

Series outline:

1) Male and female made in the image of God

- Unity → made in the image of God :: cultural mandate
- Diversity → complementarian order in marriage
- Order grounded in the Trinity and in pre-Fall creation

2) The Fall and the perversion of the created order

- Strikes at the heart of marriage and family: twisting gender relations
- The church has always been tempted to worldliness
- Secular humanism: the individual will trumps community and everything
- Is the push for women in office a result of our perversion of the Word?

3) God's preservation of the created order: marriage, family and beyond

- God's rule over his two kingdoms in Christ
- Imaging God in community
- Relational order in communities in both kingdoms

4) Corresponding gender roles in marriage and in the church

- How husband and wife relate in marriage is instructive for how questions around gender and special office/service in the church
- Just like the husband is the covenant head of the family, so too is the elder in a position of covenantal and representative authority in the church

5) Why Scripture sanctions ordination of men only

6) The error of a hermeneutic of social justice

7) Addressing some objections

Why Scripture sanctions ordination of men only

- *Exegesis*: not missing the forest from the trees
 - We are not Biblicists (cf. Example of infant baptism)

:: Hermeneutical keys

- The authority of Scripture

- Let Scripture interpret Scripture
- All texts are historically conditioned, but not all culturally captive
 - All texts are in a sense occasional
 - Addressed specific problems at a particular time and place
 - Occasional nature by no means prevents from containing teaching of enduring validity, but validity can be difficult to locate
 - Nevertheless, disclosed by the text
 - Examples of occasional: 1 Cor. 11:1-8; 1 Tim. 2:8-10

:: 1 Timothy 2

- Three major texts:
 - 1 Cor. 11:2-16
 - Women are said to be praying and prophesying, apparently in public
 - Clear that it was an accepted practice (cf. Acts 21:9)
 - Nothing is said about office and ordination
 - 1 Cor 14:33b-36
 - 11:3ff limits the absolute sweep of prohibitions in 14:34 in some way
 - Likely that 14:34 prohibits women specifically from participating in the (authoritative) judging or evaluating of prophetic utterances
 - 1 Cor 14 deals with the comparison of two gifts of tongues and prophesy, with latter deemed as superior; hence prophesy is likely focus at end of 1 Cor 14
 - Remember role of *extraordinary gifts*, such as tongues and prophesy
 - Hence, foregoing reasons suggest this passage has no direct bearing on matter of women's ordination
 - 1 Tim. 2:8-15
 - Significantly different situation
- 1 Tim. 2:8-15
 - Understanding the Pastoral Epistles in general

- Differing perspectives
 - (A) Paul intends absolute perpetual exclusion of women from office, but Paul is wrong and should therefore be disregarded
 - Liberals :: Scripture contains the Word of God
 - (B) Exclusion of women from office was historically/culturally conditioned, therefore Paul's words are limited in applicability and thus temporary
 - *However*, little is known about why Paul wrote what he did
 - So it is an extremely questionable hermeneutical procedure to attempt to limit the current applicability of biblical teaching, especially a command, on the basis of a historical reconstruction that necessarily is largely speculative
 - (C) Paul, the inspired Apostle's, words are absolute and perpetual in exclusion until Christ returns
- Are number of exegetical difficulties in passage
 - E.g. what is analogy between men and women in vv8-10; reference to child-bearing in verse 15?
 - *But*, wrongheaded, however, to therefore argue no firm conclusions can be reached
- What we can say
 - SUM: vv12-13 based on order established in creation and on the fact of sinful malfunction of that order in the Fall; reinforced by:
 - Pastoral Epistles should not be read as first book of church order
 - Rather, apostolic provision for post-apostolic future of church
 - Controlling concern of 1 Tim. 2:1 - 3:16 is with how people ought to conduct themselves in the church of the living God (3:15)
 - *Therefore*, addresses permanent relationships in the church community as a whole and not just husbands and wives
 - 1 Tim. 2:8-15 is directly linked to 3:1ff, where Paul orders and makes positive provision for the teaching and rule he has just prohibited to women
 - 1 Tim 3:1-7 suggests that 2:12-13 prohibits women specifically

from exercising the teaching and ruling functions reserved for the office of elder

- Issue is not only “*publicity*” but also “*formality*”
- Important substructure of Paul's argument in the passage, explaining in part his use of Genesis 2-3, is the unique analogy that exists between church and family
 - Basic form and role relationships established in the home (cf. Eph. 5:22ff; Col. 3:18-21) carry over into the church
 - The doctrine of covenant grounds the parallel
 - *Hence*, fundamental reason why women are not to be ordained as elders is that the church is not an aggregate body of individual believers, but the family (believers together with their children) in covenant with God

:: Galatians 3:23-29 as a proof-text?

- Wide-held assumption
 - Heart of Scriptural teaching on roles of men and women
 - Unity and equality in Christ, if consistently understood, implies functional interchangeability in all social groups, including the church, and strictly egalitarian, non-hierarchical patterns of authority
 - *However*
 - Text does not even explicitly address the subject of the roles of men and women
 - Not that it has nothing to say about the subject
- Thrust of its meaning:
 - Part of Paul's impassioned argument for the gospel of justification by faith in Christ alone
 - The fulfillment of God's promise to Abraham, which the addition of the law 430 years later could not nullify
 - Same Scripture that announces good news of salvation is for all who believe, whatever their race, social status or sex
- Once upon a time, significant religious privileges and responsibilities were

only open freely to Jewish males

- Women, proselytes, and slaves were not fully responsible members of the worshipping community
 - Women did not have equal access to God's presence with men
 - Only allowed as far as the Court of Women
- Mistake to imagine that Paul is suggesting that in Christ the original created male-female relationship is negated
 - cf. two kingdom considerations
 - Renewal in 2nd Adam does not destroy *but* renews created order

:: Cultural accommodation or counter-cultural?

- May the Word of God be our authority in the midst of a culture that exalts human autonomy at all costs