

RCSS

Women in Office: Lesson 1

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Series outline:

- 1) Male and female made in the image of God
- 2) The Fall and the perversion of the created order
- 3) God's preservation of the created order: marriage, family and beyond
- 4) Corresponding gender roles in the family and in the church
- 5) Why Scripture sanctions ordination of men only
- 6) The error of a hermeneutic of social justice
- 7) Addressing some objections

Argument: There is unity among male and female with respect to bearing God's image and communing with him. At the same time, there is a created differentiation between male and female, which comes to the fore in marriage. There is a God-ordained order. The husband is to lead and exercise authority. The wife is to submit, not as lesser being, but as the complement to the man.

The identity of the women As fellow image-bearer of God

- Presuppositions:
 - Authority of Scripture
 - Derived authority of our confessional standards
 - We don't come to the text of Scripture neutral

:: Unity of male and female at creation

- “*Let us make man in our image and likeness.*” (Gen. 1:26)
 - Generic man and then distributive - “*They shall rule.*”
 - Confirmed in v27 - “*male and female he created them.*”
 - God's blessing is pronounced on them both

- Woman is taken out of the man: from his rib (Gen. 2:21-23)
 - God creates man and then forms woman out of him
 - Human beings have both masculine and feminine qualities
 - Whether one is male or female depends on the predominancy of one set of qualities over another
- Both given the creation/cultural mandate (Gen. 1:28ff)
 - One important implication: some women has gifts to exercise authority and leadership
- Women are not more susceptible to temptation than men, or more easily misled
 - This is doubtful piece of natural theology (think apartheid!)
 - Result of deeply rooted cultural and historical factors

:: Diversity for complementarity of male and female at creation

- Differences are for the purpose of complementing
- Adam's headship over Eve and the whole human race (cf. Romans 5)
 - Federal/ covenant
- The Lord says it is not good for man to be alone: "*I will make him a helper fit for him.*" (Gen. 2:18)
 - Man needed woman before she was taken out of his body
 - Man unable to find suitable helper amid lower creation
 - Until the joyous recognition and naming of Eve (Gen. 2:23)
- Exalted standing of woman as complement
 - Image-bearer with shared dominion over creation
 - Adam recognises something distinct in woman that clearly distinguishes her and fits her for being a suitable helper
 - Not just in physiological terms; social or spiritual
 - Marriage: "*This one is at last is bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh*" (Gen. 2:23)
 - Re-creation: priesthood of all believers

:: Order in the midst of diversity in marriage

- Order
 - Consider within the Trinity
 - Other social/institutional structures as we know them today
- Marriage brings complementarian bond to fullest expression
- Order – authority and subordination – in marriage
 - Unity presupposed through sexual union (cf. 1 Cor. 6:16)
 - Woman was taken out of man
 - Woman was created for man and not man for woman (1 Cor. 11:9)
 - Analogy of Christ and his church
 - Man is the head of his wife (Eph. 5:23)
 - Women are to submit to their husbands as unto the Lord (Eph. 5:24)
 - Husband is to cherish and nurture his wife as Christ cares for his body, the church (Eph. 5:25)
 - In doing so, he asserts his headship and leadership
- Marriage as a paradigm for relationships in general?
 - Think cultural mandate
 - Think marriage/family and the church

:: Marriage and the church

- Qualifications for pastoral office
- 1 Tim 2:11-12 grounded in the created order