untouchable. His root can never be severed. He has the power of the Almighty God dwelling inside him. This truth enables him to cast aside all fear. It enables him to know beyond a shadow of a doubt that he can conquer all things in Christ. He quickly embraces all the tasks that the Lord has given to him for he believes that God will give him the ability to do whatever He requires of him. Even in his failures he remains strong and confident in God. This strength allows him to “act weak” when necessary and show kindness and pity and mercy when the Lord desires. He needs not to worry what the macho men might think of him for his hope and glory and significance is untouched by their mere opinion. All of his significance is found in God’s pleasure in Him through Christ.
THE RESULTS OF BIBLICAL MASCULINITY

How can all of these findings be applied to one’s every day life? First it would seem best for men and women to pursue long term careers that correspond with the way that God has made them. This does not mean that all women must be homemakers, but they should pursue paths that allow them to operate in their strengths as a nurturer. They should look for career paths that correspond to mothers, wives, advisors, helpers, assistants, and cultivators. The main emphasis is that it is not best for a woman to be in a role where the final burden of responsibility rests on her shoulders.

Men should look for long-term roles and career paths that correspond to being a father, a husband, a warrior, a king, a protector, a provider, a leader. Men should aspire to be in some sort of leadership role where they bear responsibility at least as a husband and a father. The way that men and women think and apply wisdom is different. Men lean more towards ruling, make decisions and judging whereas women fill more of a role of counselor to a leader. This principle can be stretched too far. The Bible does not specify which chores should be done by mom and which ones by dad. Many of these are a cultural issue and can be determined by each family. The key issue is where does the burden of ultimate responsibility lie? Where does the buck stop? Where is the final decision made? The Bible never lays down specific applications beyond the home and the church. It is not necessarily sin for a woman to be a president of a company with a

---

190 Mouser, *Five Aspects of Woman*, p. 6.31
male secretary. But it may not be best. J. I. Packer says that when we reverse the order the God given roles in society we will put strain on the relationships.  

Many have asserted that women can be deacons. This may be the case. (I am not an expert on the exegesis of those passages in question.) This would not change anything that we have said thus far. Deacons primarily serve and help and assist. Elders are to lead, shepherd and teach the church. The Bible explicitly and clearly limits the role of elder to men. Teaching is one of the main ways that elders lead, shepherd, and guide the church. The problems in the home and in the church begin whenever a woman attempts to usurp a male leader.  

What will be the long-term impact if men begin to embrace the fundamental leadership roles God has placed on them in the church and the family? Currently in the United States, between one third and one fourth of all children almost never or never see their real fathers. There are many statistics that prove how the presence of the biological father, married to the mother, have an incredible impact on the well-being of children and or all society. When the father lives with the child, he protects his children from sexual and physical child abuse. Both of these abuses rise when the father is gone. Growing up with a father in the home makes a child less likely to commit violent crimes. “Sixty percent of American rapists, 72 percent of adolescent murderers,

---

192 Grudem and Piper, Recovering Biblical Manhood and Womanhood, p. 70.
and 70 percent of long-term prison inmates come from fatherless homes.”

Studies also show that fathers tend to discipline in ways that children need; ways that mothers do not usually discipline. On a positive note, fathers in the home tend to lead to children who are more turn out to be more compassionate and gentle as adults. Children do better in school when fathers are around. Children with no fathers are twice as likely to drop out of school. Girls are 2.5 times more likely to get pregnant before marriage if their father was not involved in their lives. The family, and thus all of society, obviously and desperately needs daddy at home embracing his responsibility as a leader, protector and a provider to make society run well. All social and cultural organizations have their origin in the family.

During the French Revolution, the principle of male headship was overthrown in the home as a way to overturn basic society. If the fathers fail to embrace the role as leader, the family fails. If the family fails, ultimately, all of society will crumble. This is ultimately an issue deeper than statistics can show. It is an issue of little boys and girls for a father to love, protect, lead, and provide for them. This is especially true for little boys.

The most important long-term impact is that when men embrace the roles given them, they will bring glory to God. Men glorify God uniquely in three main ways uniquely as men. First, men glorify God through their physical strength and their deep authoritative voice. Men glorify God’s attributes of strength, decisiveness, and initiative. Secondly, men glorify God by embracing roles such as father, king, and warrior. When they

196 Ibid., p. 63.
197 Ibid., p. 146.
198 Ibid., p. 148-149.
200 Ibid.
201 Boice, Genesis, p. 137.
initiate, provide, lead, protect, and save, they are glorifying God. Lastly they glorify God through their leadership in the church, leading others in worshipping God.²⁰³

²⁰³ Mouser, *Five Aspects of Woman*, p. 5.5.
CHAPTER 7: SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

Male headship means that, “man bears the primary responsibility to lead the partnership (between man and woman) in a God-glorifying direction.” Male headship and male-female equality are not at odds with one another. Such equality and diversity and headship are seen in the Godhead. These truths are at the heart of the Trinity and of His created order. We must understand them to live in a way that pleases Him. The Bible is not anti-women. Greeks and Romans and most other cultures in the ancient world had a very low view of women, often viewing them as slaves or property. Wherever Christianity spread, women’s rights spread.

Men and women are definitely equally created in God’s image and have equal worth before Him. And yet, we are vastly different. Some will say that there are no differences between the sexes beyond the physical. They say that God just choose to assign different roles to the different sexes. It does not make sense that God would arbitrarily assign roles to men and women and put so much weight on these roles in the Scriptures and not especially design us to fill those roles.

Some say that male headship and female submission came only out of the fall and have been fully reversed by redemption. Redemption does not change the created order. Rather, redemption transforms the relationships back to the original purpose God had created them for so they can best serve God, just like redemption ultimately transforms all of creation and mankind back to its original state of purity and intimacy with God.

---

The Bible is not against headship with a few concessions. The Bible is not primarily egalitarian.\textsuperscript{205} There is mutual submission and love but each loves in a different way. Man loves his wife through servant leadership. Woman loves her husband through submitting and following.

Some commentators may have gone too far in explaining the differences, even to the point of exalting the men above women in wrong ways. Some have said that all women should submit to all men but this is not the case. Women are commanded to submit to the men God has placed over them in special relationships, specifically in the church and the home.\textsuperscript{206} There are exceptions to some of the principles discussed here. Some women are stronger and taller than men but that does not change the pattern or design. Often, rare exceptions just serve to prove the rule. Nothing in this paper should be used to demean women or make them feel like second-class citizens. Jesus delighted to do the will of the Father and become a human. If He was willing to joyfully humble Himself like that, why can we not humbly serve God in the roles He has given us without concern for status and rank. Most people are naturally so insecure that we crave to find our significance in what others think of us and our standing in the world. If we truly find our life and significance and security and joy in Christ, then we will be able to freely and fully embrace and fulfill our God given roles and follow them wherever they take us. When we truly become as slaves to Jesus, we are free to be a slave to all men.\textsuperscript{207} The differences will not go away in heaven either. In heaven, equality will be fully realized.

\textsuperscript{205} Grudem and Piper, \textit{Rediscovering Biblical Manhood and Womanhood}, p. 65
\textsuperscript{206} Boice, \textit{Genesis}, p. 133.
\textsuperscript{207} Chamblin, \textit{Paul and the Self}, p.195.
“Present distinctions of function will not be abolished, but transposed into a higher key.”^208

Adam’s sin was among other things, an abdication of leadership and responsibility. He stood there and listened as Eve was tempted and said nothing. He stood by and watched her sin and did nothing. He failed. He even joined her in her sin. His original sin was a departing from the role of leadership and responsibility that the Lord had given him.

Jesus Christ was the second Adam, the perfect man. He lived a perfect life and fulfilled all the tasks God ordained for Him, big and small. He was faithful. He came to earth for one primary task. It was a task that required more courage than any other. It was a task to be feared above all others. Jesus set Himself like flint, facing that task. He trembled with fear in the garden but He did not hesitate and never did He waver. He persevered until the end. He went to the cross, bore our sins, and drank the terrible cup of God’s infinite wrath against sin.

Christ has already fulfilled the greatest task for us. He has reconciled us to God. Now, He lives in us to help us fulfill all the daily tasks that the Lord gives to us. He gives us the strength and confidence we need to be the man God wants us to be. Adam’s failure as a man plunged the entire world into sin. Christ’s success as a man brought salvation to all the nations. Our faithfulness as men is the way by which God governs His world and advances His kingdom for His glory. The responsibility and leadership of masculinity brings the greatest results. We must do our part. We must play the man. We must be strong in the Lord and be of good courage so that one day He will say to us,

“‘Well done, My good and faithful servant.’”

Masculinity gets the job done no matter what. Biblical masculinity embraces the roles and the tasks of leadership and responsibility that God has given to you and fulfills them with strength and courage no matter what.

Our strength, leadership and activity are a reflection of God’s strength and activity. Man shows us that God is strong and faithful, while woman shows us that God is beautiful and mysterious. Masculinity answers the following questions about God: Is God active? Is He doing something? Will God come through? Can I trust God? Is God all powerful? A man fulfilling his role is a small picture of God being faithful in His tasks. John Eldredge tells us that, “A man bears the image of God in his strength, not so much physically but soulfully.”

---

BIBLIOGRAPHY


______________. *1 Timothy*. Downers Grove, IL: IVP, 1996.


__________. What’s the Difference?. Wheaton, IL: Crossways, 1990.


