

A strategy for empowering women as leaders in the modern church: a qualitative survey conducted amongst leaders in a predominantly white, affluent cross section of churches in Johannesburg, South Africa: a critique of the historical roots of societal misogyny and a biblical exegesis of key words and concepts in 1 Corinthians 11:3-16 and 1 Timothy 2:8-14.

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CHAPTER 1.

TITLE

A strategy for empowering women as leaders in the modern church : a qualitative survey conducted amongst leaders in a predominantly white, affluent cross section of churches in Johannesburg, South Africa : a critique of the historical roots of societal misogyny and a biblical exegesis of key words and concepts in 1Corinthians 11:3-16 and 1 Timothy 2:8-14.

1. Background

Within the Christian community, historically and presently, there has been much controversy and fierce debate surrounding the roles of women in the church. In light of the historical roots of a misogynist view of women and their roles within the local church, I have sought to discover God's intention, and purpose for their gifting and calling. Adopting a 'Christocentric' approach to my research, my intentions have been to contrast the varying views of those who hold either a Complementarian or Egalitarian view, to the teaching and practices of Jesus.

2. Problem.

In the application of the focal controversial scriptures (1 Cor. 11:3-16; 1Tim 2:8-14) to church practice, I have discovered that women have often been denied the right to use their God-given gifts and expertise in the leadership structures of their churches. This attitude when applied strictly would result in at least 50% of the population sitting on the side lines without a voice or the opportunity to fully participate in the fulfillment the Great Commission. (Matthew 28:18-20).

Therefore the main research problem has focused on the following:

- How can women, in today's church (specifically in the Johannesburg area) who feel called to ministry leadership roles be informed, and empowered to fulfil the purposes of God for their lives?

- How can we assess the influence that misogynist attitudes in history have affected interpretations of 1 Corinthians 11:3-16 and 1 Timothy 2:8-14?
- What effect has this had on church practice?
- What strategy can be implemented to provide a firm Biblical foundation that will provide greater freedom for women?

3. Objectives.

I set out to:

- Explore the influence of historical philosophies on the roles of women.
- Investigate the present situation that exists within a selection of churches within the demographic of predominantly white, affluent churches. I have collected, discussed and presented my findings from participants from the Baptist church, the Methodist church, the Assemblies of God, the Anglican Church, Calvinist churches and various independent churches.
- Discuss how the interpretation of key words and concepts found in 1 Corinthians 11:3-16 and 1 Timothy 2:8-14, can affect attitudes and practices in today's church.
- Outline a strategy for empowering women as leaders in line with the calling of God on their lives.

4. Purpose.

My purpose in conducting this research thesis has been to explore the reasons for the contradictory and controversial applications of some key words and concepts in Paul's letters to the Corinthians, and to Timothy. In light of the history and practice of misogyny I have been able to construct a reasonable thesis to support the influence it has had on church practice. Viewed through the lenses of history, culture, religion, philosophies, and grammatical considerations, I have sought to produce a document that will serve to address and challenge the

discrepancies and have proposed a strategy for empowering women to fulfill their God-given call. I feel that I have arrived at a firm Egalitarian viewpoint based on my understanding of God's intent as revealed in Scripture and by the Holy Spirit.

5. Hypothesis.

The hypothesis with which I began this research was that this thesis would reveal a better understanding of the reasons for the controversy over the role of women in church leadership positions. My research into the roots and influences of patriarchal and misogynist ideologies and how they have infiltrated our understanding of God's intention in creation has provided a firm basis for the need for strategic ministry. From my research I have been able to form an outline for a fiction novel which, when completed will be utilized to bring empowerment and confidence for women who are struggling with their place in the church.

6. Complementarianism vs. Egalitarianism

Research into this field has been vast. From the traditional church practice of severe restrictions on the participation of women in the church, to the radical position of modern feminism, the opinions have been diverse. It has been my findings however, that a more balanced position has developed into two main schools of thought. The views of Complementarianism (that states: equal worth and a hierarchical order of roles) and Egalitarianism (the view that affirms all types of equality between women and men except the equality of identity or sameness), have been fervently debated.

Works from such respected theologians as Gilbert Bilizikian, Loren Cunningham, Sarah Sumner, E S Fiorenza and South African Martin Pohlman have argued convincingly for an Egalitarian approach, while Gordon Fee, Wayne Grudem, John Piper among many others have proposed a firm argument for Complementarianism.

The differing viewpoints I believe, have been affected by societal norms shaped originally by the patriarchal ideologies and practices of the Old Testament and later the historical cultural practices of the philosophies of the ancient Greco/Roman world.

In contrast Jesus, being born into a culture shaped by these influences, brought a refreshingly radical break with these cultural norms. In His attitude and practice, He sought to reverse the misogynist treatment of women and endow them with their originally intended dignity.

Jesus entrusted His disciples with the task of fulfilling The Great Commission and spreading the gospel. (Matthew 28:18-20) This task is one that has continued throughout two millennia.

Jesus stated in Matthew 9:37

“The harvest is plentiful but the workers are few. Ask the Lord of the harvest, therefore, to send out workers into his harvest field.”

My research has sought to answer the question as to whether or not the roles of these ‘workers’ should be gender specific. And if not, what solutions could we explore in order to correct the imbalances.

My research findings are covered in the following chapters

Chapter 2.

The Roots and History of Misogyny.

In chapter two my research findings on the history, and roots of misogynist attitudes and practice, and my theory as to how this has affected the church, has been presented.

My research has explored the Patriarchal society of the Old Testament and The Greek and Roman Empires. The religious, societal, cultural, political, and philosophical norms of the time have been overviewed. A brief exploration of the Creation account in Genesis 1-3 has provided a foundational structure as a point of departure as to God's original intention for male and female in His Kingdom.

Chapter 3.

Methodology:

In chapter three an empirical study was conducted in the form of questionnaires and interviews. The research was focused on a random selection of males and females in leadership positions in various white, affluent, English speaking churches in the Johannesburg area.

My research has been qualitative rather than quantitative in order to reflect an in depth response in a small number of churches. Where possible I set up personal interviews in order to provide an opportunity for discussion on the broader experiences and practices within those churches. Where interviews could not be arranged participants were invited to respond to the questionnaire privately. I have incorporated the views of both male and female and while the age ranges are mostly between 35 and 50, I have received responses from males and females in their twenties. This has proved beneficial as the views of emerging generations have revealed an openness to questioning some rigid mindsets. In order to gain a qualitative study, I have limited my research to include 15 respondents. This is in order to gain reasonable evidence from a concentrated population group.

.Chapter 4.

An exegesis of key words and concepts found in 1 Corinthians 11 3-16 and 1 Timothy 2:8-14.

In chapter four I have presented an expository study of some key words and concepts found in 1 Corinthians 11:3-16 and 1 Timothy 2:8-14, and to thereby critique both the Egalitarian and the Complementarian applications of these Scriptures.

Chapter 5.

A strategy for empowering women to fulfill God's calling on their lives.

In chapter five I have offered a strategy for empowering women in the church to fulfill God's purposes in their lives. My intentions to write a fiction novel through which readers are invited to enter into the lives of the characters and events in history are to provide an accessible tool for this purpose. Although a completed work is beyond the scope of this thesis I have presented an over view to provide a concrete structure on which to build the story. My intention in writing this novel has been to utilize the findings explored in this document to compose a narrative in a format that can be made available to anyone who may be wrestling with their own convictions and calling.

Chapter 6. Conclusion.

Chapter six will present a summary of the conclusions I have come to.

Chapter 2

The Historical Roots and Influence of Misogynist philosophies and ideas:
A study of the roots of misogynist philosophies and how they have influenced and affected cultural norms.

2.1 Introduction

In this chapter I wish to explore the roots and history of misogynist thoughts and practices. This will not be a comprehensive study of the philosophies that proliferated throughout the ancient Mediterranean empires, but rather a brief discussion of how such relates to our present understanding of the role of women in the modern church. I will seek to explore to what extent these philosophies affected historical practices in the Hebrew, Greek, and Roman, societies, and their impact on the roles of women at the time of Christ and the early church.

2.2 Creation.

“Then God said, “Let us make man in our image, in our likeness, and let them rule over the fish of the sea and the birds of the air, over the livestock, over the earth, and over all the creatures that move along the ground. So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them.” (Genesis 1:26-27. NIV Study Bible)

Throughout its history, Orthodox Judaism and then Christianity have held to the conviction that The Old Testament is the inerrant Word of God. The Creation account as cited in Genesis 1:26-27, provides a foundational statement of God’s creation of man as male and female made in his image and likeness. Male and female were created by the one God, as an expression of his likeness in humanity.

His purpose in creating mankind can be ascertained from verse 28 from Genesis chapter one:

“God blessed them and said to them, “Be fruitful and increase in number, fill the earth and subdue it. Rule over the fish of the sea and the birds of the air and over every living creature that moves on the ground.”

Biblically we can be sure of God’s original intent for man, both male and female, made in his image and entrusted with the stewardship of his creation. Both were given the responsibility to rule.

In exploring the roots of modern misogynist philosophy, we are compelled to look into the controversy surrounding the interpretation of the Genesis account of Creation and the Fall. In my research, I have uncovered a viable proposition that this philosophy and the practice of patriarchy and misogyny in the Old Testament provide a foundation for the Greek then Roman religions and philosophies. In establishing how such thinking influenced and shaped the cultural norms at the time of Christ and since, it is imperative to study the writings of the most influential scholars of the time: The Hebrew translators of the Old Testament, the Greek and Roman philosophers, playwrights, politicians and physicians.

Thoughts throughout history, from three of the most influential cultures, have greatly impacted on how women were viewed and were to be treated. The lack of authority a woman had over her own body and over the life of her new born, illustrates the fact that she held no status as an equal in marriage or in life. A man held sole authority over her and could decide whether a child had the right to live and be accepted as part of his household. While this practice could sound shocking to our modern sensibilities, it is my opinion that such a foundation of ancient thought has in fact infiltrated societal ideologies in various cultures throughout history.

Patriarchy was characteristic of the Old Testament. Free to rule, the men did what they wanted; and being fallen, they didn’t always want what was right. The

Old Testament patriarchs married multiple wives, and so accumulated huge clans. The ten tribes of Israel descended from the polygamous marriages of Jacob and were perpetuated under the Israelite monarchy. David had numerous wives; Solomon over 1,000. Continuing into Jesus' time, Jewish men still could marry multiple wives and divorce them at whim. (Riss K J. article)

A departure from God's intention in marriage as found in Genesis 2:24, can only be reasoned as the result of sin.

"For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife and they will become one flesh." Genesis 2: 24

Patriarchy, devaluation of women as objects, misogyny and harsh rule abrogated the creation's purpose.

I will begin my exploration with a discussion of God's intention in the Old Testament:

2.3. Ancient Israel.

2.3.1 Scripture.

In order to establish the culture into which Jesus arrived, one needs to explore how the history of the Hebrew nation from creation to the first century has affected our thoughts and church practices in the present. I believe God's original intention in his creation of mankind, was that they would enjoy uninterrupted fellowship with Him in the Garden of Eden and be co-regents of all that He had made. Unlike the philosophy of the pagan religions, the God of the bible is the one true God in whom mankind, male and female, had their origins. They were both made in his likeness and together became one flesh.

2.3.2. Ontology

From the creation account, we can be confident that male and female shared the same origin. This is in contrast to the philosophy of the Greeks and Romans who saw woman's creation as being separate from that of man's. Scripture states that man (in this sense – mankind), both male and female, received a divine nature

and were endowed with life, by God, when He breathed into him His spirit.
(Genesis 2:7)

They were created apart from the animals, and being made in the likeness of God, were both formed from and received a divine nature. As such there can be no disparity in the worth, authority, and responsibility between God's ultimate creation - male and female, who, like the trinity, were more than one, yet one.

2.3.3 Destiny

(Genesis 1:26-27): Then God said, "Let *us* make man in *our* image, in *our* likeness, and let *them* rule over the fish of the sea and the birds of the air, over the livestock, over all the earth, and over all the creatures that move along the ground." So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him, *male and female he created them.* (Italics mine)

Man's origin, male and female are in God.

As well as having a common ontology, male and female were created for a common destiny. Before the fall it was God's intention that mankind have dominion under Himself to rule and reign His creation. Their mandate was to:

"Be fruitful and increase in number, fill the earth and subdue it. To rule over the fish of the sea and the birds of the air and over every living creature that moves on the ground." (Genesis 1: NIV Study Bible)

Delegated sovereignty was bestowed on them as shown in Hebrews 2:5-8, which encapsulates God's intention for mankind:

It is not to angels that he has subjected the world to come, about which we are speaking. But there is a place where someone has testified: "What are mere mortals that you are mindful of *them*, human beings that

you care for *them*? You made *them* a little lower than the angels; you crowned *them* with glory and honour and put everything under *their* feet." In putting everything under *them*, God left nothing that is not subject to *them*. (Italics mine)

It is my understanding that God's original intention for mankind was established when He made them. However, due to disobedience, mankind fell from his intended destiny.

2.3.4. The Fall

Paul's letter to the Hebrews continues:

"Yet at present we do not see everything subject to them. But we do see Jesus, who was made lower than the angels for a little while, now crowned with glory and honour because he suffered death, so that by the grace of God he might taste death for everyone." (TNIV Verse 8b-9)

After being given full dominion under God, mankind disobeyed His command to refrain from eating from the 'Tree Of Knowledge of Good and Evil'. Male *and* female sinned and became subject to death.

Genesis 3:11-19 reads:

"And he said, "Who told you that you were naked? Have you eaten from the tree that I commanded you not to eat from?"

The man said, "The woman you put here with me—she gave me some fruit from the tree, and I ate it."

Then the LORD God said to the woman, "What is this you have done?"

The woman said, "The serpent deceived me, and I ate."

“So the LORD God said to the serpent, "Because you have done this, Cursed are you above all livestock and all wild animals! You will crawl on your belly and you will eat dust all the days of your life. And I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your offspring and hers; he will crush your head, and you will strike his heel."

To the woman he said, "I will make your pains in childbearing very severe; with pain you will give birth to children. Your desire will be for your husband, and he will rule over you."

To Adam he said, "Because you listened to your wife and ate from the tree about which I commanded you, 'You must not eat of it,' Cursed is the ground because of you; through painful toil you will eat of it all the days of your life. It will produce thorns and thistles for you, and you will eat the plants of the field. By the sweat of your brow you will eat your food until you return to the ground, since from it you were taken; for dust you are and to dust you will return."

As can be seen, despite the *shared* fall, we can reasonably conclude from the afore mentioned Scripture in Hebrews 2:9, God's intention for male and female is that they will rediscover their original destiny through Christ whose death was for once and for all. I am of the belief that Christ's death reversed the effects of the fall, here and now. The tragedy that befell both male and female, and the effects of such were forever dealt with by the incarnation, life, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. However, they were both given a shared promise that they would not lose their privilege of procreating and filling the earth. At the same time a way of salvation would be provided through the offspring of the woman through whom all mankind would be redeemed. (www.houseofdauid.ca/anc_heb.htm *Freedman 1992: Online article 13-10-09*)

Through these Scriptures we can reasonably deduct that there is a shared ontology for both male and female. “It is not good for man to be alone, I will make a helper suitable for him.” It is here that the ontology of woman is debated: The belief that woman was created as an after-thought, upon realization that man would need a ‘helper; i.e. a servant; slave; concubine; a means to bring forth children, has been a point of departure for those who would translate it as such. In contrast, those who hold to a different translation of ‘helper’, see the meaning that God saw. His image was not fully revealed in man alone, but a female would bring completion to His image.

Andrew Micklefield in his essay, *Equal But Not the Same: An Argument for Gender Roles Before the Fall* quotes Robert Alter:

“The Hebrew ‘ezer *kenegdo*’, translated ‘a helper suitable’ is notoriously difficult to translate; in fact, the term seems to have been misunderstood often. As many point out, the phrase has no inferior association. “The word ‘ezer’ (translated helper) is never used as a subordinate in the Bible. It appears twenty-one times in the Old Testament and seventeen of those times it refers to God our “helper.” God is hardly secondary or subordinate to us. The other three times (in addition to the Genesis reference) refer to a military ally. When God is spoken of as our “helper,” we are really speaking of him as our strength or power. (Micklefield. 2004)

It has been my finding that the Hebrew word *kenegdo* means ‘equal and corresponding to’. As a ‘Helper’ God has not placed Eve in an inferior position to Adam, rather she is a strength, and an encourager to him. She was different from him but correctly reflected God as a compliment to him in partnership. The debate over gender hierarchy has caused much controversy and needless division in the Body of Christ, as these positions represent a dogmatic stand that has bred damaging conflict instead of love in the intimacy of male and female united to become one flesh. If my summation of God’s original intention of equality before the fall is correct, it stands in direct contradiction to pagan

philosophy. In a similar way, many hold to the belief that subjugation of the woman to the man is supported by Genesis 3:16:

“To the woman he said, “I will greatly increase your pains in childbearing; and with pain you will give birth to children. Your desire will be for your husband and he will rule over you.”

My question at this point is: Do these Scriptures mandate a position of subjugation for the woman? Taken within the context of the pronouncements on the serpent, Satan and the man, each received one judgment. Why was the woman to receive two: Pain in childbirth, and the seeming lordship of her husband over her? This subject is far too large to discuss in any sort of depth in this thesis. However, important to the continued debate, and in light of clearer scriptures, I would suggest that although the propagation of humanity would continue, there would be much pain (in the same way that in the man’s labour there would be pain). However, in spite of that, a woman would still have desire for her husband to procreate, and a man’s determination to ensure that life continues.

Irvin Busenitz theorises on the context of this scripture in his article: *Woman’s Desire for Man; Genesis 3:16 reconsidered.*”

He explains that although the original intention of Gods’ order instigating intimacy between the man and the woman had been abrogated, their command to populate the earth had not been annulled. He further explains that the phrase ‘and he shall rule over you’ cannot be taken as a punishment for the woman for usurping authority of the man. She was under the authority of God just as the man was. She was responsible for usurping the authority of God, as was the man. All sin is man’s desire to usurp the authority of God, and as a result the original order of creation was affected. (Busenitz I, 1988:207-208)

Berel Lerner in his journal. *'He Shall Rule Over Thee'*, presents his argument from the Torah, and Judaic history: Lerner argues that those who hold to the belief that the Scripture "He shall rule over you", is the 614th law of the Torah, base their understanding of the Word of God on a patriarchal premise. However, he surmises it was a punishment for sin. It is interesting that he notes that nowhere in the Torah is man commanded to enforce God's punishments! He likens it to someone who would plant thorns and thistles in their neighbour's garden!

God said, "Cursed is the ground because of you; through painful toil you will eat of it all the days of your life. It will produce thorns and thistles for you, and you will eat the plants of the field. By the sweat of your brow you will eat your food until you return to the ground, since from it you were taken; for dust you are and to dust you will return." (TNIV Gen. 3:17-19)

Likewise are we to enforce severe pain in childbirth, making it more difficult? Rather, the midwives were praised for helping the Israelite women to give birth (Exodus 1:15-21) Noah used agricultural implements to till the ground after the flood (Genesis 5:29). Citing Genesis 3:16,

Berel Lerner concludes: "Torah does not use the curse as a recipe for marital bliss, therefore the struggle against equality is as legitimate as the struggle for material sustenance from intractable nature." (Lerner 2006:449).

The Genesis story is most often cited as proof that women are sinful in nature and in partnership with the devil. Since this story has parallels in most of the major cultures of the world and in all the major religions, this interpretation has proliferated.

2.3.5 Women's lives in the Bible.

In addition to the work of historians and archaeologists, we draw much of what we know about Israel's history from the traditions and stories found in the Old Testament. For the sake of this document, I will seek to understand God's

intention for mankind, and what the Bible has to say to women. I ask the following question, “Does God view women as inferior creatures?” We have the choice to accept whether or not the Bible is God’s word. If so, we cannot overlook the obvious patriarchal teachings and misogynist practices. In admitting to the male bias, we have several departure points from which to study and interpret Scripture:

- We can reject the interpretation as being faulty.
- We can stand apart from it and study it as an objective critic.
- We can deny and ignore the cultural realities that treat women as inferior.
- We can seek to reinterpret them to fit our own paradigm.
- We may also choose to accept God’s Word as literal, for all time, and in sincere obedience, submit to an understanding, that as women, being inferior is God’s will.
- Alternatively, we can proceed into the story as participants identifying with the characters within their contexts.

In her book *‘Whispering the Word: Hearing Women’s Stories in the Old Testament’*, Jacqueline Lapsley suggests as a departure point for reading the Bible, and accepting the belief that God truly wants to speak to His children, male and female, we need to look deeper. She posits that the defining feature of the Bible as a word from God to the church; the task of interpretation being to better hear and understand that word. (Lapsley 2005:6)

She goes on to illustrate:

“Is the Bible’s central message about gender? I believe not. Although patriarchy and misogyny were realities in cultural beliefs and practice, I cannot accept that gender hierarchy is the basis upon which to base interpretation. The question this presents is, how do we make some theological sense out of the patriarchal characters of the stories? What positive message; what word, can bring inspiration and spiritual sustenance? What is God saying through the stories documented in Scripture? A look at history attests to the fact that many women

have found great wisdom and power through reading the Bible. I am persuaded that the original authors, inspired by God, sought to tell a different story to one that sees the position of a woman as being inferior to man.”

The issue of patriarchy and misogyny weren't I believe, the defining feature of the accounts they wrote. I consider the idea that they were ignorant about such issues. It would seem that they were a part of the culture in which they had been shaped. I would posit therefore that whether consciously, or subconsciously, the narrators planted within the text, a male bias. If we accept the Bible as God's very word, by necessity, it would conform to His character and purpose. The central feature of Scripture; the story of God's plan for His people; is the love and redeeming work of Jesus. This central act reflects the Spirit of God in His dealings with mankind. Thus, the importance of interpretation lies in entering into the story, in order to understand the intricate link between the richness, involvement, and life of the text. In relating with sensitivity and empathy to the people in the story, we are challenged to enter into a relationship with God.

In order to gain a broader perspective on the influence of the two other predominant cultures in ancient Mediterranean times, we turn to an overview of the Greek and Roman empires.

2. Ancient Greece

2.4.1. Women's Lives

Any investigation into the lives of women in the ancient world must take into account that all sources about women were written by men. No ancient documents or diaries, written by women and revealing what life was like for them, have been uncovered. However, what we can learn from the past sheds light and understanding on the history of women's rights and roles in society. (Cantarella 1987:115)

From my research I have discovered that most sources come from the wealthy aristocracy, having time on their hands, to write and journal. As such, much of

our information and insight comes from depictions of upper class women by their wealthy male family members. While we do not know what life would have been like for women from the lower classes, we can be confident of one thing: It would seem that a woman's role and purpose was to bear children. Women did not have a choice between having children or not, and they could not overrule their husband if he chose not to accept her new-born as a part of his family. He had full control over who would be counted among his offspring. Many female infants were exposed (left in the open – especially on a hillside, or in a river) to die or be claimed by others as slaves. Fathers had the authority to make this decision, because a female baby could not carry on the family name and was seen as an unnecessary expense to the family, as she would require a dowry at the time of her marriage. (Fiorenza 1992: 82)

Eva Cantarella in '*Pandora's Daughter's*, states:

“The earliest power that the father could exercise over a '*filias familias*' was that of exposure. At birth, in a highly symbolic rite, newborns -- male and female -- were deposited at the feet of the father. He -- without explanation or justification -- either recognized the child as his by picking it up, or withheld his recognition by leaving it where it was. The recognized child became a member of the '*familia*'; the unrecognized child was abandoned to the river or left to die by starvation.” (Cantarella,1987:115)

In further reading, I have discovered that although a male baby was sometimes exposed, it was generally due to a birth defect.

2.4.2 Religion.

A variety of bible scholars have discovered a similarity between the Greek pantheon of gods, in their creation accounts and the biblical accounts in the Pentateuch. The biblical account of the creation of male and female made in the

image of God, and the results and curses of The Fall, shaped much of the patriarchal order in Hebrew culture. (It was Eve who deceived, therefore evil entered the world through a woman).

(*Pandora*.[Http://Wikipedia.org/wiki/Pandora](http://Wikipedia.org/wiki/Pandora). 10-04-09)

Rhonda Tyree in her article *Pandora*, posits an argument for the similarities found in Eve and Pandora, and how such characterizations have solidified misogynist thought in history

“In ancient Greek philosophy the ontology of womankind as depicted in the myth of Pandora (the first woman), is a kind of theodicy, an explanation for evil in the world.” (Tyree R 1998.)

In my (limited) study of Greek mythology, I have discovered certain similarities between the creation accounts found in Genesis, and in the creation accounts portrayed in ancient Greek religion and culture. Michelle Houle in her book, *Gods and Goddesses in Greek Mythology*, explains how creation happened according to Greek mythology: In story telling fashion, she relates the account of creation in a simple form based upon her study of Greek Mythology. I will seek to emulate her style and portray the characters in a way that will remain simple yet informative. While the style may indicate a ‘fairytale’, I would like to posit the seriousness of such a belief system and the effect it has had on history:

In the beginning of creation, ‘Chaos’ (meaning wide open spaces) reigned. The universe was a great expanse of nothingness, until he decided to create the earth as a separate entity. Out of himself he took the goddess ‘Gaia,’ her name meaning and representing ‘Mother Earth’. (In contrast to the creation account in the Bible, where woman was created first).

She, out of desperation for children, became pregnant by herself and gave birth to Uranus, who became the ruler of the sky and the heavens. She then married her son and gave birth to three creatures known as ‘The hundred handed ones’. These three ‘monsters’ were the pride and joy of Gaia, but Uranus was afraid

that they would rise up and seize power from him. Because of this he forced them back into their mother's womb!

Gaia had three more children, also monsters, called Cyclops. Again, Uranus was worried that they would be a threat to his reign, so he cast them into a deep cavern far away.

Gaia was furious and gave birth to twelve more children, called the Titans. Again being threatened by his children, Uranus forced them back into the womb. However, Gaia was able to talk to her children and convinced them to rise up against Uranus.

Chronus, the youngest, took the opportunity and stabbed and killed his father. As he lay dying, Uranus cursed Chronus, by declaring that he too would die by the hand of his son. (This happened later, in almost the exact manner).

In time, the family was split into two groups; the Titans and the Olympians. There was great mistrust and hatred between them and they eventually went to war. The greatest of these gods was Zeus, who became the 'god of the gods'. The Olympians crushed the Titan gods, and in the process, many Titans began to side with them.

Meanwhile, Zeus, in his desire to share the earth with creatures over which he could rule, set out to form animals and humans from clay. During this process, he was called away and so, delegated the job of creation to Prometheus and his brother, Epimetheus.

Epimetheus was not as intelligent as his brother, and having been delegated the task of forming the creatures and giving them their abilities, discovered that there was no strength or survival skills left for the humans,

Prometheus felt sorry for them and left his place amongst the gods to make his dwelling among humankind. He taught them to survive the elements and wild animals, and to build shelter and find food. Upon recognizing that they had no fire with which to cook their food, he made his plan to steal fire from the gods.

Furious that he had been betrayed, Zeus sought revenge. Up until this time, only males had been created, and thanks to Prometheus, had lived in peace and tranquility. In order to punish his foe, Zeus created a 'beautiful evil': Pandora was the first woman, exquisite to behold. Zeus gave her a beautiful box ('jar' in some accounts) that she was forbidden to open.

Prometheus, suspecting that nothing good could come from the gods, cautioned his brother. However, Epimetheus fell in love with Pandora and married her. Married life was blissful for the two lovers, until Pandora could no longer resist the temptation to open the box. As she did so, all the evils of mankind flew out and filled the earth.

Sin had entered world through woman. (Houle M. 2001:28-35)

2.4.3 The Writers and Poets

Although the story of Pandora is found in many of the ancient Greek writings, it is most famously known through the works of the poet Hesiod (7th Century BC).

In '*The Theogeny of Hesiod*', Hugh G Evelyn translates as follows:

“For from her is the race of women and female kind: of her is the deadly race and tribe of women who live amongst mortal men to their great trouble, no helpmeets in hateful poverty, but only in wealth. And as in thatched hives bees feed the drones whose nature is to do mischief -- by day and throughout the day until the sun goes down the bees are busy and lay the white combs, while the drones stay at home in the covered skeps and reap the toil of others into their own bellies -- even so Zeus who thunders on high made women to be an evil to mortal men,

with a nature to do evil. And he gave them a second evil to be the price for the good they had: whoever avoids marriage and the sorrows that women cause, and will not wed, reaches deadly old age without anyone to tend his years, and though he at least has no lack of livelihood while he lives, yet, when he is dead, his kinsfolk divide his possessions amongst them. And as for the man who chooses the lot of marriage and takes a good wife suited to his mind, evil continually contends with good; for whoever happens to have mischievous children, lives always with unceasing grief in his spirit and heart within him; and this evil cannot be healed.” www.sacred-texts.com/cla/hesiod/theogony.21-09.09

While the writings of Hesiod and particularly his epic poem '*The Theogony*' are brilliant and emotive, they were too, culturally forming. The saying, "You can't live with them and you can't live without them" in reference to women, may be comical and act as an easy retort, but the underlying premise is that women are indeed a necessary 'evil'! It goes much deeper than this of course. Writings such as those quoted, written centuries before Christ, have had a subversive and powerful impact on our whole society: its history; politics; philosophy; culture; religion; and education. Likewise, the Greek poet Homer (8th-7th Century BC), a brilliant mind, whose works have endured, inspired and influenced for millennia, provides us with some clues as to the submissive view of womanhood some hold to today. As far back as the 8th Century BC, the poet Homer in his classic '*The Iliad*', tells the story of the Trojan War, followed by the epic battle between the Trojans and the Spartans, who were fighting over the beautiful Helen. In its sequel, '*The Odyssey*', the tale of the epic journey of Odysseus and his return from the war in Troy is, told. The role of the gods in his deliverance back to his home and his wife, Penelope, are portrayed. These epic poems provided the foundation for all that was believed about the Greek gods and goddesses. The Greek gods and goddesses provided a 'backdrop' to Greek thought. (Hamilton 1995:27).

Although '*The Odyssey*' is a classic tale of human passion and betrayal, there have been accusations of an underlying misogynist standpoint: Fitzgerald, in his book, '*Homer, the Odyssey*', comments on the poem and the treatment of the female characters. Calypso, Circe, Scylla, Charybdis and the Sirens who portray women as "femme fatales: that deadly admixture of lust and love, pleasure and death, pleasure and pain, pleasure and slavery. Women consume, women demean, women destroy". Further, he points out Agamemnon's condemnation of Clytemnestra as a curse on all women: "She defiled herself and all her sex, all women yet to come, even those few who may be virtuous." (Fitzgerald R. 1961: 112)

However, apart from these well-defined seeds of his philosophy, for the most part Homer's treatment of the female characters in his poems provides ample evidence of his favourable stance towards women. Conversely, the 6th century BC poet, Semonides' description of women as 'descending from animals and nature', is a monument to misogyny:

"From the beginning, god made the mind of woman a thing apart. There is no common ground between her and man, no shared origin, no joint identity." (Hamilton 1995:29)

Semonides proclaimed that a woman was descended from one of the following: A long-haired sow, a dog, a weasel, an evil fox, a delicate long-haired mare, a stumbling obstinate donkey, a monkey, mud, or if she were lucky, a bee. While Hesiod denounced women generally, Semonides focused his attack on the particular variance in women's wicked nature.

(The Bee is) "The only woman who attracts no blame, a faithful mother who takes no pleasure in the company of other women gossiping about sex." (Osborne R, 1996.)

To do an in depth study of the classical Greek writers in this thesis is not my intent. From this very brief discussion of some of the most influential writers and

poets of the time, a point can be drawn that the view of women portrayed in their writings was often one of a derogatory stance. In presenting an ontology of women (I believe though similarities are found) contradictory to the Genesis account, and from my own perspective, God's truth, the result is always going to be less than God's perfect intent.

2.4.4. The Philosophers.

The philosophers built upon the foundations of these great writers and poets, the most influential of whom were Socrates, Plato and Aristotle. Although Socrates never wrote anything, we can know his philosophies through his student, Plato (428BC-399BC). Plato is commonly known as 'The Father of Philosophy' and is best known through his work: '*The Republic*'. Plato, although more egalitarian than the philosophers that followed him, provided the basis for modern misogyny. In his writings Loren Cunningham in '*Why Not Women*' quotes Plato:

"Our punishment is with us here and now. The price for our sinning was exacted at the beginning of time by Zeus himself when he afflicted us with these creatures. He also designed it so that we can neither exist without them nor bare their company! We cannot escape their pain, for it lives among us. It is our sisters, our mothers, our betrothed, our wives, daughters, our mistresses and concubines. Furthermore, if we spend our lives in wrong-doing and in cowardice, afterwards Zeus will send us back into this life as women." (Cited from *The Republic* 5.4-6. Cunningham and Hamilton, 2000:77)

In Plato's defense, he did encourage the education of women. He sought reforms for equal education, but this is not to be confused with 'education' as we know it today. His idea of women being educated was in the areas of gymnastics and riding so that they would be, along with the men fit for work and battle. (Hamilton, 1995:34).

Plato argued that in a Utopian state men and women should work together alongside one another for the good of the family and the future of the state. In his other works, '*Symposium*' and '*Tymaeus*', Plato's misogynist leanings come to

the fore as he idealizes the love and beauty of the male in the former and subordinates the female in a class lower to the animals than to a man in the latter. This can be found in his description of a woman's ontology.

"The men of the first generation who lived cowardly or immoral lives were, it is reasonable to suppose, reborn in the second generation as women; and it was therefore at that point that the gods created sexual love, constructing in us and in women a living creature itself instinct with life." (Plato translated by Lee D.1965)

Women therefore were according to Plato merely created as a consequence of a man's failure to adopt his full masculinity, and as a means for procreation. However, it is difficult to determine where Plato stood on his view on the role of women, but he left a powerful legacy of thought with his protégé, Aristotle.

Aristotle was the student of Plato, who did however establish his own philosophy that upturned his mentors' work (Plato held to an allegorical, mystical view of the world, whereas Aristotle built a philosophy based on reason and knowledge). Aristotle was of the persuasion that what separated a man from an animal was his ability to reason, (a very concrete view that formed the basis for Gnosticism). Having a separate ontology, a woman could not share a man's ability to reason. However, she was a necessity for procreation. (Although, he argued she produced no seed, providing merely a receptor and environment in which the semen could develop into a human being). He concluded that she was in fact a deformed male, but was capable of producing males, conducive to her purpose. (Clack 1999:2)

Aristotle viewed women as imperfect men. He was the student of Plato and therefore influenced by his philosophy, and was the tutor of Alexander the Great. As such his influence was great.

His views became the basis of western science. Not only did he posit that women were "misbegotten men," but he also stated that they had 'lighter' and 'inferior' brains (Tuana, 1993).

This bias continues through almost all of classical, medieval, and (unfortunately) modern religion, philosophy, and science. Philosophy in Ancient Greece

overlapped and integrated medicine as the ancients grappled with understanding physiology, the laws of nature and the ontology of human life. Aristotle formulated his theory of reasonable thought and how it overlapped with physiology. Because he believed that women originated from a different source, were incapable of reason, were necessary for procreation as the receptors and provided the environment for the man's seed to develop, the idea that she could in any way claim equality with men was considered ludicrous.

2.5.5. Physicians

Hippocrates, considered the 'Father of Medicine', moved away from the philosophical and mythical philosophies of the day to build a view of physiology and medicine as a science. As a contemporary of Socrates, he preceded Aristotle in his teachings. Some of these were rejected by Aristotle as being contradictory to his own philosophies. Hippocrates laid the foundations and paved the way for medicine to grow and become established as a science. His view of women as seen from a practical, empirical observation, stemmed largely from their role in reproduction. Much of his theory on women's health therefore stemmed from the study of her menstrual flow. Fitting with her role in society, her ability to bear children related directly to her physical health. Treatment for women's diseases therefore involved gynaecology in its most base and manipulative forms. (Joshel & Momaghan 1998:167)

After Hippocrates, the next significant physician was Galen, a Greek who lived from 129 to 200 AD. Galen perpetuated Hippocratic medicine, moving both forward and backward. He more fully adopted Aristotle's philosophy of woman being a deformed male, however. Galen's writings were the physiological base for all medical knowledge and practice until the 18th Century. Margaret Talmadge May, in her translation of Galen, *'On The Usefulness Of The Parts Of The Body'*:

"Now just as mankind is the most perfect of all animals, so within mankind is the man more perfect than the woman, and the primary instrument. Hence in those

animals that have less of it, her workmanship is necessarily more imperfect, and so it is no wonder that the female is less perfect than the male as by much as she is colder than he. In fact, just as the mole has imperfect eyes, though certainly not as imperfect as those who have no trace of them at all, so too is the woman less perfect than the man in respect to the generative parts. For the parts were formed within her while she were still a foetus, but could not because of the defect in the heat emerge and project on the outside, and this, though making the animal itself, that was being less perfect than one that is complete in all respects, provided no small advantage for the race, for there needs must be a female. Indeed you ought not to think our creator would purposely make half the whole race imperfect, and as it were, mutilated, unless there were to be some advantage in such mutilation.” (Quoted in Aughterston 1998:47)

The Hippocratic science of medicine stated that a woman’s health generated from her reproductive organs. This thought, while reinforcing medicine as a scientific and empirical study, solidified the view that women are useful solely for their worth in reproduction. Galen, taking a giant leap back to Aristotle’s theory of women being inferior in all respects than a man, formed not only the basis for medical practice until the nineteenth century, but also the belief that women were of a different ontology, worth and makeup.

2.5.6 Politics.

Alexander the Great was born in 356 B.C. to King Phillip II of Macedonia. He was taught from an early age that he was the descendent of the ancient Greek gods and that greatness was expected of him. When Alexander was only thirteen his father, King Philip of Macedonia, employed Aristotle as his son’s tutor from whom he learned many of life lessons. At the age of twenty Alexander’s father was assassinated and he then became king of Macedonia. From there his lust for power grew. As Alexander the Great was the student of Aristotle, and in fact his benefactor, the philosophy of Aristotle spread as far as did Alexander’s conquests. One of Alexander’s favorite books was Homer’s *Illiad* and he took it

with him wherever he went. In the third Century B.C, Alexander extended the Greek Empire throughout what was then the known world, reaching even to parts of Asia and India (www.eclassics.com/ALEXANDER.htm. 30-09-09).

Greek society had begun by the formation of the city-state. This city-state, was based on tribal allegiances, and was generally the first political association during the early stages of civilization. Greek city-states generally moved through four stages:

- Rule by a king (monarchy),
- Rule by landowning aristocrats (oligarchy),
- Rule by one man who seized power (tyranny),
- Rule by the people (democracy) (www.azete.com/preview/5283901-10-09.)

The Greeks invented democracy, but they gave the vote to neither women nor slaves. Greek law saw women as being on par with children, in need of a guardian and as such having no legal status. Although males came of age at eighteen, females never did. That initially the father and then the husband would rule over her was the expected norm in Greek culture. Those women who were fortunate enough to receive an education were the exception, and were limited to reading, writing and poetry - mathematics, science and rhetoric were forbidden. (Hamilton 1995:50)

The cultural changes that occurred after Greek military conquest in the 4th century BC included the movement of Greeks abroad and into positions of influence and governance. Through this dispersion came the transplanting of culture, bringing with it one currency; the Greek language; Greek philosophies; a higher level of education and the spread of Greek religion and deities. The result of this dispersion ensured the Hellenization of the known civilized world and a cultural hub around which society functioned. Alexander the Great was convinced that Greek culture was the one thing that could unite the world. The

predominant subculture at the time was the Jewish state and Jews were encouraged to practice their religion and in addition were given many of the same privileges as Greek citizens. As Judaism and patriarchal practices in the Old Testament were infused into Greek and then into Roman thought and practice, culture, religion and philosophy became increasingly blurred.

2.5. Ancient Rome

2.5.1 Religious History.

The city of Rome traces its foundations back to the 8th Century BC. According to one legend, Rome was founded on April 21, 753 BC by twin brothers descended from the Trojan prince Aeneas. Through the works of the brilliant Roman writer, Virgil, (70BC-19BC) The Romans established their own mythical history, borrowing extensively from the writings of Homer centuries before. The Roman religion which was established by Virgil, borrowed the characters from Greek deities, giving them Roman names as portrayed in his story, '*The Aeneas*':

As the legend goes, Romulus and Remus were the grandsons of the Latin King. The King was ejected from his throne by his cruel brother Amulius while his daughter, a vestal virgin, raped by the god Mars gave birth to twins (Romulus and Remus) making them half divine

The new king, afraid that he would lose his throne to the twins determined that they should be drowned. A she-wolf (or a shepherd's wife in some accounts) saved and raised them, and when they were old enough they returned to the throne of their grandfather. Romulus and Remus then founded their own city. However a quarrel broke out over who would be king and give their name to the new city. Romulus killed his brother and the republic of Rome was founded. (en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ancient_Rome 11-10-09)

However it was around 168 BC when Rome conquered Alexander's territories that Rome moved from being a republic to becoming an Empire. Along with the many deities in Roman mythology, one that shaped society in their

understanding of the purpose of the female, both morally and legally, was the goddess Vestal (the Hestia of the Greeks):

A sacred fire tended by six virgin priestesses called Vestals, flamed in her temple. As the safety of the city was held to be connected with its conservation, the neglect of the virgins, if they let it go out, was severely punished, and the fire was rekindled from the rays of the sun. (en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ancient_Rome 11-10-09)

Vestal was the goddess of the hearth in the Roman religion. The hearth fire in the home of the ancient Romans was not only essential for cooking food and heating water, but also served as the gathering place for the family. Over time, it became associated with the spirit of a particular family gathered around a particular hearth. When leaving home for any extended period, a member of the family carried along some of the hearth fire in order to keep the home close even when away. The difficulty of making or transporting fire made the constantly-burning hearth a vital element in the home as well as state buildings. Vestal was therefore, along with the house spirits of the Penates, Panes and Lares, a goddess revered in every strata of Roman Society (<http://romanhistory.suite101.com/article.11-10-09>).

The Vestal religion of Rome stated that the priesthood (the father was the priest in his own family) passed from father to son. The wife existed to produce sons. If she were caught in adultery or even suspected of such she would be killed, as it would result in contamination of the bloodline. (Hamilton 1995:63). On the other hand if a man committed adultery it did not affect the genetic line, therefore no punishment was necessary. This double standard permeated every aspect of Roman life both morally and in the courts of law. The law of infanticide was also instituted under Roman jurisdiction. As it had been widely practiced by the Greeks, in the same way the right to expose new born infants fell to the father. The law demanded that sons were to be exempt as well as first born daughters,

but subsequent daughters and physically or mentally handicapped boys could be exposed. In this act of infanticide a girl's rights were subjugated from birth.

In every home the sacred hearth was the centre of religious belief, and it was the women's job to 'keep the home fires burning'. From here the Vestal Religion was born, and the role of wives and daughter religiously defined. (Hamilton 1995:54)

2.5.2 Politics

During Virgil's lifetime, Octavius Caesar defeated Marcus Antonius at the battle of Actium in 31 BC. He changed his name to Augustus (meaning first and greatest) to flaunt his importance as the unrivalled source of power. The Roman Empire by now had extended the Hellenization of its conquered territories, (begun under the ruler ship of Alexander the Great). Its influence stretched from Britain to Syria and included territories in North Africa. To be a Roman citizen was a privilege and a passport to deferential treatment throughout the empire. However the rights of a woman were never equal to that of a man. Roman citizens had three names; a first name (the individual's name); a second name (gentile) and a family name. Women however only had two names. She had no individual name and was known as the feminine version of her father's name. When she married she gave up her family's identity and became the property of her husband. Dyonysius of Halicarnassus wrote: (Not long before the birth of Jesus). "The law obligated both the married women, as having no other refuge, to conform themselves entirely to the temper of their husbands, and the husbands to rule their wives as necessary and inseparable possessions." (Lefkowitz and Fant, 1992, p 102. Quoted in Hamilton 1995:63)

Under Augustus however, the laws were relaxed slightly as marriage was on the wane due to the men being sent off to war and the women choosing to remain single. Women were beginning to afford some of the privileges of the upper class and were able to make their own decisions. However they were never equal to

men, or given equal status. Women caught or suspected of adultery were now divorced or exiled (as opposed to being killed as was formally encoded). Augustus himself was obliged to invoke the law against his own daughter, Julia, and relegated her to the island of Pandateria. (Hamilton 1995:63)

At no time in Rome's history were women allowed to hold office. In the early days of the Republic women were not even allowed to make suggestions. By the beginning of the Empire many men were seeking and following the advice of their wives. (As women were being afforded the right to an education) It was all right to do so, provided the advice was given in private and the husband did not make a big deal of it. This differed greatly from the Athenian tradition which placed both the cultural and educational facets of raising boys exclusively in the hands of men. In the Roman world, women were encouraged to teach the children Roman culture. When the boys grew up, the mother would spend her money and time to advance their political careers. Even the girls would receive this sort of home education because they would be expected to teach their own children one day. Roman women had more rights than their Greek sisters, and although life could not have been easy for them, they did have certain allowances. These cultural and legal practices of ancient Greece and Rome were largely dispersed and established throughout known civilization. This was due largely thanks to the power and conquering abilities of the Roman Empire.

H.I. Marrou in his book, *'A History of Education in Antiquity'* stated:

“If Greek civilization had in its turn remained the preserve of a few Aegean cities, it too would have disappeared long ago, without renewing, as it has, the face of the earth. And the fact that it has fulfilled its destiny is largely due to Rome. Rome's function was to complete the work begun by Alexander, and plant Hellenistic civilization throughout the known world.” (Sheed & Ward, 1956:293)

As we have discovered thus far, the influence of the poets, philosophies, cultures, world views, politics, governance, morality, religion and society norms of the ancient Greeks and Romans have had a lasting and profound effect on history. Can it have shaped society's view of the role of women? And if so, to

what extent? As we begin to explore some of the major influences in Israel's history I hope to gain a clearer understanding of the society into which Jesus came, the culture of the time and the issues Paul addressed in his epistles.

4. Jesus.

2.6.1. His teaching and example.

I believe that any serious study of the Bible needs to centre itself on the teachings and practices of Jesus Christ. Thus our study needs to be 'christocentric'. In order to understand the Old Testament we need to understand that Jesus was the fulfilment of the law and the prophets (Matthew 5:17). Everything He did or said was the culmination of God's plan and purpose for mankind. Similarly the Gospel accounts highlight the essence of Jesus ministry and example, as the representation of the Father, (John 14:9). In the same way, the remainder of the New Testament demonstrates the application of the teachings and example of Jesus, illumined by The Holy Spirit. Although Jesus did not directly offer any teaching on the role of women, He demonstrated his attitude through His example. I do not believe that He dealt at all with gender equality, but rather sought to empower and equip all those who came into contact with, male, female, Jew, Gentile, slave or free. (As Paul records in his letter to the Galatians 3:28)

Jesus treated women with dignity and respect and he elevated them in a world where they were often mistreated.–Hurley writes that Jesus did not perceive women "primarily in terms of their sex, age or marital status; he seems to have considered them in terms of their relation (or lack of one) to God."(Hurley J. 2005)

As such Jesus challenged and departed from the cultural norms of the time. He showed care and concern for women as He did with all people no matter their age, race, gender, or social standing. In some of his parables, Jesus portrayed, challenged and demonstrated his intention for women. As we skim over these 'stories' we look through the spectacles of our own cultural understanding. In

doing so we miss so much truth because we do not understand the traditions of the culture to which Jesus spoke. We fail to see the radical statements being made by Jesus through His teaching and parables. We fail to see the “power of the gospel” - Good news, at work to set free those held in the bondage of religion and man’s traditions.

Jesus rose above the cultural norms of the day, the prevalent religions and philosophies, and demonstrated through His life, death and resurrection, God’s intent of redemption.

2.6.2 History.

In order to understand just how radical Jesus’ presence in the context of history, culture, religion and politics, it is helpful to look at Palestine as it was in the first century. Jesus entered the world at a time in history, whereby the prevailing influence on the culture had been shaped by the Patriarchal practice of the Old Testament, ancient Greek and then Roman philosophical thinking and religion.

Palestine at the time of the birth of Christ had a political and civil judiciary system controlled by Rome. It had undergone periods of rule from the Persian Empire (450 -330 BC); The Hellenistic Period (330-166 BC); The Hasmonian Period (166-63 BC) up until Pompey the Roman general, captured Jerusalem and the Holy Land became subject to Rome. (NIV Study Bible, 2002:1455).

King Herod the Great ruled the area known as Palestine from 37BC until 4 AD. He was a Jewish ‘client king’ installed by the Roman Governor and ruling on behalf of the Romans who had invaded the area in 63 BC. In turn he installed the ruling party of the High Priest and the Sanhedrin. In his over inflated opinion of himself and in order to appease his Jewish subjects, he began the rebuilding of the Jewish Temple (although throughout antiquity it has been commonly known as ‘Herod’s Temple’). When Herod died his kingdom was divided amongst his sons (the Tetrarchs) Herod Antipas, Herod Philip, and Herod Archelaus. (Ward K:1997)

2.6.3. His Life.

Jesus spent most of his life in and around the farming village area of Nazareth. Life in this village like many others, centred around the family unit, and ancient tradition and roles that had been passed down from generation to generation. The population consisted mainly of Jews but there was some diversity as Syrians, Greeks and Romans made their home there. The synagogue was the centre for government, teaching and worship, while it was the market place that provided the hub of social activity. In first century Israel, women were considered second-class citizens, akin to slaves. The fact that they are mentioned as avid followers of Jesus is unusual – both that they would be allowed to follow him with his disciples, and unusual that the authors of Jesus' biographies would mention their presence at all.

James Hurley in his article, *'Women in the ministry of Jesus'* writes:

"The most striking thing about the role of women in the life and teaching of Jesus is the simple fact that they are there. Although the gospel texts contain no special sayings repudiating the view of the day about women, their uniform testimony to the presence of women among the followers of Jesus and to his serious teaching of them constitutes a break with tradition which has been described as being 'without precedent in [then] contemporary Judaism.'

Boys received an education superior to their sisters. They started their learning at age 5 and by ten they would have memorized the Torah (The first five books of the Bible). By age thirteen they were expected to understand and recite the teaching of the prophets. Formal education was completed at age eighteen, and those who so desired were afforded the opportunity to go on and learn law (the Pharisees), or to become scribes, and doctors. Only the brightest students were chosen to become a disciple of a Rabbi (teacher).

In contrast girls were afforded no such opportunities. They would learn from their mothers and older women, the traditional roles of wife and mother. (Ward k. 1987)

2.6.4 Women Disciples

To be a disciple of a Rabbi (teacher) was a great honour and availed the follower an intimate knowledge and teaching from the teacher of a particular school. The disciples lived with, served, and received teaching and equipping from their particular Rabbi, which afforded them the opportunity for themselves to become Rabbis. Jesus was one who taught like no other Rabbi and was questioned concerning His source of authority. (Mark 1:22; Matthew 7:29).

Among those who argue their case for male only leadership in the church, often make reference to the fact that there were no women among the twelve. However I believe that although Jesus rose above the cultural norms of the time, it was not His purpose to cause unnecessary antagonism that would divert His mission. It was not His intention to prove a point or to provide His male disciples with temptation. Another aspect to His choosing the twelve was I believe, to bring about an aspect of the New Covenant. The Old Covenant provided the state of Israel with twelve tribes, as the foundation of a people chosen by God. Likewise as Jesus came to fulfil the law, this Kingdom would find itself built upon the testimony of the twelve disciples. I don't believe however that because only men were chosen as disciples, that it would discount women as leaders in any way, both in Jesus' time nor throughout the years between the early church and present church practice. To do so would also to discount anyone who was not Jewish or spoke Aramaic! The disciples (followers, learners) of Jesus included women. We can be sure of this by several incidences recorded in the gospels. Examples include:

Luke 24:5-7 "...and as the women were terrified and bowed their faces to the ground, the men said to them, "Why do you seek the living One among the dead? 6 "He is not here, but He has risen. Remember how He spoke to you while He was still in Galilee, saying that the Son of Man must be delivered into the hands of sinful men, and be crucified, and the third day rise again."

These women had been following Jesus to the grave and had been recipients of His teaching. Dawn Wilson in her Blog: *'Women serving in ministry positions'*.

Notes:

"The disciples to whom Jesus plainly revealed his coming death and resurrection were not simply the twelve men who were separated by Him and called apostles. Jesus revealed what lay ahead of Him in Jerusalem to the men and women who followed Him as His disciples." (Wilson D 18-01-10)

Several of the twelve were not able to receive or understand Jesus' revelation. They were afraid to ask Him about it. (Mark 9:31-32). Peter openly rebuked Him. (Matthew 16:22). Scripture records the contrast between the twelve's disbelief and the faith of one of His female disciples:

(Matthew 26:6-13.)

" Now when Jesus was in Bethany, at the home of Simon the leper, a woman came to Him with an alabaster vial of very costly perfume, and she poured it on His head as He reclined at the table. But the disciples were indignant when they saw this, and said, "Why this waste? For this perfume might have been sold for a high price and the money given to the poor." But Jesus, aware of this, said to them, "Why do you bother the woman? For she has done a good deed to me. For you always have the poor with you; but you do not always have me. For when she poured this perfume on my body, she did it to prepare me for burial. Truly I say to you, wherever this gospel is preached in the whole world, what this woman has done will also be spoken of in memory of her."

It was on the testimony of her actions that the faith of generations to come would be built. It is clear that Mary and Martha of Bethany were the friends of Jesus along with Lazarus, their brother. They were also His disciples, the recipients of His teaching, unveiling of His revelations, and witness to His Lordship as the

Messiah. As Shawner Atteberry writes in her essay, '*Mary and Martha, Sisters who Served*':

"In Luke 10:38-42 we meet Martha and Mary who are apparently two single sisters living together. While John's Gospel tells us about Jesus' resurrecting Lazarus from the dead (John 11), Luke makes no mention of Lazarus." (Atteberry S.2007)

"Now as they went on their way, he entered a certain village, where a woman named Martha welcomed him into her home. She had a sister named Mary, who sat at the Lord's feet and listened to what he was saying. But Martha was distracted by her many tasks; so she came to him and asked, "Lord, do you not care that my sister has left me to do all the work by myself? Tell her then to help me". (Luke 10:38-42).

In this account we see that Jesus is received into a woman's home (no mention is made of a brother) and that He teaches a woman. This act was radical in two respects. Martha was the head of her own home, and did not defer authority to her brother, and it was here that Jesus was shown to be teaching a woman as He would one of His disciples. The act of 'sitting at someone's feet' was a position a disciple took when they were learning.

Atteberry continues:

"For the first century Jew, sitting at someone's feet did not bring to mind children sitting at the feet of adults listening to stories. Sitting at someone's feet meant higher, formal education. Jesus was known as a rabbi, a teacher. To sit at his feet meant that one was being trained as a disciple (cf. Luke 8:35). Mary was not quietly sitting contemplating all Jesus said. She was in active training with the other disciples. This was an unusual activity for women. It was Martha, not Mary, who was doing what women were supposed to do: be good homemakers." (Atteberry S. 2007)

This however does not dismiss Martha as 'just' a home maker. She was the second (after Peter's declaration) to proclaim Jesus as the Messiah.

John 11:20-27: "When Martha heard that Jesus was coming, she went and met him, while Mary stayed at home. Martha said to Jesus, "Lord, if you had been here, my brother would not have died. But even now I know that God will give you whatever you ask of him."

After four days, Jesus arrives. Martha, in her conviction that, had He been there sooner Lazarus' death could have been averted, was one that I believe to have provoked Jesus' response:

"Jesus said to her, "Your brother will rise again." Martha said to him, "I know that he will rise again in the resurrection on the last day." Jesus said to her, "I am the resurrection and the life. Those who believe in me, even though they die, will live, and everyone who lives and believes in me will never die. Do you believe this?" She said to him, "Yes, Lord, I believe that you are the Messiah, the Son of God, the one coming into the world." (John 11:23-27)

Jesus drew many women to Him, restoring their dignity as human beings, healing them of their diseases, empowering them for ministry and overturning social norms:

- Elizabeth, the mother of John the Baptist: Elizabeth bore John, the one who was to proclaim the coming of the Lord. Her words are recorded in Scripture. (Luke 1:25 & 42-45)
- Mary the mother of Jesus: Mary provided the roots of redemption through Jesus, and her words and song inaugurated the deliverance of the longed for Messiah. (Luke 1:34,38, 46-56)

- Anna and Simeon: Anna was a prophet who had served in the temple for eighty four years, she proclaimed the coming of the Messiah (Luke 2:36-38)
- The Samaritan woman at the well: The conversation with the woman at the well is the longest recorded discussion Jesus had with anyone. And she was a Gentile woman. Further, the lesson Jesus gave her about living water was just as profound as the lesson he gave Nicodemus but unlike Nicodemus, she was willing to be associated with Jesus. She told her neighbors about Jesus, (an evangelist?) and many of them believed in Jesus “because of the woman’s testimony” (John 4:28-29, 39).--The testimony of a woman was considered invalid in the culture of the time.
- The sisters Mary and Martha, Jesus’ friends and disciples. (Luke 10:38; John 11:1; 19; 20)
- The woman who anointed Jesus’ feet with perfume from an alabaster jar. (Matt 26:6-8; Mark 14:2-4; Luke 7:37)
- Joanna, the wife of Chuza – Herod’s business manager, Susanna and many other women were beneficiaries (from their own means).
- Mary Magdalene, the one sent (an apostle?) to tell the twelve of Jesus’ resurrection) and Mary the mother of James and John, disciples and witnesses to the resurrection.(John 19:11; 11:20; Luke 8:2; 24:10; Mark15:47; 40; 16:1;9; Matt 22:61; 27:56; 28:1)

The context of Paul’s epistles to Timothy (1 Tim 2:8-14) and the church at Corinth (1 Corinthians 11:3-16) will be explored in light of the teachings and practices of Jesus. In chapter four I will consider the cultural and religious practices of the society in which these letters were written, in an attempt to shed some light on these difficult and seemingly contradictory (to Paul’s teaching and practices) passages.

Conclusion

In summary, through my research into the roots and history of misogyny, I have discovered the many historical influences that have shaped our understanding of the roles and purposes of women. Initially I was of the opinion that the religious and philosophical practices of the ancient Greek and Roman cultures, had invaded the Hebrew nation and the Jewish religion. Upon further investigation however, I have discovered the complexities of the cross cultural/ religious influences of the Old Testament, Greek mythology, and Roman government, and how they have interacted with one another.

From the creation story found in Genesis 1-3, a variety of starkly differing opinions and often dogmatic interpretations have fuelled fierce debate over the intentions of God in His creating woman. There are those scholars who believe that our understanding of God's Word on the Creation account provides the foundation for God's intent for mankind. They posit that the purpose of the relationship between male and female can be understood through their interpretations of these passages of Scripture.

The questions I found myself asking was; "Does God view Woman as an inferior being? And if so where do they fit into His purposes?" "Does God's Word have anything to say to women?" "If women can trust that the Bible is the Word of God, speaks to women and brings them the 'good news' of salvation, how can they relate to the patriarchal, misogynist accounts often found in the Old Testament?" I came to the conclusion that Yes; God does have something to say to women that is aligned with His character as revealed in His Son.

I believe that the negative accounts found in the Old Testament can only be the consequences of sin and not God's original intention for mankind. In order to gain the incredible richness and value of the Old Testament stories (and likewise the Gospels) it is imperative to interact personally with culture, history, context and characters the writers portray.

From 800 BC at the rise of Greek influence, religion and mythology, it would appear that much of the creation account found in Genesis 1-3, infiltrated and influenced the thinking. For example similarities between Eve and Pandora as being the first woman, stems from the pervading view of women since creation.

The relationship between Adam and Eve, and subsequently the generations to follow was toppled by the Fall. Eve was blamed by many as providing the entrance of sin into the world. Likewise Pandora as the first woman was identified as the source of all evil.

The God of the Bible however worked within the cultural norms, to bring about His plan for redemption while the Greek and the Roman religion and philosophy sought to solidify their misogynist views through culture and politics. As the Greek Empire found its strength and influence through conquests of Alexander the Great, the known world including Judah became Hellenized. The Greek culture and political structure provided the way for the expansion of Greek thinking. Upon the rise of the Roman Empire, the religious practices were copied from the Greeks. With different names, the Roman gods took up their deity establishing the Roman religion. Rome in affect became the centre of the world and brought an oppressive rule to the surrounding lands.

It was into this cultural and religious context that Jesus was born. It was within this context that He brought the good news of freedom from oppression to all who put their trust in Him. It was within this context that He instituted the rule and reign of God in His creation. It was within this context that the radical and subversive teaching and practice of Jesus sought to overthrow the cultural norms of the time. It was His teaching and practice, death and resurrection that provided the way of salvation.

It was the “Spirit of the Sovereign Lord that had anointed Him to preach good news to the poor ...to bind up the broken hearted...to proclaim freedom to the captives...and the release from darkness for the prisoners.” Isaiah 61:1 (NIV Study Bible.)

It is my steadfast belief that Jesus came to set us free from the curse of sin and death that were the consequences of the Fall. Finally I am of the opinion that the freedom purchased was available no matter the gender, race or social standing.

From my findings thus far I believe that God sees humanity through the lens of equality.

In chapter three, I will present my findings of the empirical research conducted within churches with a predominantly white, affluent, English speaking demographic.

Chapter 3.

A presentation of the findings of an empirical study focused on a random selection of males and females in leadership positions in predominantly white, affluent, English speaking churches in the Johannesburg area.

The research has utilized the method of questionnaires and interviews.

3.1. Introduction.

In order to ascertain whether or not the disparity between the two main viewpoints and convictions held by the two camps have influenced church practice, this empirical research has been conducted.

3.2. Intentions.

My intention for conducting this study has been to establish an overview of actual church practice within this particular demographic. This information is crucial and provides the foundations of this study. In order to establish credence for a study such as this the need must be identified. Research into the experiences and views of leaders who differ in their convictions as to whether the bible places restrictions on women's ministry will provide the necessary framework with which to present my thesis.

3.3. Participants.

My decision to restrict my research to leaders within the chosen focus group was made due to the need to establish a distinct demographic study. The variables that exist within the cultural, social, and educational elements in a broader selection of participants would prevent this work from fulfilling its purpose as a qualitative study.

3.4. Methodology.

In order to determine a sense of the existing convictions and practices within a cross-section of churches, I formulated a questionnaire that was used in interviews with Church leaders. Where a personal interview was not possible due to time, availability, or distance, I asked participants to complete the questionnaire in their own time.

My reasons for choosing this method of collecting empirical data are as follows:

- To allow time for respondents to deeply consider their responses.
- To provide time for them to explore their own theology and how this was developed.
- Interviews afforded me the opportunity to hear ‘between the lines’ of participants’ responses. This was particularly helpful as I was able to assess as to where and how personal experiences and challenges may have affected their views.

3.5 Confines.

My intention was to conduct an unbiased investigation with the purpose of gaining insight into the reasons for and consequences of either position. This research was conducted within the confines of agreed confidentiality, therefore names and specific churches have been protected by anonymity. Therefore a key will be used to distinguish the individual participants.

3.6 Personal Reservations and Difficulties.

Reservations.

In entering into this empirical research, I determined that I would need to identify my own reservations and personal bias. Being a woman pastor and leader, and having faced many challenges against both my character and calling, I felt lead to conduct this research thesis and develop a strategy that would empower

women to hold their convictions with confidence. A dissonance between unbiased objectivity and my own emotional subjectivity has proved to be a challenge with which I have had to wrestle. This pull ironically is that it is my emotional subjective experiences that have provided the motivation and passion towards seeking justice. My quest therefore is to produce a document that is fuelled by my desire to empower those who have felt marginalized due to gender while concurrently seeking to enter the discussion without an alternative agenda.

Difficulties.

It has been with several difficulties in addition to my personal reservations that this research has been conducted. This process took approximately eighteen months to complete in order to overcome these troublesome hurdles. These include:

- Identifying prospective participants that were willing to take part.
- Establishing the theological roots of the many churches that identified themselves as 'Independent or 'Interdenominational'. (For a qualitative study into the doctrinal convictions of a church leader/s I have found it helpful to establish the roots of those particular doctrines).
- Becoming frustrated with the unexpected difficulties in securing interviews with the willing participants. This resulted in reducing my proposed representations of the anticipated church affiliates.
- The challenge of resisting the temptation to participate in a debate with the interviewees when responses have become inflammatory.
- The difficulty of entering into the research without presumption.

3.7. Opposing views.

3.7.1. Definitions.

3.7.2 Egalitarian:

Rebecca Merrill Groothuis and Ronald W Pierce, in their book, '*Discovering Biblical Equality. Complementarity without Hierarchy*', describes this term as such:

"Egalitarianism recognizes patterns of authority in the family, church and society- it is not anarchistic- but rejects the notion that any office, ministry or opportunity should be denied anyone on the grounds of gender alone." (Pierce and Groothuis 2005:13).

For the purpose of this study the term will be used to denote a person who upholds the view that equality exists in creation and function, specifically in relation to a woman's role in the church.

3.7.3 Complementarian.

Respected theologians and authors, John Piper and Wayne Grudem, who themselves are strong advocates of the Complementarian position, have expressed their definition of Complementarity.

The position they (Piper and Grudem) advocate is based on the concept of "Complementarity", because it suggests both equality and beneficial differences between the sexes. According to their understanding, God created male and female equal but also designed the woman to complement the man by subordinating herself to his leadership." (Grenz And Kjesbo, 1995:18)

For the purpose of this study this term will be utilised to denote a person who upholds the view that although male and female are created equal, there exists in creation a hierarchal order which specifies roles and function.

3.7.4 Feminism.

A doctrine that advocates the rights of women. When used in its broad sense it delineates the egalitarian position.

3.7.5 Hierarchical.

The organisation of people at different ranks in an administrative body.

These terms will be used to describe the positions and convictions across the spectrum of their meanings.

3.7.6 Overlaps.

From this empirical research I have discovered that there are overlapping standpoints within both the Complementarian and Egalitarian positions. While I believe that there can be no middle ground between these two positions since they are in opposition to one another, I have become aware that there have been assumptions on both sides.

3.7.6.1 Egalitarian as Feminism.

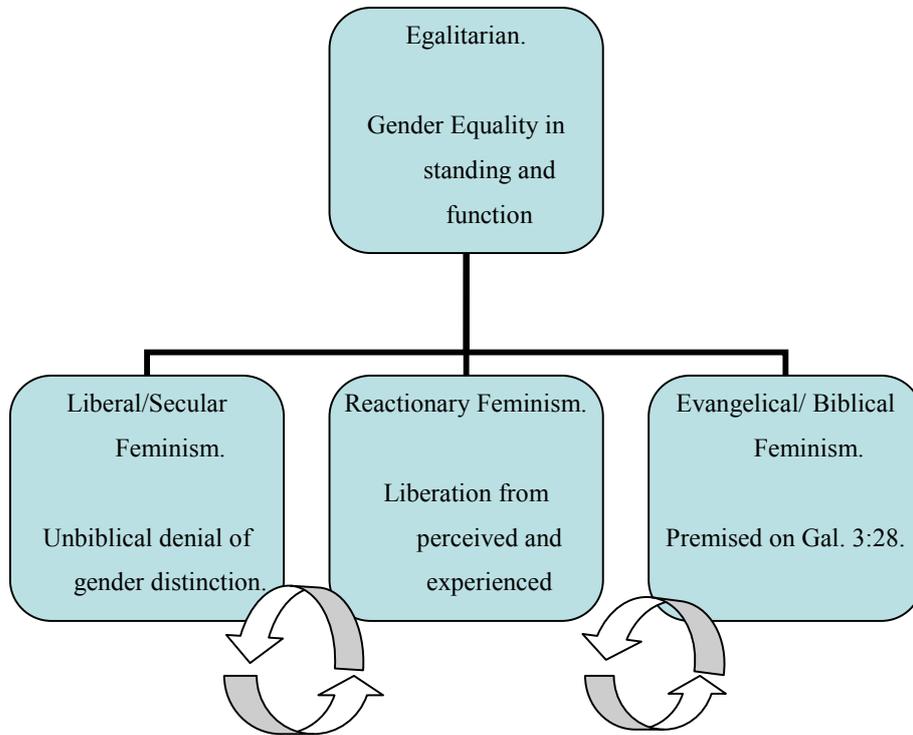
The term 'Feminism' can be used in a broad view to refer to the following:

- A secular social group, which in its extreme can be understood to advocate the belief that there can be no differentiation between the sexes and who seek to empower women in reaction to misogynist treatment.
- A liberal theology that un-biblically denies the differences between the genders.
- A reactionary feminism that has arisen due to abuses of interpretations of Scripture that allows male domination.
- Evangelical/Biblical Feminism (Premised on Galatians 3:28) that seeks to be supportive of a woman's freedom and opportunity to serve alongside men in ministry and marriage.

(Pierce and Groothuis, 2005:16)

Diagram 3.1.

Presents a simple overview of how these subgroups convey these broad positions within the Egalitarian spectrum and how they overlap.



Sadly, while acknowledging the possible overlaps, too often those who hold to the Evangelical/Biblical view have been cast together with the first two subgroups.

3.7.6.2 Complementarian as Hierarchal.

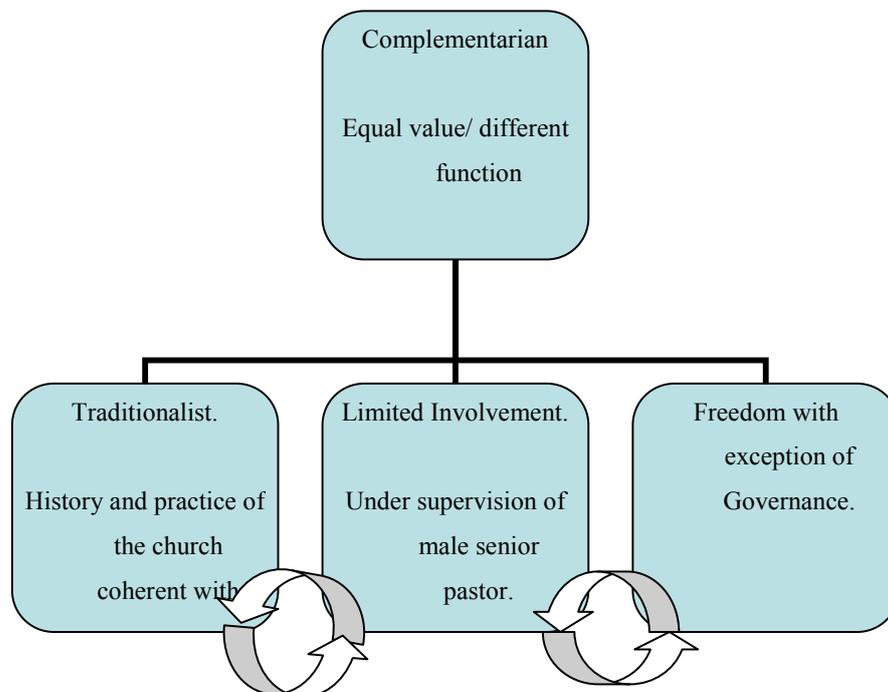
Hierarchal in the context of this study can be defined as ‘The affirmation of male authority over females’. (Pierce and Groothuis 2005:302)

However as with the term ‘Feminism’ it also contains various degrees and overlaps.

- Tradition. The argument that the tradition of the church throughout millennia of biblical and historical practice needs to be upheld in any attempt of exegesis of Scripture.
- Traditionalists on the extreme end of the spectrum of the hierarchal argument strictly apply 1 Corinthians 11:3-16 and 1 Timothy 2:8-14, regarding headship, head covering, and women’s silence in the church. The doctrine of the ‘Exclusive Brethren Christian Communities’ is an example. See [www.mybrethren.org/doctrine/ Man and Woman](http://www.mybrethren.org/doctrine/Man%20and%20Woman). (Accessed 06-07-10)
- Limited involvement of women in ministry as long as they are under the direction of a male senior pastor. This position holds that although male and female are equal, the woman’s *function* is of a supporting, subordinate role to the man. (Clouse and Clouse. 1989:72)
- Freedom for women in ministry with the exception of an authoritative position of government.

Diagram 3.2.

Presents a simple overview of how these subgroups convey these broad positions within the Complementarian spectrum and how they overlap.



The evidence for these sub groups within the Egalitarian and Complementarian positions makes it necessary to present my research findings sensitive to both the spectrum and the overlaps within them.

Following is a sample of the questionnaire used to collect data for this empirical research.

Masters Thesis For the South African Theological Seminary.

Women Leaders in the Church.

3.8 Questionnaire.

Thank you very much for completing this questionnaire the contents of which shall be kept confidential and used for research purposes only.

Personal Details.

Today's Date:

Name:

Age:

Occupation:

Employer:

Work Address:

Work Phone Number:

Mobile/ Cell:

Email Address:

Years / Months in Present Position:

Education/Qualifications:

Previous Experience:

Work Areas / Responsibilities.

1. Approximately how many people make up your congregation/ministry?
2. What approximately is the ratio of male to female?
3. Is your area of responsibility gender specific?
4. If yes, why?
5. If no, why?
6. Is your area of responsibility age specific?
7. If yes, why?

8. If no, why?
9. Do you believe that a person's gender is an issue in leadership in the church?
10. If yes, why?
11. If not, why?
12. Are there people in your leadership team that believe that a person's gender affects their area of responsibility?
13. If yes, what are their reasons?
14. If no, what are their reasons?
15. Have you personally experienced a situation whereby a decision has been made at leadership level based purely on a person's gender?
16. If yes, can you reveal the details here?
17. If not, why?
18. Do you believe that the Bible places restrictions on women in leadership or teaching roles?
19. If yes, to which Scriptures are you referring?
20. If yes, have you always believed this?
21. If no, have you always believed this?
22. Is there anyone in the Bible who has affected your viewpoint?
23. If yes, who and how?
24. Is there anyone in history or the present who has affected your viewpoint?
25. If yes, who and how?
26. Have you been in a situation whereby you have had your views disputed? (If yes, can you give an example?)
27. Has this affected you positively or negatively?
28. How has this affected you in your work / ministry role?
29. In some countries and cultures gender discrimination is prevalent to greater or lesser degrees. Do you believe this can be changed?
30. If yes, how?
31. If no, why?
32. Do you believe that the secular world is more accommodating than the church in its approach to gender issues?

33. Do you believe your answer to be a positive or negative trend?
34. If positive, why?
35. If negative, why?
36. Do you believe the church should be more or less 'liberal' on its standpoint on gender discrimination?
37. Do you believe that you can make a difference to the church's stance on gender issues?
38. If yes, how?
39. If not, why?

Thank you for your time and willingness to share your views and experiences.

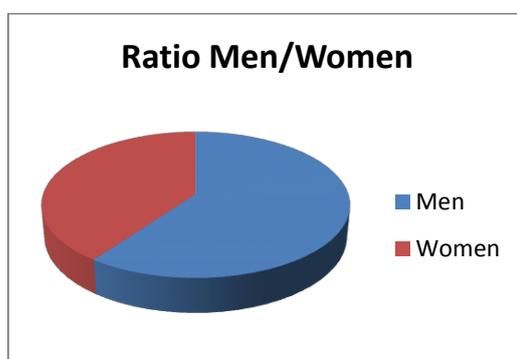
Joanne Robolakis. Tel +27 11 4674556; +27 72 2683636; Email:

axessjo@gmail.com

3.8.1 Overview of Participants. 9 men 6 women

In seeking willing participants, my objective was to target a cross section of white, middle class, affluent church leaders within the Johannesburg area. Being a qualitative study, I limited my research to include 15 participants. In order to attain the perspectives, views and experiences from both men and women leaders.

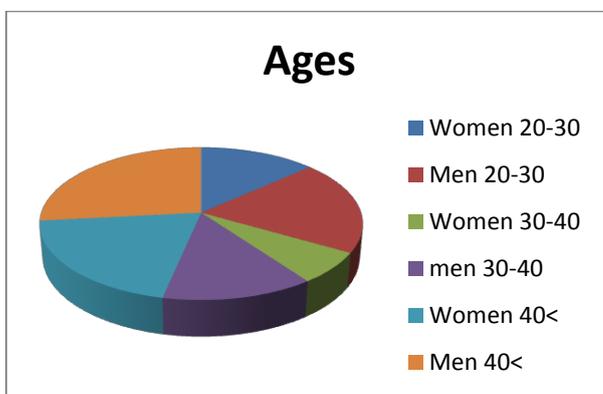
Diagram 3.3 Participants.



In attempting to gain a sample from various age groups, my aim was to ascertain the degree to which age may affect view- points. The sample group however, represents a greater percentage of participants from within the mature generation. These results are contingent to the degree of leadership experience within the younger age groups.

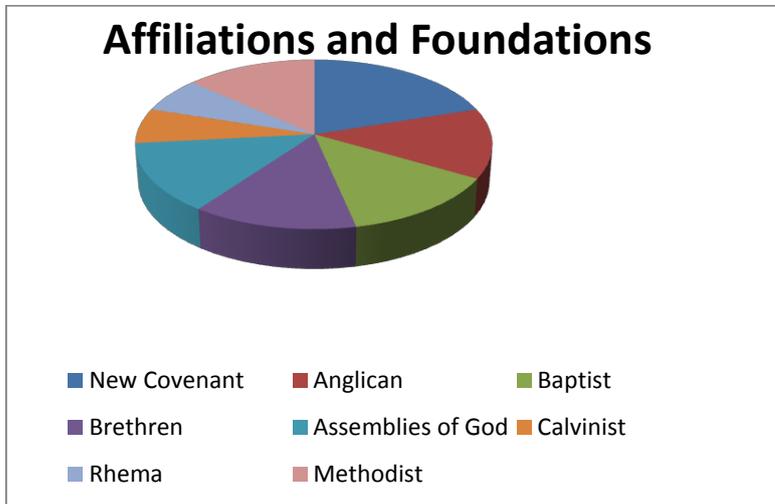
Diagram 2 graphs the ratio of men and women participants as follows:

Diagram 3.4 Ages.



One of my intentions for conducting this study has been to sample various viewpoints, convictions and experiences of church leaders across denominational affiliations. Due to the rising number of churches however, who define themselves as 'Non-denominational' or 'Independent' I have found it necessary to explore the core doctrines within the foundations of these churches. From the 15 respondents I discovered 9 core affiliations, as illustrated in diagram 3.5.

Diagram 3.5.



3.8.2 Key

In presenting the responses to the questionnaires for the sake of brevity I have condensed the questions and answered clearly as stated those to which the participants responded. To those questions that did not apply I marked N/A.

In order to protect the identities of the participants the feedback will be presented within specific age categories as follows:

3.4.1. Women: age 20-30.

3.4.1a.

3.4.1b

3.4.2 Men: age 20-30.

3.4.2a

3.4.2.b

3.4.2c

3.4.3 Women: age 30-40.

3.4.3a

3.4.4 Men age: 30-40.

3.4.4a

3.4.4

3.4.5 Women age: 40 <

3.4.5a

3.4.5b

3.4.5c

3.4.6 Men age: 40<

3.4.6a

3.4.6b

3.4.6c

3.4.6d

3.9 Findings.

Upon collating the responses of the participants from the questionnaires my findings can be tabulated as follows. This table serves merely as an overview of the entire sample group. The overlaps and complexities will only find depth as we explore the responses from the various age subgroups.

3.10 Responses.

Table 1.

Gender	Age	Participants	% Egalitarian	% Not Sure	% Complementarian
Women	20- 30	2	100%		
Men	20-	3	33.3%	33.3%	33.3%

	30				
Women	30-40	1	100%		
Men	30-40	2	50%		50%
Women	40<	3	75%		25%
Men	40<	4	50%		50%

4.2 Questionnaire Responses.

3.4.1. Women age 20-30

3.4.1.a.

- Female age 21
- Affiliation and foundations: ANGLICAN.
- Qualifications. 2nd Year BTh. Diploma in Children's Ministry.
- Experience: 5 Years Children Ministry. 3 Years Youth Ministry.

Questionnaire.

1. Ministry membership: 68.
2. Ratio: 40% male; 60% female.
3. Gender specific? No.
4. Why? Children and youth open to both sexes.
5. N/A
6. Age specific? Yes.
7. Why? Children and Youth.
8. N/A
9. N/A
10. Is a person's gender an issue in the church? Yes.

11. Why? *Men tend to undermine young women priests as they feel they have the upper hand.*
12. N/A
13. Are there people in your leadership team who believe it is an issue? *Yes.*
14. Why? *Both the boys and girls are concerned with impressing the opposite sex, so the leaders feel they should be separated. Male leading males, females leading females.*
15. N/A.
16. Experience of decision made by leadership based on gender alone? *Yes.*
17. Details? *Due to the fact that we have a woman priest, men within the clergy seem to undermine her and do not respect her. They feel this is acceptable.*
18. N/A
19. Does the Bible place restrictions on women in leadership or teaching roles?
No.
20. N/A
21. Have you always believed this? *Yes.*
22. N/A
23. Is there anyone in the Bible who has affected your view point? *Not specifically.*
24. N/A.
25. Is there anyone in history or the present who has affected your view point?
Yes.
26. Who and how? *There are women who have gone through the same training as men and have been very successful and inspirational.*
27. Have you had your own views disputed? *No.*
28. How has this affected you? *Positively.*
29. How has this affected your ministry role? *The fact that I haven't been disputed in my area of ministry has shown me that the younger generation aren't as bothered about gender in leadership as the older generation.*
30. In some countries and cultures gender discrimination is prevalent to greater or lesser degrees. Do you believe this can be changed? *Yes.*

31. How? *The newer generations are more progressive.*
32. N/A.
33. Is the secular world more accommodating than the church to gender equality? *Yes.*
34. Is this a positive or negative trend? *Both.*
35. Positive? *In the business world there are many women who hold respected leadership roles and are thus empowered.*
36. Negative? *The church should be more open to women sharing their gifts and strengths than the secular world. Setting an example.*
37. Should the church be more or less accommodating? *More.*
38. Can you make a difference? *Yes.*
39. How? *I could finish my studies, become a woman priest and through my ministry show that I too have a calling on my life and am able to spread the Word as effectively as men.*

3.4.1.b.

- **Female age 22**
- **Affiliation and foundations: ANGLICAN.**
- **Qualifications. Matric.**
- **Experience: Office Administrator, Youth Leader.**

Questionnaire.

1. Ministry membership: approx. 2,500. (*Congregation*)
2. Ratio: 50/50.
3. Gender specific? *No.*
4. Why? *N/A*
5. *N/A*
6. Age specific? *Yes.*
7. Why? *Youth and young adults up to age 30.*
8. *N/A*
9. *N/A*
10. Is a person's gender an issue in the church? *No.*

11. N/A
12. Why? *I think that if gender is an issue in church ministry we've lost sight of the true meaning of 'church.'*
13. Are there people in your leadership team who believe it is an issue? *No.*
14. N/A.
15. Why? *None of them are bothered by it and see the value each gender can bring.*
16. Experience of decision made by leadership based on gender alone? *No.*
17. N/A
18. N/A
19. Does the Bible place restrictions on women in leadership or teaching roles?
No.
20. N/A
21. Have you always believed this? *Yes*
22. N/A
23. Is there anyone in the Bible who has affected your view point? *Jesus.*
24. How? *He sees all people (men and women) as equal children of God.*
25. Is there anyone in history or the present who has affected your view point?
Jesus.
26. Who and how? *As above.*
27. Have you had your own views disputed? *Yes. Theology classes and Feminist studies.*
28. How has this affected you? *It hasn't affected me personally.*
29. How has this affected your ministry role? *It has motivated me to show that being female is by no means limiting or less important in church ministry*
30. In some countries and cultures gender discrimination is prevalent to greater or lesser degrees. Do you believe this can be changed? *Yes.*
31. How? *By teaching the love God has for each of us and making known the value that both man and women can bring.*
32. N/A.

33. Is the secular world more accommodating than the church to gender equality? *Yes.*
34. Is this a positive or negative trend? *Negative for the church.*
35. N/A
36. Negative? *People are put off the church because of sexist behaviour especially when compared to the secular world.*
37. Should the church be more or less accommodating? *More.*
38. Can you make a difference? *No not on the church, but on individuals.*
39. How? *By showing that gender differences are positive, but both are valuable.*

3.4.2a

- **Male age 21.**
- **Affiliation and foundations: New Covenant**
- **Qualifications. Matric.**
- **Experience: Youth Leader.**

Questionnaire.

1. Ministry membership: approx 400-500 (*Congregation*)
2. Ratio: *50/50.*
3. Gender specific? *No.*
4. Why? *Youth of both sexes.*
5. N/A
6. Age specific? *Yes.*
7. Why? *Teenagers.*
8. N/A
9. Is gender an issue in church leadership? *Yes.*
10. Why? *Some positions are only for men.*
11. N/A
12. N/A
13. Are there people in your leadership team who believe it is an issue? *Yes.*

14. Why? *Only a man may fill a governmental role. The Greek word for Elder is 'Elderos' which is of a male gender.*
15. N/A
16. Do you have an experience of decision made by leadership based on gender alone? *Yes*
17. Can you reveal the details? *A female applicant for an eldership role will not be considered.*
18. N/A
19. Does the Bible place restrictions on women in leadership or teaching roles? *Yes. There are no female priests in the Old Testament. In the New Testament there is teaching that an elder must be male.*
20. N/A
21. Have you always believed this? *Yes*
22. N/A
23. Is there anyone in the Bible who has affected your view point? *Paul.*
24. How? *He only appointed male elders.*
25. Is there anyone in history or the present who has affected your view point? *Yes.*
26. Who and how? *My church elders, Martin Luther.*
27. Have you had your own views disputed? *Yes. My good friend holds an opposite view.*
28. How has this affected you? *It hasn't affected me.*
29. How has this affected your ministry role? *It hasn't affected my role.*
30. In some countries and cultures gender discrimination is prevalent to greater or lesser degrees. Do you believe this can be changed? *No.*
31. N/A.
32. Why? *Certain religions will never allow it to happen.*
33. Is the secular world more accommodating than the church to gender equality? *Yes.*
34. Is this a positive or negative trend? *Both. Women could and should use their gifting in the church (not as elders) They have more freedom in the secular world.*

It should be so in the church. (Some churches put too many restrictions on women.)

35. N/A

36. Negative? *People are put off the church because of sexist behaviour especially when compared to the secular world.*

37. Should the church be more or less accommodating? *As above.*

38. Can you make a difference? *No.*

39. Why? *I have no weight or 'punch'.*

3.4.2b

- Male age 22.

- Affiliation and foundations: New Covenant

- Qualifications. B.Com. Maths and Economics.

- Experience: Youth Leader, children's ministry, out-reach missions.

Questionnaire

1. Ministry Membership? *Approx 300.*

2. Ratio? *50/50*

3. Gender specific? *No.*

4. N/A

5. Why? *My ministry is primarily teens of both sexes.*

6. Age specific? *Yes*

7. If yes, why? *As above.*

8. N/A

9. Is a person's gender is an issue in leadership in the church? *I'm not sure.*

10. N/A

11. N/A

12. Are there people in your leadership team that believe gender is an issue?

Yes

13. Why? *They believe some leadership positions are not open to women.*

14. N/A

15. Have you experienced a situation whereby a decision has been made based on gender? *No.*

16. N/A
17. N/A
18. Does the Bible place restrictions on women in leadership? *Yes.*
19. If yes, to which Scriptures are you referring? *1 Corinthians. 1 Timothy, Titus. But am not sure if they are set in context and no longer applicable.*
20. If yes have you always believed this? *No, my mind is changing.*
21. N/A
22. Is there anyone in the Bible who has affected your viewpoint? *No.*
23. N/A
24. Anyone in history or the present affected your viewpoint? *Yes.*
25. Who and how? *Joyce Meyer. Men work under her leadership.*
26. Have you ever had your views disputed? *Yes.*
27. Has this affected you positively or negatively? *Positively*
28. How has this affected you in your work / ministry role? *It has made me question my view point and try not to be legalistic.*
29. In some countries and cultures gender discrimination is prevalent to greater or lesser degrees. Do you believe this can be changed? *Yes.*
30. How? *Through education. Especially in developing countries. Women are capable and should be empowered to share their skills.*
31. N/A
32. Is the secular world more accommodating than the church in its approach to gender issues? *Yes.*
33. Is this a positive trend? *Both.*
34. Why? *Gender should not limit opportunities. The secular world is leading the church*
35. N/A
36. Do you believe the church should be more or less 'liberal' on its standpoint on gender discrimination? *People should know what they believe and stay within the bounds of their church constitution.*
37. Can make a difference to the church's stance on gender issues? *Possibly.*
38. How? *If I was passionate about it I could.*

39 . N/A.

3.4.2c.

- **Male age 28.**

- **Affiliations and foundations : Rhema**

- **Qualifications. I.T. Mac. CCE. IBM.**

- **Experience: Worship Music Director.**

Questionnaire

1. Ministry Membership? *Approx 200-300.*

2. Ratio? *50/50*

3. Gender specific? *No.*

4. N/A

5. Why? *Worship involves men and women in leadership positions. God is neither male nor female and His trust for ministry is not based on gender.*

6. Age specific? *No.*

7. N/A

8. N/A

9. Is a person's gender is an issue in leadership in the church? *Yes, but shouldn't be.*

10. Why? *It is an extreme negative in the church*

11. N/A

12. Are there people in your leadership team that believe gender is an issue? *No.*

13. N/A

14. Why? *The senior pastor does not believe nor practice gender discrimination and through his example and teaching the leadership of this church hold to the same convictions.*

15. Have you experienced a situation whereby a decision has been made based on gender? *Yes.*

16. Details? *I have been in 'meetings behind closed doors' when only men have been invited to attend. (Previous church). I have however not confronted this hypocrisy.*

17. N/A

18. Does the Bible place restrictions on women in leadership? *No*

19. If yes, to which Scriptures are you referring? *There have been misinterpretations of some of Paul's letters (e.g. Corinthians and Timothy) that I believe have been taken out of context.*

20. Why? *I have never truly thought about it because it has never been an issue for me.*

21. N/A

22. Is there anyone in the Bible who has affected your viewpoint? *Yes.*

23. Who and how? *David showed a great appreciation for women, e.g. Abigail when her husband died.*

24. Anyone in history or the present affected your viewpoint? *Yes.*

25. Who and how? *Darlene Zschek, my mother, Joan of Arc, Marie Antoinette. They all stood for what they believed in and have made an impact on the world.*

26. Have you ever had your views disputed? *No.*

27. N/A

28. N/A

29. In some countries and cultures gender discrimination is prevalent to greater or lesser degrees. Do you believe this can be changed? *No. Not in our time.*

30. N/A

31. Why? *In Moslem countries, the religion is embedded into the culture and not open to interference from other cultures. But there are some who are called to make a difference.*

32. Is the secular world more accommodating than the church in its approach to gender issues? *Yes.*

33. Is this a positive trend? *Positive.*

34. Why? *The secular world needs a 'big kiss'. People become a product of their environment and as the younger generations are exposed to powerful women in leadership positions, their view- points will line up.*

35. N/A

36. Do you believe the church should be more or less 'liberal' on its standpoint on gender discrimination? *More. We should talk about it openly.*

37. Can you make a difference to the church's stance on gender issues? *Yes. We can be a force against the fundamentalists*

38. How? *Myself personally, I am 'punch drunk' and am standing removed from such issues, and observing from a distance.*

39 . N/A.

3.4.3c. Ages 30-40

- **Female age 32.**

- **Affiliations and foundations: Baptist**

- **Qualifications: BCom. (Psychology, Marketing and Advertising Management); and various courses through Baptist Theological College.**

- **Experience: Youth worker, Children's worker. Lecturer of youth teams, Counsellor, Events coordinator, Schools ministry.**

Questionnaire

1. Ministry Membership? *Approx 250*

2. Ratio? *50/50*

3. Gender specific? *No.*

4. N/A

5. Why? *I work with all children and the leaders and helpers are both male and female.*

6. Age specific? *Yes.*

7. Why? *The ministry is for children 3-13.*

8. N/A

9. Is a person's gender is an issue in leadership in the church? *It can be.*

10. Why? *Society has only recently, in the past few decades, allowed women into top positions of business. So, it is only recently that the church, as a whole has faced the question of women in leadership. I think there are a lot of men and women who are not ready for women in pastoral roles, and yet I know some women who have been*

clearly called by God to take specific leadership positions in churches. I believe things will change in the future as young people grow up with less gender prejudice.

11. N/A

12. Are there people in your leadership team that believe gender is an issue? *No.*

13. N/A

14. Why? *I am not certain of all the history, but I do know that those in leadership have faced this question and drawn the conclusion that the question is more about if someone is called to a position by God, not whether their gender allows it.*

15. Have you experienced a situation whereby a decision has been made based on gender? *Yes.*

16. Details? *I was not allowed to teach a youth bible study. The explanation was that they believed that women are not allowed to teach men, and since Jewish boys became men at age 13, I was not allowed to teach boys in high school.*

17. N/A

18. Does the Bible place restrictions on women in leadership? *No. There are no Scriptures that are applicable for today. I see them as culturally specific.*

19. N/A

20. N/A

21. Have you always believed this? *No.*

22. Is there anyone in the Bible who has affected your viewpoint? *No, it has been a study into culture.*

23. N/A

24. Anyone in history or the present affected your viewpoint? *Yes.*

25. Who and how? *Rev. Allen is a female pastor who has a powerful testimony of when she was called to pastor a church in Hillbrow. The church was made up predominantly of black males, and yet they believed she was called. She pastored there for many years. I heard her testimony while I still believed that women should not be pastors, but I couldn't fault her calling and so started to question my own beliefs.*

26. Have you ever had your views disputed? *Yes. At the church where I was told I couldn't teach the youth bible study I disagreed very strongly. However I was told that the viewpoint was not up for discussion. I either submitted to it or I resigned.*

27. Has this affected you positively or negatively? *Negatively.*

28. Has it affected you in your ministry? *I am still confident in what I know God has called me to do. However I am more aware of men who struggle to take leadership from a woman, especially since I am younger than them as well.*

29. In some countries and cultures gender discrimination is prevalent to greater or lesser degrees. Do you believe this can be changed? *Yes.*

30. How? *Countries which are seeing more and more women in secular leadership positions are changing slowly, accepting them and the roles they are filling. As children grow up not having the history of gender discrimination it will start to change more rapidly.*

31. *N/A*

32. Is the secular world more accommodating than the church in its approach to gender issues? *This is often the case.*

33. Is this a negative or positive trend? *Negative.*

34. *N/A*

35. Why? *The church is often behind the world when it comes to change. We have seen it in terms of postmodernism in recent years. People don't like change and they use the Bible to try to back up their theories instead of being open to what God is doing.*

36. Do you believe the church should be more or less 'liberal' on its standpoint on gender discrimination? *I don't know if it's about being more or less liberal as it is about being open to what God is doing, and being obedient to His leadership. God has often done unusual and controversial things from the bible to the present, including sending a Jewish Rabbi to teach a way that many religious people were strongly opposed to. Those who hold onto their views too strongly often miss out on what God is doing here and now.*

37. Can you make a difference to the church's stance on gender issues? *Yes.*

38. How? *I am already working in a church which accepts female leadership. However there are always individuals within the church who I come into contact with, who cannot deny the calling God has placed on my life. I am also involved in organising a leadership conference for youth pastors, predominantly male, and so will come into contact, indirectly, with a lot of churches from a wide variety of denominations.*

39 . N/A.

3.4.4a.

- Male 31.

- Affiliations and foundations: Baptist

- Qualifications: DTh.

- Experience: E-Learning New Testament. South African Theological Seminary.

Questionnaire

1. Ministry Membership? *Ministry presently 5 university students.*

2. Ratio? *Presently 60% male; 40% female*

3. Gender specific? *No.*

4. N/A

5. Why? *I work in general education.*

6. Age specific? *Yes and no*

7. Yes. Why? *Tertiary education.*

8. No. Why? *Students are accepted based on experience and there is no age limit.*

9. Is a person's gender an issue in leadership in the church? *It can be seen as a problem, but personally I don't have a problem.*

10. Why? *Some of the more traditional churches hold to a hierarchal theology based on their understanding of Scripture, the creeds of the church and tradition.*

11. N/A

12. Are there people in your leadership team that believe gender is an issue?

Yes

13. Why? *They believe that a man shouldn't counsel a woman and vice versa. There is also an assumption that a man should take responsibility for teaching a cell group and in other ministries in the church.*
14. Why? *I am not certain of all the history, but I do know that those in leadership have faced this question and drawn the conclusion that the question is more about if someone is called to a position by God, not whether their gender allows it.*
15. Have you experienced a situation whereby a decision has been made based on gender? *Yes.*
16. Details? *No women are ever considered for pastoral positions. The leadership team is all male and this policy is clearly stated.*
17. N/A
18. Does the Bible place restrictions on women in leadership? *No. Not when taken in context.*
19. N/A
20. N/A
21. Have you always believed this? *Yes.*
22. Is there anyone in the Bible who has affected your viewpoint? *No.*
23. N/A
24. Anyone in history or the present affected your viewpoint? *Yes.*
25. Who and how? *While St John of the Cross was sainted due to his strong leadership in the 16th century, there have been many women who have been exceptional in their leadership and influence and have not been awarded the same honour. Many have simply been forgotten in history.*
26. Have you ever had your views disputed? *Yes. Through the Baptist constitution that stipulates male leadership. I have also been debated on the subject of women elders and deacons and the dangers and realities of reading into the text.*
27. Has this affected you positively or negatively? *Neutral. I feel that it is important to respect another's point of view.*

28. Has it affected you in your ministry? *I have felt the need to submit to my church's constitution for now.*

29. In some countries and cultures gender discrimination is prevalent to greater or lesser degrees. Do you believe this can be changed? *Yes.*

30. How? *Through teaching a biblical perspective aligned with the teaching and practice of Jesus.*

31. *N/A*

32. Is the secular world more accommodating than the church in its approach to gender issues? *Yes.*

33. Is this a negative or positive trend? *Negative for the church.*

34. *N/A*

35. Why? *I think the church should exemplify a Christ-like attitude. It has taken the view of the world's leadership structure and enforced an authoritarian approach. Many in the church hold to male only authority structure worked out in their leadership model. Conversely, Biblical leadership is one of servant hood as Christ set it. It is a harder task to lead as a servant and be willing to die as Christ did for the church, than to maintain hierarchal control.*

36. Do you believe the church should be more or less 'liberal' on its standpoint on gender discrimination? *I believe the more traditional churches need to move.*

37. Can you make a difference to the church's stance on gender issues? *Yes. However since it has not affected myself or my family personally, it has not become an issue for me.*

38. *N/A*

39. Why not? *Presently I don't feel that I am called to reform women. This may change if it begins to affect me personally.*

3.4.4b.

- Male age 31.

- Affiliations and foundations: Calvinist.

- Qualifications: B.Sc; Cert. Theology.

- **Experience: Management of credit risk, Nedbank; Preaching and Research Team.**

Questionnaire

1. Ministry Membership? *1,500*
2. Ratio? *Presently 45% male; 55% female*
3. Gender specific? *No.*
4. N/A
5. Why? *My role is one of support to the eldership team. Male and females can be part of that support team as it is not a biblically governing role.*
6. Age specific? *Not explicitly, but we prefer culturally engaged and theologically astute people, which generally means mid 20's to early 40's.*
7. Yes. Why? *Our preaching and research team is seeking to support the elders in designing sermons and supporting media that is theologically rich, while also being sensitive to the fast changing cultural milieu in which we find ourselves. Members of the team must understand what is shaping the culture, both positively and negatively. On these criteria, people in their mid 20's to early 40's tend to match best, although people outside this bracket could be considered in the future.*
8. N/A.
9. Is a person's gender an issue in leadership in the church? *Yes.*
10. Why? *We believe that the explicit restrictions on male eldership found in the New Testament are grounded on the character of God and are tied back to the roles given at creation, and are therefore binding for all time. This in no way implies that men are superior in worth to women, only that God in His good design made men and women different, with differing but complementary roles.*
11. N/A
12. Are there people in your leadership team that believe gender is an issue?
Yes
13. Why? *A common theological conviction.*
14. N/A

15. Have you experienced a situation whereby a decision has been made based on gender? *No.*

16. *N/A*

17. Why? *Decisions will always be made for a variety of reasons; gender is merely one of them.*

18. Does the Bible place restrictions on women in leadership? *Yes.*

19. To which Scriptures are you referring? *1 Tim 2:11-14; 3:1-6; Tit 1:5-9; 1 Cor 14:33-55. Relating to God's differing roles for men and women in general (esp. Headship and submission) Gen 1:27; 21-24; 1 Cor 11:7-9.*

Particularly in the home: Eph 5:22-33; Col 3:18-19; Tit2:3-5; 1 Pet 3:1-7; 1 Cor 11:3.

Grounded in the triune God's character which reveals different roles and levels of authority amongst the persons of the Godhead: 1 Cor11:3; 15:28; John 4:34, 5:19,14:26; Mark 14:36.

And the fact that God is a God of order: 1 Cor 14:33,40.

Differing roles do not imply differing levels of dignity: Gal 3:28; 1 Pet 3:7.

20. Have you always believed this? *Yes*

21. *N/A.*

22. Is there anyone in the Bible who has affected your viewpoint? *Yes.*

23. Who and How? *Mainly Peter and Paul with the texts mentioned above. Examples like Deborah in the OT seem to be exceptions and are raised up by God in situations far from ideal where men have abdicated their responsibility to lead and to follow God. The book of Judges can hardly be regarded as prescriptive in general!*

24. Anyone in history or the present affected your viewpoint? *Yes.*

25. Who and how? *Wayne Grudem and John Piper. By writing persuasively on the issue in 'Recovering Biblical Manhood and Womanhood' . Also Mark Driscoll and C J Mahaney.*

26. Have you ever had your views disputed? *Yes, I have close friends who hold to Egalitarian views and as a married couple pastor a church in Durban. We have debated at length egalitarianism and Complementarianism.*

27. Has this affected you positively or negatively? *Positively, by forcing me to delve into the biblical texts, read supporting material and come to a well-supported position.*

28. Has it affected you in your ministry? *It has made me a strong proponent of the Complementarian position, equipping me to counsel, teach and preach on this topic.*

29. In some countries and cultures gender discrimination is prevalent to greater or lesser degrees. Do you believe this can be changed? *Yes.*

30. How? *By planting grace-filled, truth loving churches that seek to emulate the New Testament pattern and by teaching how following biblical patterns for gender roles can bring great freedom, rather than unfulfillment and disappointment. This needs to be both taught and modeled by godly men and women in the church. The abuses of chauvinism and apathy on the part of men and feminism on the part of women should be exposed and denounced.*

31. *N/A*

32. Is the secular world more accommodating than the church in its approach to gender issues? *Yes, but this is clearly changing rapidly.*

33. Is this a negative or positive trend? *Very Negative.*

34. *N/A.*

35. Why? *I believe that the trend in the church towards a more liberal view on gender issues is both harmful and concerning. Abuse of gender roles as prescribed in scripture is to be lamented, but the reaction to this has been one of imbalance to the other side, where scriptural distinctive between men and women are being denied. Adding to the concern is the exegetical gymnastics that are used to come to this view. This is a slippery slope. Since I believe that gender roles are tied to the nature of our Triune God Himself, I believe this puts the very nature of the gospel and character of God at risk*

36. Do you believe the church should be more or less 'liberal' on its standpoint on gender discrimination? *Assuming you mean by "discrimination", something along the lines of following scriptural distinctive between the genders, less liberal.*

Obviously any "discrimination" of an unfair or unbiblical sort should never be tolerated..

37. Can you make a difference to the church's stance on gender issues? *Yes.*

38. How? *By modeling and teaching the Complementarian viewpoint, where men lead in the home and church with humility, sacrifice and an attitude of servant hood and where women intelligently submit to their husbands and elders in a way that respects and honours both God and the men.*

39. N/A.

Women 40<

3.4.5a.

- Female age 46.

- Affiliations and foundations: Methodist

- Qualifications: Teaching. Dip.Ed

- Experience: Lead Pastor with Husband.

Questionnaire

1. Ministry Membership? *200.*

2. Ratio? *Presently 40% male; 60% female*

3. Gender specific? *No.*

4. N/A

5. Why? *Our church allows for individual release into ministry independent of gender.*

6. Age specific? *No.*

7. N/A

8. No. Why? *We aren't targeted towards a specific age demographic.*

9. Is a person's gender an issue in leadership in the church? *Yes.*

10. Why? *Even though our church holds to an Egalitarian view, there is still a disparity, an example of which is salaries.*

11. N/A

12. Are there people in your leadership team that believe gender is an issue? *Yes although not in our church specifically. In a previous church there were definite disqualifications based purely on gender.*
13. Why? *The basic level would be that it suits them, they are comfortable in their maleness. Secondly it could be experiential. They may have tried having women leaders and it hasn't worked. Thirdly it may be that they have always 'played that game', as it is something they have been taught.*
14. N/A
15. Have you experienced a situation whereby a decision has been made based on gender? *Yes.*
16. Details? *I was asked to leave the elders meeting. My experience and potential as a leader were not recognised.*
17. N/A
18. Does the Bible place restrictions on women in leadership? *No. But there are different interpretations.*
19. Which Scriptures? *1 Tim 3. Elders must be the husband of one wife. There are many of Paul's writings that can be interpreted as restricting women.*
20. N/A
21. Have you always believed this? *Yes.*
22. Is there anyone in the Bible who has affected your viewpoint? *Yes.*
23. Who and how? *Women have been part of the God story from the very beginning. Adam and Eve were the first parents.*
24. Anyone in history or the present affected your viewpoint? *Yes.*
25. Who and how? *My friend who leads a church with her husband and is an ordained minister in her own right faces challenges on an intellectual level. She is comfortable in her womanhood, and she lives out her convictions.*
26. Have you ever had your views disputed? *Yes. But I have attempted to understand their position. It has not shifted my convictions.*
27. Has this affected you positively or negatively? *Neutral. I chose to position it that way.*

28. Has it affected you in your ministry? *I have risen above it. I am secure in who I am as I was brought up in a very empowering family.*

29. In some countries and cultures gender discrimination is prevalent to greater or lesser degrees. Do you believe this can be changed? *No. Not without losing the culture.*

30. N/A

31. Why? *People need to be respected for their own beliefs, they may have chosen it. We shouldn't bulldoze them into western cultures.*

32. Is the secular world more accommodating than the church in its approach to gender issues? *Yes.*

33. Is this a negative or positive trend? *Negative for the church.*

34. Why? *Morality is an issue with liberation. There should be freedom with morality in the church. Often there is a danger of accepting the morality of the world.*

35. N/A

36. Do you believe the church should be more or less 'liberal' on its standpoint on gender discrimination? *More. A thinking generation cannot go backwards without losing their God-consciousness. Men and women need to be equipped to use all God has given them.*

37. Can you make a difference to the church's stance on gender issues? *Yes.*

38. How? *By living it.*

39. N/A.

3.4.5b.

- Female. Age 47

- Affiliations and foundations: New Covenant.

- Qualifications: Teaching Dip.Ed.

- Experience: Church leader with husband. Teacher.

Questionnaire

1. Ministry Membership? *500.*

2. Ratio? *Presently 50% male; 50% female*

3. Gender specific? *Yes.*
4. Why? *I relate better to females in the pastoral care. However I do teach both genders.*
5. N/A
6. Age specific? *No*
7. N/A
8. No. Why? *I will care for anyone who needs it.*
9. Is a person's gender an issue in leadership in the church? *Only in the area of eldership.*
10. Why? *We believe only men are called to a governing role.*
11. N/A
12. Are there people in your leadership team that believe gender is an issue?
Yes
13. Why? *It is biblically foundational.*
14. N/A
15. Have you experienced a situation whereby a decision has been made based on gender? *Yes.*
16. Details? *No women are ever considered for eldership positions. Leadership teams can be male and female however.*
17. N/A
18. Does the Bible place restrictions on women in leadership? *Yes.*
19. To what Scriptures are you referring? *1Tim 3. An elder must have one wife.*
20. Have you always believed this? *Yes. But I haven't always liked it!*
21. N/A
22. Is there anyone in the Bible who has affected your viewpoint? *Yes*
23. Who and How? *Paul. Question over Deborah. She was a prophet, judge and a warrior, maybe it was because no man was available, or maybe the Israelites did what they saw right in their own eyes and appointed a woman?*
24. Anyone in history or the present affected your viewpoint? *Yes.*

25. Who and how? *Dudley Daniel taught this view and he was a strong teacher with an apostolic gifting. Nola MacKellar is married to a leader in the church. She is happy, content and influential.*
26. Have you ever had your views disputed? *Yes. I rally in the church for God's order. I have wrestled with this and support my husband's strong convictions on this issue. I don't allow others to influence me.*
27. Has this affected you positively or negatively? *Positively. I am still here trying to do what God has called me to do. This is not an oppressive environment.*
28. Has it affected you in your ministry? *It hasn't. I have felt relief at not having to carry the load.*
29. In some countries and cultures gender discrimination is prevalent to greater or lesser degrees. Do you believe this can be changed? *Yes.*
30. How? *The gospel of Christ can change everything.*
31. N/A
32. Is the secular world more accommodating than the church in its approach to gender issues? *Yes.*
33. Is this a negative or positive trend? *Neutral. We live in the world but it doesn't mean we need to become like them. We live in a different kingdom.*
34. Why? *God puts people in positions, male or female positions. He is at work everywhere. It is as it is.*
35. N/A
36. Do you believe the church should be more or less 'liberal' on its standpoint on gender discrimination? *My conviction is in what the Word says. This debate has raged for years and can't be allowed to divide the church. There needs to be mutual respect.*
37. Can you make a difference to the church's stance on gender issues? *I choose not to*
38. N/A
39. Why not? *I don't feel oppressed so don't want to make a big issue. I am quite happy.*

3.4.5c.

- **Female. Age 54**

- **Affiliations and foundations: Methodist**

- **Qualifications: Public Relations Diploma., Financial Diploma, Theology Student.**

- **Experience: Marriage officer, counselling, Rescuing child prostitutes, motivational speaking, preaching, exorcism.**

Questionnaire

1. Ministry Membership? *Since 1992 more than 200,000 girls (under 16) rescued from prostitution*

2. Ratio? *Mostly women.*

3. Gender specific? *Yes.*

4. Why? *I run an organisation for girls.*

5. N/A

6. Age specific? *Yes.*

7. Why? *My ministry is for young girls coming out of prostitution.*

8. N/A

9. Is a person's gender an issue in leadership in the church? *Not for me.*

10. N/A

11. Why? *We are all created in the image of God. Genesis 1. Feminine attributes of God are vast. A man is more in his body, a woman is more in her mind – Intuition, sensitivity to needs of others, etc.*

12. Are there people in your leadership team that believe gender is an issue? *No.*

13. N/A

14. Why? *I deal with like-minded people whose main purpose is to love God and to fulfil His calling.*

15. Have you experienced a situation whereby a decision has been made based on gender? *No.*

16. N/A

17. Why? *I work in a male dominated environment, so it doesn't come up.*

18. Does the Bible place restrictions on women in leadership? *No.*

19. N/A

20. Have you always believed this? *Yes. Jesus never took a Shabbat meal without a woman being present. She had the responsibility to pray.*

21. N/A

22. Is there anyone in the Bible who has affected your viewpoint? *Yes*

23. Who and How? *Mary the mother of Jesus, she certainly was used by God! Jesus. He empowered everyone regardless of gender. He led by example and never expected anyone to do what He didn't do. We are to follow Him.*

24. Anyone in history or the present affected your viewpoint? *Yes.*

25. Who and how? *Maria Frahm. A beautiful example of being a 'Woy' in a male dominated environment. She is a professor and a dean at a Theological University, and despite severe health issues has risen to the top, with love.*

26. Have you ever had your views disputed? *Constantly. Particularly black men in leadership in the Anglican Church, and fundamentalist men in all churches.*

27. Has this affected you positively or negatively? *Positively.*

28. Has it affected you in your ministry? *It has shown me that my battle is to fight for Christ to be manifest in my life. My strength is not in the frailty of my feminine form but in relying on His power.*

29. In some countries and cultures gender discrimination is prevalent to greater or lesser degrees. Do you believe this can be changed? *Yes. With time.*

30. How? *Any (fundamentalist) community has their entire life based on belief and experience of their community. Should knowledge and reason be imparted, things may start to change.*

31. N/A

32. Is the secular world more accommodating than the church in its approach to gender issues? *No.*

33. Is this a negative or positive trend? *Negative.*

34. N/A

35. Why? *Even in 2010 a woman in leadership role is often questioned as to how she got there. E.g. Nose Week, November Issue. The CEO of the largest advertising company admitted that she slept her way to the top.*

36. Do you believe the church should be more or less 'liberal' on its standpoint on gender discrimination? *I would prefer to use the word 'accommodating'. More. Each person in leadership should qualify on their gifting, experience and qualifications, regardless of gender.*

37. Can you make a difference to the church's stance on gender issues? *Yes.*

38. How? *By continuing to be an example in a truly feminine, gentle, but firm way.*

39. N/A.

3.4.6a.

- Male age 50.

- Affiliations and foundations: Methodist

- Qualifications: BTh. Honours.

- Experience: Methodist Minister since 1986. Pastored 4 Congregations.

Questionnaire

1. Ministry Membership? *100 staff. 2,800 church members*

2. Ratio? *31% male 69% female*

3. Gender specific? *No.*

4. N/A

5. Why? *Nowhere does it state a senior minister must be male, however in this congregation it has always been the case.*

6. Age specific? *No.*

7. N/A

8. Why? *Age is not specified, but experience and gifting is what counts.*

9. Is a person's gender an issue in leadership in the church? *Not in our church.*

10. N/A

11. Why? *We have males and females across the levels of leadership.*

12. Are there people in your leadership team that believe gender is an issue?
Yes.

13. Why? *There are leaders in certain management positions that are predominantly black males. They prefer to be led by male leaders.*

14. N/A
15. Have you experienced a situation whereby a decision has been made based on gender? *Yes*
16. Why? *When certain positions are advertised the remuneration is lower for females.*
17. N/A
18. Does the Bible place restrictions on women in leadership? *No.*
19. N/A
20. Have you always believed this? *Always.*
21. N/A
22. Is there anyone in the Bible who has affected your viewpoint? *No.*
23. N/A
24. Anyone in history or the present affected your viewpoint? *Yes.*
25. Who and how? *Dr. Bilzikian's writings on the comparisons between Colossians and Ephesians on gender issues clarified this for me once and for all. ('Beyond Sex Roles: What the Bible Says About a Woman's Place in the Church and Family.')*
26. Have you ever had your views disputed? *Yes. In Theological debates and in male dominated societies. It is their own insecurities that have produced a need for male authoritarian roles in church, society and culture.*
27. Has this affected you positively or negatively? *Positively. It has helped me be clear on my perspective.*
28. Has it affected you in your ministry? *I find myself supporting females more often in order to balance the equation.*
29. In some countries and cultures gender discrimination is prevalent to greater or lesser degrees. Do you believe this can be changed? *Yes.*
30. How? *Awareness and education. It is a slow transformation process but can be worked on consistently and systematically. The more men and women are engaged with and not threatened the more open they will be to change.*
31. N/A

32. Is the secular world more accommodating than the church in its approach to gender issues? *Yes.*

33. Is this a negative or positive trend? *A slow but positive trend.*

34. Why? *We are in better places today than even a few years ago. Society changes assist most times to adjust more easily.*

35. N/A

36. Do you believe the church should be more or less 'liberal' on its standpoint on gender discrimination? *The church needs to walk faithful to God and open to the Spirit and so not just buy into the latest feminist fad or trend. In most areas liberal approaches bring life, but not all. In fact some have brought death to babies and families when not done with deep self-awareness and communication.*

37. Can you make a difference to the church's stance on gender issues? *Yes.*

38. How? *Teaching and leading by example.*

39. N/A.

3.4.6b.

- **Male age 61**

- **Affiliations and foundations: Assemblies of God.**

- **Qualifications: Doctorate theology**

- **Experience: 20 years in banking. Pastor. Lead Elder. Church Leader.**

Preaching. Teaching.

Questionnaire

1. Ministry Membership? *670*

2. Ratio? *220 male; 450 female.*

3. Gender specific? *As a pastor no, as lead elder yes.*

4. Why? *Because I believe that although a woman may pastor which is ministry, she may not serve as an elder.*

5. N/A

6. Age specific? *Yes.*

7. Why? *Eldership is age specific in that maturity and wisdom is a requisite. Pastoring is not age specific providing it is appropriate.*

8. N/A

9. Is a person's gender an issue in leadership in the church? *No*

10. N/A

11. Why? *Leadership is not an issue. Leadership is a ministry and is therefore not gender specific. Elders lead but not all leaders are elders. Eldership is gender specific.*

12. Are there people in your leadership team that believe gender is an issue?
Yes.

13. N/A

14. *Only in Eldership*

15. Have you experienced a situation whereby a decision at leadership level has been made based on gender? *Yes, by omission.*

16. Why? *We do not consider women for inclusion in the eldership team therefore no decision at this level would be gender inclusive.*

17. N/A

18. Does the Bible place restrictions on women in leadership? *No. But it does limit Eldership to men and all setting of doctrine.*

19. To which Scriptures are you referring? *Jesus appointed only males as His 12 disciples.*

All reference in the Old Testament to elders is male.

Headship hierarchy 1Cor. 11:3. First God, then Jesus, then man, then woman.

Headship in the home. Ephesians 5:22-23.

1 Timothy 2:12-14. Authority, primacy .

1 Timothy 3:1-7. No mention of a woman being an elder.

20. Have you always believed this? *Yes.*

21. N/A

22. Is there anyone in the Bible who has affected your viewpoint? *No.*

23. N/A

24. Anyone in history or the present affected your viewpoint? *No.*

25. N/A

26. Have you ever had your views disputed? *Yes, at mentoring classes and by individuals in leadership.*

27. Has this affected you positively or negatively? *Neither.*

28. Has it affected you in your ministry? *It has served to strengthen my understanding and to verify my views. It has also served to increase my sensitivity to all needs and views of others.*

29. In some countries and cultures gender discrimination is prevalent to greater or lesser degrees. Do you believe this can be changed? *Yes.*

30. How? *By holding all people to a responsible interpretation of scripture.*

31. N/A

32. Is the secular world more accommodating than the church in its approach to gender issues? *No. Society has a wrong appreciation of 'liberalism'.*

33. Is this a negative or positive trend? *Neither.*

34. N/A

35. N/A

36. Do you believe the church should be more or less 'liberal' on its standpoint on gender discrimination? *Not liberal or discriminatory but biblical.*

37. Can you make a difference to the church's stance on gender issues? *Yes.*

38. How? *By teaching and writing.*

39. N/A.

3.4.6c.

- Male age 54.

- Affiliations and foundations: Assemblies of God.

- Qualifications: B. Com. Honours.

- Experience: Former deacon.

Questionnaire

1. Ministry Membership? *1400*

2. Ratio? *50% male 50% female*

3. Gender specific? *No.*

4. N/A

5. Why? *Gender in the church is not important.*
6. Age specific? *No.*
7. N/A
8. Why? *All ages are catered for generally by the deacons.*
9. Is a person's gender an issue in leadership in the church? *Yes.*
10. Why? *The Bible prescribes gender specifics.*
11. N/A
12. Are there people in your leadership team that believe gender is an issue? *No.*
13. N/A
14. Why? *They do not believe the bible prescribes gender for leadership.*
15. Have you experienced a situation whereby a decision at leadership level has been made based on gender? *No.*
16. Why? *We do not consider women for inclusion in the eldership team therefore no decision at this level would be gender inclusive.*
17. N/A
18. Does the Bible place restrictions on women in leadership? *Yes.*
19. To which Scriptures are you referring? *Old Testament and New Testament. Levitical priesthood, Selection of apostles, Selection of leaders in church history.*
20. Have you always believed this? *Yes.*
21. N/A
22. Is there anyone in the Bible who has affected your viewpoint? *Yes*
23. Who and how? *Paul. He expressly forbade women from having authority over a man. He said women are to keep silent in the church and learn quietly from their husbands at home.*
24. Anyone in history or the present affected your viewpoint? *Yes.*
25. Who and how? *There has been a general avoidance by ministry leaders to confront these issues. They made their case known by omission. Their doctrines may reflect a biblical stand, but in practice they don't follow it. Also the emergence of women leaders, Joyce Meyer for example, who has found acceptance in the church, when teaching females and males. When she comes on the television I switch it off, as she is out of line.*

26. Have you ever had your views disputed? *Yes. I have faced a strong negative reaction from women 'elders' (leaders) in my church.*
27. Has this affected you positively or negatively? *Negatively.*
28. Has it affected you in your ministry? *Yes. I have resigned my position and have thereby given up fulfilling the duties God gave me to do.*
29. In some countries and cultures gender discrimination is prevalent to greater or lesser degrees. Do you believe this can be changed? *Yes.*
30. How? *Teaching and information.*
31. N/A
32. Is the secular world more accommodating than the church in its approach to gender issues? *Yes*
33. Is this a negative or positive trend? *Negative.*
34. N/A
35. Why? *The secular society and its practices are infiltrating the church.*
36. Do you believe the church should be more or less 'liberal' on its standpoint on gender discrimination? *If you mean 'discrimination' as prejudice, the church should take a stand against it. But if you mean more accepting of the worlds ways, less.*
37. Can you make a difference to the church's stance on gender issues? *Yes.*
38. How? *I should reengage in Leadership issues rather than giving up.*
39. N/A.

3.4.6d.

- **Male age 55.**
- **Affiliations and foundations: Brethren**
- **Qualifications: Pastoral counselling.**
- **Experience: Pastor and family counselling**

Questionnaire

1. Ministry Membership? *1000*
2. Ratio? *30% male 70% female*
3. Gender specific? *No.*

4. N/A
5. Why? *My ministry is to reach out to families but circumstantially more women come for counselling.*
6. Age specific? *Yes*
7. Why? *I am not qualified to counsel children., but able to counsel anyone from teenagers up.*
8. N/A.
9. Is a person's gender an issue in leadership in the church? *Yes. But not for me personally.*
10. Why? *There are many in our church who believe that there are certain roles and positions that are gender specific. I believe we are all created equal and can be involved at every level of leadership.*
11. N/A
12. Are there people in your leadership team that believe gender is an issue?
Yes.
13. Why? *There are women leaders here but they are not allowed to teach publicly or to preach from the pulpit. Interestingly though a very gifted woman teacher was given permission to preach publicly from the pulpit on a Wednesday night because it was decided that Wednesday was not officially a church day.*
14. N/A
15. Have you experienced a situation whereby a decision at leadership level has been made based on gender? *Yes*
16. Why? *A very gifted woman was overlooked for a leadership role based on the fact that she was a woman. I was in that meeting and was left very sad.*
17. N/A
18. Does the Bible place restrictions on women in leadership? *It depends on how it is translated.*
19. To which Scriptures are you referring? *The 'difficult' passages. 1 Tim 2; 1 Cor 11, Titus, Ephesians, etc.*
20. Have you always believed this? *No. I have come from Brethren roots that are extremely hierarchal and apply the scriptures literally and dogmatically. I have*

grown through seeing women who are undoubtedly called and gifted by God who have been restricted from using those gifts.

21. N/A

22. Is there anyone in the Bible who has affected your viewpoint? *Yes*

23. Who and how? *Paul. In a time and culture where legalism was powerfully entrenched, he began the process in the church of enabling and releasing women into their gifting. Eg. Priscilla, Chloe, Phoebe, Lydia and others. He was following in the footsteps of Jesus*

24. Anyone in history or the present affected your viewpoint? *No.*

25. N/A

26. Have you ever had your views disputed? *Yes. I was challenged by others in the leadership for occasionally supporting divorce in very abusive marriages. I made my position clear that women, especially those who are being abused need to be empowered. They stood by their convictions that a woman must always submit to their husbands.*

27. Has this affected you positively or negatively? *Positively*

28. Has it affected you in your ministry? *Yes. I have resigned my position in the church (though I still offer counselling twice a week under my own ministry). I'm running my own business of family counselling.*

29. In some countries and cultures gender discrimination is prevalent to greater or lesser degrees. Do you believe this can be changed? *Yes. But only by the Holy Spirit.*

30. How? *The Holy Spirit can transform lives and communities.*

31. N/A

32. Is the secular world more accommodating than the church in its approach to gender issues? *Yes*

33. Is this a negative or positive trend? *Positive.*

34. Why? *We can learn from the world, but with caution.*

35. N/A

36. Do you believe the church should be more or less 'liberal' on its standpoint on gender discrimination? *The church needs to be more bold in terms of understanding the Truth of God's Word, despite their safety zones.*

37. Can you make a difference to the church's stance on gender issues? *No. Only the Holy Spirit.*

38. N/A

39. Why? *I cannot make a change in this church. The men here are very happy.*

3.11 Observations.

3.11 Sub groups ages 20-30.

3.11.1. Women

I have deduced that both of the women participants have presented an Egalitarian viewpoint. Their responses reveal that although they have not personally experienced a serious challenge to their convictions, they have become aware that there seems to be a disparity between Jesus' example and certain convictions and practices within their church. They are optimistic that the younger generations seem to be more open to equal roles and opportunities for women. I would posit that presently these women are moving into an evangelical feminist approach to this debate. However, should either of them experience a personal challenge to their convictions, overlaps into reactionary feminism, both positive and negative, may occur.

3.11.2 Men.

The three men representing the 20-30 age groups hold distinctly differing views. It has been interesting to note that respondent 3.2a has been directly influenced by the Complementarian creeds, and the practices of his church. The teaching of the elders has firmly established this young man's convictions that women cannot hold the office of an elder. In addition he has been led to believe that a

word '*elderos*' is the Greek for elder and that it specifies the male gender of the role. However, according to my research the Greek word is '*pre`sbute`rion*' and has a neutral gender. (Strong J. Exhaustive Concordance of the Bible.).

Unfortunately he is presently unwilling to be open to a differing opinion. I am hopeful that due to his youth he may move to a position of exploration that will reflect his own considered convictions.

Respondent 3.2.b has revealed a willingness to enter into a deeper exploration and consideration of opinions that differ from his own. He has been honest about his deliberations and concluded that presently he is unsure of his convictions.

The responses of participant 3.2.c revealed an Egalitarian view point. While he has always adhered to his convictions, he has expressed a deep concern for the hypocrisies he has witnessed in the church. These concerns have caused a reactionary response overlapping his evangelical feminist convictions in calling for a forceful resistance against the 'fundamentalists' who hold a discriminatory stand against women in leadership. Presently however he has expressed an unwillingness to get involved due to a previous hurt.

3.11.Subgroup ages 30-40.

3.11.3 Women.

Participant 3.4.3a, while being the only female sample from this age group, her answers provided ample insight particularly noteworthy for this research. She furnished responses to her personal experiences that displayed a large measure of maturity. She previously held Complementarian convictions that were challenged when she witnessed the undeniable calling and gifting of a powerful woman pastor. It was her willingness to explore her own convictions that prepared her to stand when her altered viewpoints were seriously disputed. Her negative experience of focalized misogyny from the leaders in her previous

church served both to solidify her Egalitarian views and motivate her into further cultural and biblical study. Additionally there has been a new awareness of the existence of prejudice against women, which she has accepted without bitterness.

It is my opinion that her views reveal a position of evangelical feminism solidified by her positive reaction to conflicting convictions manifest in her exposure to evidence of a strong female pastor and subsequent challenges to these new convictions. Being such I would suggest a positive overlap between reactionary and evangelical feminism.

3.11.4 Men.

Participant 3.4.4a presented an entirely Egalitarian viewpoint, whilst serving in a church that holds to a Complementarian theology. It seems that because he has not experienced personally an offence to his convictions, he has remained completely objective. Should this change, however, he had admitted to the possibility of a reactionary response. Simultaneously he has made clear a degree of irritation over what he sees as the misinterpretation of scripture.

Respondent 3.4.4b is a very strong proponent of Complementarianism, as he has clearly stated. His vehement defense of his position I find confounding and caused me to speculate as to his motivation. I have discovered through this research a commonly held misconception as to the meaning of 'feminism' in the context of this discussion. As posited in diagram 1 on page 53 the overlaps and presuppositions of many of the respondents from the Complementarian camp, group all positions holding to the Egalitarian / feminism camp, together under a banner of 'secular feminism'. As previously covered, it is often within the secular that feminism denotes a disregard for gender differences. This is not the case with the evangelical feminism that forms part of the Egalitarian view.

3.1.5 Sub group ages 40<

3.1.5.1 Women.

Respondent 3.4.5a holds to an Egalitarian position defined by her considered evangelical convictions. While her background suggested no issues around gender roles in church, her experience of being asked to leave the room at an elders meeting because she was a woman, caused her to face the existence of gender discrimination. While expressing reservations over attending immoral standards that often come with a more liberal approach, she noted the need for accommodation towards those who hold an opposing view.

I have been encouraged to note that in choosing to rise above challenges to her leadership at every level, an opportunity to show grace and gentleness presents itself. Rather than react negatively she shows a willingness to allow her life and ministry to affirm her calling. It has been my observation that through godly submission to love and grace a leader is qualified to bring some measure of resolution to this debate.

Participant 3.4.5b expressed a Complementarian view point from a position of opportunity for women in leadership except in the position of eldership. In our interview I recognised a strong conviction held deeply as the result of her church dogma and the various challenges she has faced in this area. While expressing some level of frustration over her submission to this dogma, she felt strongly that her conviction is placed firmly in scripture. My concern would be that as an experienced, educated, capable leader, her convictions could possibly restrict her potential in ministry.

The responses from participant 3.4.5c signify a strong and influential woman as affirmed by the sheer numbers of lives that have been impacted through her ministry. Despite her capabilities she has determined to embrace her femininity and rely on God for her strength. Having been constantly challenged in the business world and through her ministry, her Egalitarian convictions have remained stable. It has been my summation that her influence is contingent upon God's affirmation of her gifting and calling.

3.11.5.2. Men.

Respondent 3.4.6a indicated an Egalitarian view of women in leadership positions. As the senior pastor of a large church he has been compelled to seek deeper understanding of those passages of the Bible that would seem to restrict women's roles. He is fully persuaded that such passages referred to specific cultural and historical contexts, and therefore do not apply today.

The responses from 3.4.6b were very informative and brought greater clarity of the Complementarian position. His educated and experienced deductions of the biblical constraints placed on women's roles were well supported by the quoted scriptures. However, he supports much of his theology on the 'so-called' order in the God-Head, This theology will be discussed in chapter 4. While he views the constraints upon women are solely in the areas of governance in eldership, he prescribes no such limits on general leadership positions. The disputes with other leaders in the church have served to consolidate his position while fostering sensitivity towards the views of others. This research has revealed an inordinate degree of opposition from those in the Complementarian camp towards those who hold an Egalitarian view. In contrast this respondent has reflected an attitude that is distinctive from many of his contemporaries. This I find moderately encouraging.

Participant 3.4.6c responded in an aggressive, confrontational manner and posed a serious challenge to my own objectivity. However, such being the case I have sought to bring his responses to the questions uninfluenced by my own bias. His views supported the Traditionalist position of hierarchy in the home, church and society, and he posited the suggestion that a woman should 'know her place'. Unfortunately his view of those who held an Egalitarian position was one of secular feminism that sought to deny gender differences. This he backed up with unspecified scripture references.

Respondent 3.4.6d provided an Egalitarian view point that he admitted was a swing away from his previously held Traditionalist position. With the influences of his Brethren background he had held to the teaching of the church creeds of biblical hierarchy within the genders. It has been his role as a counselling pastor in his local church that has forced him to explore his own convictions towards gender roles. Having counselled substantial numbers of women who have been held captive in abusive marriages he questioned the biblical intention of the concept of submission. After witnessing countless abuses of this concept by the leaders of his church, he began his own separate counselling ministry. The contention over gender roles within leadership at this church, served to empower him to be sure of what he believed. He posited that change within the church generally would only be accomplished by the working of the Holy Spirit as he believed that the men who held the authority were comfortable in their positions and were thus unwilling to upset the status quo.

3.1.2. Conclusions.

The results of this empirical research clearly reveal the influence the Egalitarian and the Complementarian viewpoints have had on church practice. The doctrines and creeds held by the various churches have greatly impacted the convictions of the various leaders within the denominations and affiliations. This has been made apparent by the evidence of church practices.

Generally I have discovered that churches having their roots in the Methodist and Anglican traditions largely hold to an Egalitarian position, while those that have their roots in the New Covenant, Assemblies of God and Baptist, churches tend towards a Complementarian view – although this is changing as evidenced in women leaders within these denominations.

The doctrine and practice of leaders from the Calvinist and Brethren traditions follow a more traditionalist hierarchal system as relating to gender. And it is

within this group that change in all probability would constitute long term, individual intervention of the Holy Spirit.

The many crossovers and assumptions held on either side have caused, in my opinion, distrust and misunderstanding. Pain and division resulting from fierce dogmatism have worked to widen the chasm between the two camps. Those within the Egalitarian camp have often become reactive to perceived chauvinism and misogyny from those opposed to their view, resulting in further animosity and denial of gender differences. Conversely, those within the Complementarian camp have frequently delineated Egalitarian dogma classifying secular, reactive and evangelical feminism as equally subversive.

I have found it particularly noteworthy that the more vitriolic opinions from within the Complementarian camp have been expressed by men, whilst the women have often compliantly accepted the doctrines of their church affiliation. For want of an alternative conclusion, I would posit the suggestion that the male leaders who expressed such virulent reactions could possibly be responding to their own insecurity and fear. Conversely the views expressed by participants within the Egalitarian camp both male and female have displayed more frustration and hurt over experienced and witnessed chauvinism and misogyny.

The participants from the 20-30 age sub-groups were less experienced in the issues surrounding gender discrimination. As it had not affected them personally they were largely devoid of felt emotional conviction. Their optimism for greater understanding between the two camps was virtually untarnished, and therefore supported their willingness to positively engage in the debate.

I am fully persuaded that the division created by this fierce debate has caused deep pain and misunderstanding. The resulting disempowerment of those individuals who feel called by God to ministry leadership has led to a tragic loss to the body of Christ.

I believe conclusively that through the evidence from the gathered data, a need for a positive contribution to the debate is warranted. Thus my intention is to develop a constructive strategy for change.

CHAPTER 4.

An exegesis of a selection of key words and concepts found in 1 Corinthians 11: 3-16 and 1 Timothy 2:8-14 that pertain to the controversy surrounding women's role in church leadership.

4.1 Introduction

Chapter 4 will present an exegesis of some key words and concepts that pertain to much of the controversy surrounding the role of women in church leadership positions. An understanding of the meaning of 'Head' and 'Glory of' found in 1 Corinthians 11:3-16 and 'Learn in Submission', 'Authority' and 'The Order of Creation' in 1 Timothy 2:8-14, will be explored.

I will endeavour to present both the Egalitarian and Complementarian views in order to honour the steadfast belief of sincere Christians, in addition to the intellect and integrity of many respected theologians. Within my study I seek to establish some clarity within the maze of scriptural induction, history, paganism and other religious philosophies and how they have influenced our understanding of Biblical intention.

Drawing upon my research in establishing an overview of a cross section of churches with a demographic of affluent churches, and a study of misogynist practices across history, culture and religion, I will seek to gain some clarity into God's intention and purpose for women called and gifted to function in these positions..

The method of hermeneutics I will use for this investigation will be explained as I undertake this study.

4.2. Hermeneutics.

4.2.1 Definitions:

- Hermeneutics is the craft of interpreting a work of literature in order to establish its ruling principles. In the case of this study the discussed Bible passages will be the focus of the hermeneutics.
- Exegesis is the process of leading out and fixing the meaning.
- Axioms of Hermeneutics are the fundamental principles which may be very briefly expressed but which contain only the most primary and central truths of the science. “ (Lockhart C. Quoted in Taylor G 1995: 18).

4.3. Methods of Interpretation.

Various methods of interpretation exist in seeking an understanding of scripture. The following list briefly describes various faulty methods used when attempting to exegete a text.

- The mystical method.
 - This method gives prominence to certain ‘holy men’, those who have received divine revelation hidden from the masses.
- The allegorical method.
 - This method focuses on a search for hidden meanings behind scripture.
- The superstitious method.
 - This places subjective emotion over reasoning.
- The hierarchal method.
 - The decrees of the church are final. This method places the tradition of the church or the dogma of the leader over revealed or experienced truth.
- The dogmatic method.
 - This is evidenced when a church leader/s desires to rule spiritual matters.
- The apologetic method.
 - Constitutes the absolute perfection of all statements of the Bible no matter who is speaking, and ignoring the context. This method stresses the need to quote all passages with equal weight even if it is a quotation from another source.

What follows is an outline for the method of hermeneutics I will be using in my research to draw out the meaning of the relevant words and concepts of these controversial scriptures.

Firstly and most importantly I constantly determine the guidance of the Holy Spirit and seek to silent the voice of my own bias, a task that is often arduous.

4.4 The role of the Holy Spirit.

John 16:13-15

“But when he, the Spirit of truth, comes, he will guide you into all the truth. He will not speak on his own; he will speak only what he hears, and he will tell you what is yet to come. He will glorify me because it is from me that he will receive what he will make known to you. All that belongs to the Father is mine. That is why I said the Spirit will receive from me what he will make known to you.” (TNIV)

2 Timothy 3:16-17

“All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, so that all God’s people may be thoroughly equipped for every good work.” (TNIV)

Hebrews 4:12

“For the word of God is alive and active. Sharper than any double-edged sword, it penetrates even to dividing soul and spirit, joints and marrow; it judges the thoughts and attitudes of the heart”. (TNIV)

We can garner from these scriptures that without the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, the Word of God will remain dead, and the Bible would be just another interesting book of antiquity.

Donald G. Bloesch in his book '*Holy Scripture: Revelation, Inspiration and Interpretation*' posits:

"We are covenantal partners with the Holy Spirit in the interpretation of the text. In Acts 8 we witness the missionary Philip interpreting the Old Testament to the Ethiopian eunuch. Without an interpreter Isaiah 53 would probably have remained a closed chapter to the Ethiopian. One should note that Philip was expounding the scripture in light of the scripture's own criterion – the gospel of grace revealed in Jesus Christ. The Bible can only be interpreted in its own light. Philip was the instrument. But the Spirit of God, the divine author of scripture, was the interpreter. Scripture is the norm, but this norm must be illumined by the Spirit as we seek to assess the significance of the text for our lives in the here and now."

(Bloesch D G.1994:173 quoted in SATS Hermeneutics reader.)

My prayer for the undertaking of interpretation of 1 Corinthians 11:3-16 and 1 Timothy 2: 8-14, is that I will be Spirit-led. Although I intend to use a certain method of interpretation, my intention is that it will be infused with the Holy Spirit's guidance.

4.5. The Historical / Cultural / Grammatical Method.

The method I will be using in exegesis of the controversial words and principles found in 1Corinthians 11:3-16 and 1Timothy 2:8-14, will be the Historical/ Cultural / Grammatical Method. This method utilises the principle of context when approaching a passage of scripture. The elements of this method encompass a set of rules in its approach to hermeneutics. In explanation I have divided up the term into its three components:

4.5.1 Historical

A degree of knowledge of history informs an understanding of the historical context and is imperative when seeking an accurate interpretation of a portion of

scripture. The Bible holds much historical data, the need therefore to research and understand such information is imperative. Our knowledge of certain events relate to our understanding the Bible's place in history is key to honest interpretation. The recovery of The Dead Sea Scrolls for example, contributed extensively to our knowledge of the historic context of the Biblical narrative. Likewise, the documented evidence of a great flood found in other extant writings discovered in other parts of the world, adds validity to the Genesis account. (Atrahsis Epic Akkadian , 2nd millennium B.C depicts creation and early human history including the flood.) (NIV Study Bible)

Within this thesis the role of misogynist attitudes and practices throughout history will be the main focus of the historical contexts.

4.5.2 Cultural.

An investigation into the cultural context a portion of scripture was written is imperative. In order to ascertain the meaning of a text, one would need to understand the intentions of the writer, and how the recipients would have interpreted what was said. Within the cultural context one needs to take into consideration certain religious, civic and political constraints and then to define the occasion and purpose for which a letter was written. This investigation requires careful and diligent research encompassing both the historical and grammatical disciplines.

4. 5.3 Grammatical.

This term indicates the importance of following the grammatical rules of literature. It is therefore expected to use grammatical tools such as similes, metaphors, allegory, parables, etc. When interpreting the Bible, standard grammatical tools must be recognized, and used in the context of its normal usage at the time. Also included here is the ability to use the original languages to determine the true sense of a word.

Contextual interpretation necessitates an understanding of the Bible as a whole. Each passage of scripture is a part of a greater context. Its place in the chapter, the preceding and following passages, its placing in the book, and the cross references to similar principles and truths. These are all a part of ascertaining its meaning as the word of God.

Conjunctively although the bible is comprised of 66 books, it incorporates the wholeness of God's word assimilating perfectly with His purposes, His will and His character. The need for scripture and principle comparisons is a vital tool especially when interpreting so-called 'difficult passages'. The rule here is to allow scripture to interpret scripture. If an obscure passage is to be understood, one should always compare it to clear scriptures dealing with the same situation or principle. This rule is premised on the fact that God does not contradict Himself.

In the following discussion the principles for understanding the words in a text will be outlined. (I have drawn extensively from the Gene Taylor's excellent article: '*A Practical Approach to Understanding Scripture*').

According to Clinton Lockhart in his book, '*Principles of Interpretation*', one can reach an understanding of the importance of determining a words particular usage within a text.

"As language is a reliable means of communication, the usage of a word or sentence determines the meaning of an impartation of thought. In handling words one must consider the variables that influence its meaning". (Lockhart C. Quoted in Taylor G 1995: 19).

Taylor explains the use of language as follows:

- A word receives its first meaning.
- A word may have its meaning changed.
- A word may receive many meanings.
- A word may become obsolete.

- The extent of a word's usage can also affect its meaning, whenever it is spoken, or in a distinct dialect

In order to understand a word within its specific context a certain process is involved. It is this process of contextualization that is needed to determine its application.

Briefly, when the hermeneutic utilises a contextual method there is a six stage process of contextualisation.

This can be shown in the following:

Diagram 4.1.

What it Meant

Surface Meaning.
(Exegesis)



Deep Structure Principle.
(Biblical Theology)



Original Situation
(Background)

What it Means

Specific Contextualisation.
(What is it saying to me?)



General Contextualisation.
(What is it saying theologically?)



Parallel Situation
(How can this be applied?)



(Taylor G 1995: 19- 21)

4.5. A Contextual Exposition.

In order to formulate such a contextualized exegesis, I have presented the background to the letters and have then sought to present each word or concept within its historical, cultural and grammatical contexts. Within this process, I have discussed both the Egalitarian and Complementarian viewpoints and conclusions theologically considering both general and specific contextualization.

4.5.1. Theology.

The definition of the term ‘theology’, indicates a particular system or school of religious beliefs and teachings. In this instance, the theology of both the Complementarian and Egalitarian interpretations as they are taught will be discussed according to their understanding of our texts.

4.5.2. General Contextualization.

In the practical application of both the Complementarian and Egalitarian theologies and the resultant doctrines, I have placed them within the general context of church practice. Within this context, the implications can be viewed in their out workings and general influence upon individual lives that constitute the church.

4.5.3. Specific Contextualization.

The personal implications of both theologies are discussed under this heading. My own understanding of my role in church leadership and how various church doctrine, has and will have serious implications in my desire to serve God to my fullest potential.

We will begin our discussion of the focus texts.

4.6. 1 Corinthians. 11:3-16.

But I want you to realize that the head of every man is Christ, and the head of the woman is man, and the head of Christ is God. Every man who prays or prophesies with his head covered dishonours his head. But every woman who prays or prophesies with her head uncovered dishonours her head—it is the same as having her head shaved. For if a woman does not cover her head, she might as well have her hair cut off; but if it is a disgrace for a woman to have her hair cut off or her head shaved, then she should cover her head. (Words in bold mine.)

Grammatically the Greek word for head is '*kephale*'. According to Linda Belleville, (*Two Views on Women in Ministry*) Paul uses the word '*kephale*' to mean source. She explains; Paul's four references to the word '*kephale*' refer to Christ's relationship with the church. His meaning is biological as the church is a living organism that draws its sustenance from Christ. Christ is saviour and head of the church. The church is the body and it is Christ who nurtures and cares for her. '*Kephale*' as source goes back to the creation account. Man was the source of the woman as she was taken out of his side. They became one flesh.

So too the church is one flesh with Christ. (Belleville L. 2001. Ed. Beck J and Blomberg L.)

Ephesians 5:30-32 "...for we are members of his body. "For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, and the two will become one flesh." This is a profound mystery—but I am talking about Christ and the church." (TNIV)

4.6.1 The Author.

The apostle Paul is acknowledged as the author of the first letter addressed to the church at Corinth and this can be ascertained by the letter itself, (1:1-2; 16:21). The early Church fathers also recognised Paul as the author. Clement of Rome attested to the fact as early as A.D 90. (NIV Study Bible: 1773).

4.6.2. Background and Occasion of the Letter.

In Paul's first letter to the church in Corinth, he addresses many of the abuses and excesses being practiced by the new believers. He had been informed about the many problems besieging the young church, and sought to bring correction.

Corinth was a thriving city and was a major centre of commerce and politics, forming the crossroads for travellers and traders. The culture at the time was characterised by Greek philosophy and placed a high value on wisdom. Due to the many travellers who passed through Corinth, great diversity in religious practices had ensued. At least twelve temples were situated in this great city, with one of the most infamous being the Temple of Aphrodite. Those who worshipped her practiced religious prostitution, making sexual immorality a feature of Corinth.

"So widely known did the immorality of Corinth become, that the Greek verb, 'to Corinthianize' came to mean 'to practice sexual immorality'. (NIV Study Bible:1773).

Some other Corinthian visitors had sought Paul requesting counsel on several issues surrounding the fledgling church. Such issues as divisions, immorality, court cases, abuse of the Lord's Supper, propriety in worship and false teaching concerning the resurrection, were brought to his attention.

The purpose of his letter was therefore to bring correction and urge for immediate and drastic action.

4.6.3 The Historical context.

Paul wrote this letter to the young church at a time in history that was steeped in the influence of the Greco Roman society. So enmeshed was it in Corinthian

society that in order to refrain from participating in the beliefs, rituals, and religions, the early Christians would have had to isolate themselves from society completely. While this may have served to unite this Christian 'sub culture' it was also the breeding ground for animosity and hatred. (NIV Study Bible:1773)

Since the time of the Greek poets and philosophers around the 8th century B.C, the ancient Greeks treated their women as on par with slaves and gentiles. Wives were under the authority of either the fathers or their husbands both traditionally and legally. There existed three classes of women. Wives lived out their lives in the domestic section of their homes, it was their responsibility to bear and care for children (preferably male). They were often treated little more than domestic slaves.

Aristotle was to have said, "Society would be completely disorganised if women were on an equality with their husbands, just as it would be if slaves were on an equality with their masters." (Gilly G. 1980)

Another class of women was the prostitutes, often associated with the pagan religions of the time. The goddess Aphrodite, around whose temple the prostitutes served, was the deity of 'love', and those who worshipped her were sexually and morally degenerate.

Thirdly there were the '*Hetarari*' women who served as companions and mistresses to the wealthy, well to do men. They were offered the privilege of receiving an education so as to be the intellectual equal to the men in order to provide pleasing conversation. They were however prohibited to marry.

In Roman society women were treated at a slightly higher status than the Greek women, however they remained the property of their fathers and husbands. By law a man could treat their women in any manner they chose which often resulted in harsh and cruel treatment, even death.

In the Jewish society that Jesus entered, the treatment of women had deteriorated since their status in the Old Testament. They were no longer permitted to learn. Rabbis were forbidden from speaking to a woman and thought it preferable to burn the Torah than to teach it to women. Every morning a

Pharisee would not get out of bed before he had thanked God that he was not a gentile, a slave or a woman! (Gilly G.1998).

Philo of Alexandria was a contemporary of Jesus and Paul. While Jewish and a fierce defender of Judaism, he was highly influential throughout early Christianity. His theology formed what is referred to as syncretism- one that fused and harmonized various belief systems, in this case, Judaism and Greek philosophy. He quoted the epic poets with frequency, and often alluded to passages in their works. He held that the highest perception of truth is possible only after an exhaustive study of the sciences. The influence of both Platonism and neo-Pythagorism formed his theology that saw a dualist contrast between the spiritual and the physical. (Philo. Wikipedia . accessed 12-1-11)

Jason Rust, in his article, *'Women in 1st Century Mediterranean Culture: A Comparison Between Philo of Alexandria and Paul of Tarsus'* posits:

Philo was deeply influenced by Greek culture, and above all by Greek philosophy. His greatest debt is to Plato, especially in the areas of theology and anthropology. He was diligent to make a careful reading of Plato's more important dialogues. (Rust J.2006)

Through Philo, the philosophies of Plato, and Aristotle and the influences of the ancient Greek play writes, radically affected the way the early church viewed and incorporated such thought into their interpretation of scripture.

It is my conviction that it was through the 'marriage' of Judaism, the Gospel of Jesus and Greek philosophy that seeds of contention were planted. In particular the lenses through which interpreters viewed the 'gender issue' in Paul's writings formed the theology that continues to divide the church.

4.6.4 Cultural Context.

Corinth, being on a main trade route was a major centre for foreigners and merchants. This could be one of the reasons Paul spent so much time and patience with the fledgling church. As a centre for commerce it provided routes to

other civilisations, and communities for the spread of the gospel. Most of the converts were gentiles, slaves and pagan worshipers. Being such it was also a melting pot for various philosophies, religious practices, temple worship, and cultures.

4.6.5. Grammatical Context.

In this text the meaning of the word 'head' has been debated over centuries. From my research I have seen that two views have predominated. There are those who state that the word refers to authority and those who posit that it means source. There exist other opinions however for the purpose of this document; I have restricted my investigation to these two views.

4.7. Exegesis of the word 'head' 1 Corinthians 11:3-6.

Complementarian Theology is a theology that supports equality in value, but a hierarchal order of gender roles.

Wayne Grudem, an original proponent of the Complementarian position (he originally coined the term) in his journal, *'The Meaning Of Kefale ("Head")': An Evaluation Of New Evidence, Real And Alleged'* states:

"Wherever one person is said to be the "head" of another person (or persons), the person who is called the "head" is always the one in authority (such as the general of an army, the Roman emperor, Christ, the heads of the tribes of Israel, David as head of the nations, etc.) Specifically, we cannot find any text where person A is called the "head" of person or persons B, and is not in a position of authority over that person or persons. So we find no evidence for your claim that 'head' can mean 'source without authority'. (Grudem W. 2001: 26).

Respected theologians in history have held to the traditional understanding of *kephale'* to mean authority and provide a base for recent Complementarian views.

Matthew Henry 1662-1714, an English minister and Bible commentator, in his commentary of 1 Cor. 11:3 explains his position.

“In the abundance of spiritual gifts bestowed on the Corinthians, some abuses had crept in; but as Christ did the will, and sought the honour of God, so the Christian should avow his subjection to Christ, doing his will and seeking his glory. We should, even in our dress and habit, avoid everything that may dishonour Christ. The woman was made subject to man, because she was made for his help and comfort. And she should do nothing, in Christian assemblies, which looked like a claim of being equal. She ought to have "power," that is, a veil, on her head, because of the angels. Their presence should keep Christians from all that is wrong while in the worship of God. Nevertheless, the man and the woman were made for one another. They were to be mutual comforts and blessings, not one a slave, and the other a tyrant. God has so settled matters, both in the kingdom of providence and that of grace, that the authority and subjection of each party should be for mutual help and benefit. It was the common usage of the churches, for women to appear in public assemblies, and join in public worship, veiled; and it was right that they should do so. The Christian religion sanctions national customs wherever these are not against the great principles of truth and holiness; affected singularities receive no countenance from anything in the Bible. (www.biblegateway.com *Matthew Henry's Complete Concordance of the Bible.*)

John Gill- (23 November 1697 – 14 October 1771) was an English Baptist pastor, biblical scholar, and theologian who held to a staunch Calvinistic soteriology.

In his exposition of the bible he states:

“And the head of the woman is the man, The man is first in order in being, was first formed, and the woman out of him, who was made for him, and not he for the woman, and therefore must be head and chief; as he is also with respect to his superior gifts and excellences, as strength of body, and endowments of mind,

whence the woman is called the weaker vessel; likewise with regard to pre-eminence or government, the man is the head; and as Christ is the head of the church, and the church is subject to him, so the husband is the head of the wife, and she is to be subject to him in everything natural, civil, and religious. Moreover, the man is the head of the woman to provide and care for her, to nourish and cherish her, and to protect and defend her against all insults and injuries”.

4.7.1. Theology.

A popular opinion held by many Egalitarian theologians is that the word ‘head’ connotes a cultural, historical context. As Paul’s letter was written for the purpose of addressing problems in the Corinthian churches, these problems were situational. Being a place of pagan idolatry and sexual impurity, it has been suggested that women converts could have been bringing their cultural practices into the Christian assemblies. A reminder to the women of the need to maintain a demeanour of respect towards their husbands and a proper regard for their marriage oath, just as her husband brings a respect to Christ, the injunction here is one of propriety in the assemblies. Paul places no restrictions on the breadth of the use of the woman’s use of her gifts (1 Cor:12), but refers to a woman’s demeanour in which they are to serve, with their marital status in mind. He cautions them to be aware of their behaviour and how it may violate cultural norms and bring the church into ill repute.

Sarah Sumner in her book, *‘Men and women in the church’*, posits the following explanation.

“Conversely, Complementarians would suggest that the rendering of the word ‘head’ as authority, would interpret 1 Cor.11:3 as ‘God is the authority of Christ; Christ is the authority of a man; a man is the authority of a woman.’ Thus the order is: The Father is the boss over.. the Son is the boss over... man is the boss over... Even so Scripture does state that God is greater than Christ (John 11:28)

but Egalitarian scholars have proposed that this refers to God's authority while Christ was on earth." (Sumner S 2003:146)

Gilbert Bezekian agrees that there is order in verse three, but rather an historical order. As he describes it,

" ...it happened first that Christ became the source, or original prototype of Adam who represents every man, Adam's rib became the source of a woman, after that, God (ie. The Holy Spirit in Mary's womb) became the source or fountain head of Christ." (As quoted in Sumner S 2003:147)

As such an order of authority would not be applicable to the text. He defends his position of the rendering of the word 'head' as meaning source. Therefore Paul, in appealing to the order of creation outlined in verse three, a woman would not be in a subordinate position at all.

Sumner makes a pertinent point when she questions the validity of the Complementarian view of a man being the authority of woman. She asks an open ended question. "Is Christ not the authority of women?"

Grudem draws heavily on a Trinitarian theology that states that in God being the head of Christ, taking an (eternal) subordinate role, signifies that though He is of the same essence of God, His role is one of subjection. He bases his argument for feminine essential equality, within a subordinate role. (Piper and Grudem 2006:130).

He states in his journal, "This has also been the opinion of many of the Church Fathers and those theologians who hold to their traditional roots.

In a quote from *'Jesus and the Father'* he says:

"The most decisive factor in the case for the permanent subordination of women is a proper understanding of the doctrine of the Trinity". -By this he means

understanding the Trinity as hierarchically ordered so the Son is bound to obey the Father. “Nothing is more important in the whole universe than maintaining the equality of being together with authority and submission to authority, in relationship between the Father and the Son in imminent Trinity.” (Giles K. 2006:42)

An Egalitarian response to such a claim is alliterated in Gilbert Belzekian’ book ‘Beyond Sex Roles’. He says,

“Nowhere in the bible is there a reference to a chain of command within the Trinity. Such ‘subordinationist’ theories were propounded during the fourth century and were rejected as heretical.” (Belzekian 2006:209)

R.C and C. Kroeger define subordinationism as “A doctrine that assigns an inferiority of being, status, or role to the Son or Holy Spirit within the Trinity”. They also say “Some apply a doctrine of subordinationism of woman to man on the basis of a similar relationship within the Trinity. (1 Cor. 11:3). (As quoted in Piper and Grudem 2006:129.)

Such claims to the doctrine of subordinationism provide the basis for the Complementarian theology of the rendering the word ‘head’ to mean authority.

Conversely, an Egalitarian claim of equality within the Trinity provides a landscape that views a voluntary submission by the Son while on earth for the purpose of salvation, God in turn exalted Him to the highest position over creation, giving Him the name above all names. (Phil.2:6-11). In verse 5 we are commanded to exemplify Christ’s attitude and lift each other up, considering one another better than ourselves. This would apply equally to those of differing genders.

4.7.2. General Contextualization

In order to grasp the intensity of the controversy over the word head in the context of its meaning, we must examine the repercussions of either view in how they affect church doctrine.

In those churches that hold to the firm belief that a woman being under the authority of men generally, is a biblical injunction, will by necessity restrict her function and the use of her gifts.

Conversely, those churches that hold the opposing view that maintains that an equal role for both genders is the biblical injunction are more likely to be inclusive. Such being the case the call to a certain role will be decided on gifts rather than gender, offering a woman freedom to function in her fullness.

4.7.3. Specific Contextualization

Within its specific context, the meaning of the word head as it is used in 1 Corinthians 11:3-16, holds immense relevance to my own calling. If the word does in fact mean authority in the context of all men over all women based on the order of creation, and the relationships within the trinity, I would be at best in error, and at worst rebellion.

If on the other hand head means source, I would thus be free to experience with confidence, my God-given gifts. As such, I and many women throughout the church would be set free from confusion and doubt, and get on with serving God as equal labourers alongside our brothers.

Conclusion.

Although very briefly outlined, it has been my intention to reveal the contention that has ensued over the meaning of the word '*kephale*' and its impact on our understanding of the subordination of women. I have concluded that the debate is hinged on the order of authority within the Trinity and whether it is hierarchical or sequential, and its influence on how we are to understand the word, 'head'.

4.8. "The Glory Of".

1 Corinthians 11:7

"A man ought not to cover his head, since he is the image and glory of God; but woman is the glory of man."

4.8.1 Grammatical Context.

The meaning of glory in the Hebrew is '*kabhd*'; and in the Greek: '*doxa*'. Its use in this scripture means honour and dignity. (Webbibleencyclopedia.net)

To paraphrase therefore the text can be understood as:

"A man ought not to cover his head, since he is image and honour and dignity of God; but woman is the honour and dignity of man.

Jamieson Faussett Brown, (Commentary of the Whole Bible) stipulates:

"He is . . . image . . . glory of God--being created in God's 'image', first and directly: the woman, subsequently, and indirectly, through the mediation of man. Man is the representative of God's 'glory', this ideal of man being realized most fully in the Son of man (Ps 8:4, 5; compare 2Co 8:23). Man is declared in Scripture to be both the 'image,' and in the 'likeness' of God (compare Jas 3:9). But 'image' alone is applied to the Son of God (Col 1:15; compare Heb 1:3). 'Express image', Greek, 'the impress.' The Divine Son is not merely 'like' God, He is God of God, 'being of one substance (essence) with the Father.'"

".....woman . . . glory of . . . man--He does not say, also, 'the image of the man.' For the sexes differ: moreover, the woman is created in the image of God, as well as the man (Ge 1:26, 27). But as the moon in relation to the sun (Ge 37:9), so woman shines not so much with light direct from God, as with light derived from man, that is, in her order in creation; not that she does not in grace come individually into direct communion with God; but even here much of her

knowledge is mediatory through man, on whom she is naturally dependent. (she is) of . . . taken out of man" (compare Gen 2:23). The woman was made by God mediatory through the man, who was, as it were, a veil or medium placed between her and God, and therefore, should wear the veil or head-covering in public worship, in acknowledgement of this subordination to man in the order of creation. The man being made immediately by God as His glory has no veil between himself and God."

Martin Pohlman explains the Creation account thus:

"It is critically important to note at the very outset that there is essentially only one word for mankind (male and female), the Hebrew word, 'adam'. The word simply means 'human being'. Eve (ishah) is taken from Adam, and is one in essence with him." Genesis 1:27 (Pohlman M. 2008)

The theory of female subordination taken from the creation account is one held by many Complementarian theologians. I find it interesting to note however, that their appeal is to the rendering of the word 'head', to mean 'source'. The jump then is to link it to the concept of authority. My question to such an idea would be to ask whether there is substance to support the theory that an order of creation designates authority to the one who is created first?

Secondly their assumption that a man is the mediatory of woman is clearly contradictory to Paul's assertion to Timothy that.....

"For there is one God and one mediator between God and human beings, Christ Jesus, himself human, who gave himself as a ransom for all people." 1 Timothy 2:5 (TNIV)

(The word used for 'man' in this context is the Greek word '*anthropos*' which is the general term for mankind, whereas the term 'male' is specified by the word '*aner*')

The Egalitarian position is clearly explained by Cunningham and Hamilton:

“Did Paul limit the image and glory of God to the male? The creation account in Genesis 1:26-27 says that male and female were made in the image of God, and Paul couldn’t have been contradicting that. What Paul was actually saying was woman is the glory of God*and* of man! The key to understanding this verse lies in the little Greek word ‘*de*’.

The common Greek conjunction ‘*de*’ has no English equivalent. Though it is sometimes translated as ‘but’, it’s usually better translated as ‘and’ or ‘and also’.

They go on to explain that had it been Paul’s intention to make a contrast between the man and woman he would have used the stronger word ‘*alla*’, to mean ‘but’, instead he used the softer word ‘*de*’, better translated as ‘and’.

To further paraphrase therefore, we would say:

“A man ought not cover his head, since he is image and honour and dignity of God; *and* woman is the honour and dignity of man.”

Or:

“Whereas the male is the glory of God along with the female, the female is also the glory of the male”! (Hamilton DJ and Cunningham L. 2000: 182)

4.8.2 Theology.

The theology resulting from both the Complementarian and Egalitarian camps and to the degree to which it affects church doctrine, results in far reaching consequences. On the line is the question of a woman’s dignity and honour before God. If it is true that she finds her glory only in a man, she would only have freedom to minister solely at his discretion and not as directed by the Holy Spirit, according to her gifts. Being such we are forced to look back through millennia whereby a woman’s sole purpose was to procreate and then to nurture

both her children and her husband, or in the case where she is not married, her father or other male relatives. This would make the claim held by most Complementarians that a woman is of equal worth, while stipulating a hierarchal order of gifts and roles, absurd. A woman's position before God as Christ being her sole mediator, would be compromised and affirm her role as a man's subordinate. More seriously such a rendering could suggest that a man is qualified to act as a mediator when it can only be through a sinless sacrificial atonement. To even suggest such is blasphemous and invalidates Christ's work on the cross!

The theology resulting from an Egalitarian understanding of these key words would alternatively afford a woman equal opportunity to minister alongside her husband and male leaders and its ensuing freedom to minister to the full scope of her gifts and calling. This I believe would radically improve the confidence and stature of gifted women as they are allowed to move from behind the men without feeling the need to either discount their calling, or to become aggressively militant. A situation that I maintain can only increase the impact of the church to the world we live in.

4.8.3 General contextualization.

An accurate rendering of the meaning of the word 'glory' in these texts, while being difficult and controversial, is needed as it is of utmost importance to the church's function. Understanding Paul's reason for writing the letter as being to correct serious issues in the Corinthian church, places it within a setting foreign to us. We can be reasonably certain however, that he was addressing the need for proper decorum in worship assemblies, in Corinth, A.D. 55/56. It is crucial to be mindful of this fact when attempting to translate these words. As previously stated the impact of an incorrect understanding can and will have a devastating outworking affecting the effectiveness of women and the church in general.

4.8.4. Specific Contextualization.

Bringing the doctrine resulting from these two theologies into a personal context, means to evaluate my own position before my husband and more importantly, before God. If I am the glory of my husband first, I would need to approach him for God's will and word in my life. This suggestion can be rendered ludicrous when interpreted in the light of clear injunctions in the bible that state that ALL people are made in the image and glory of God; because of the redemption work of Jesus, we can ALL approach the throne room with confidence; there is neither Jew nor Gentile, slave nor free, neither male nor female, for we are ALL one in Christ Jesus. In addition to His word God has given ALL of us His Spirit, and it is by His counsel and character that I am able to function for Him with confidence. These constitute just a very few amongst many more scriptures and themes. To look to my husband as my mediator, I believe would not serve to bring him dignity and honour as glory suggests in this context, but would rather burden him with sole responsibility while allowing myself to renege.

Conclusion.

I am of confident persuasion that an accurate translation of 'glory' in context of 1 Corinthians 11:7, designates a meaning of full gender equality, as all mankind is created in the image and glory of God. As such, our only mediator is Jesus Christ, as it is only by His sacrifice that we are able to approach the throne room of God.

4.9. 1 Timothy 2: 11-14

"A woman should learn in quietness and full submission I do not permit a woman to teach or to assume authority over a man; she must be quiet. For Adam was formed first, then Eve. And Adam was not the one deceived; it was the woman who was deceived and became a sinner. But women will be saved through childbearing—if they continue in faith, love and holiness with propriety."

4.9.1 The Author.

Early church tradition and the opening salutations in his letter to Timothy, support the claims for Pauline authorship. Paul's relationship to Timothy, as a son in faith confirms both his role as a mentor and as the author of this letter.

"Paul, an apostle of Christ Jesus by the command of God our saviour and of Christ Jesus our hope. To Timothy my true son in the faith: Grace, mercy and peace from God the Father and Christ Jesus our Lord." (1 Timothy 1:1-2. NIV)

4.9.2 Background and occasion of the letter.

An important consideration when attempting to interpret any of Paul's letters is that they are exactly that, letters. An analogy can be drawn of listening to a one sided conversation of a personal telephone call. Considering the close relationship that Paul shared with Timothy, we can be fairly certain that they would communicate from the broad basis of personal knowledge. Paul need not and does not explain matters and information that would already be known by Timothy. Therefore we as outsiders are in a position whereby certain assumptions and historical and cultural lenses need to be used in our hermeneutics.

We can be confident however, of those issues that are clearly stated.

Paul writes to Timothy concerning the issue of false teachers. Roughly 50% of the letter stipulates the crucial need for Timothy to recognise and correct the young church in Ephesus, warning him of the danger of false teachers. (1 Tim 1:3-7). Secondary to the urgency of this issue is the direction given for managing church affairs such as worship and the appointment of leaders. Linda Bellville states the following:

" That false teaching is Paul's overriding concern compared with that of 'church order'. To be sure, Paul does remind Timothy of how people ought to conduct

themselves in God's household (1 Tim. 3:15). It is critical mass; however that determines the overriding concerns. Also a lack of details about leadership roles and an absence of offices steer us away from viewing church order as the primary matter." (Bellville L 2005:206)

Therefore in interpreting the concept of authority in 1 Tim 2:12, we must understand where the verse sits within the context of the letter.

4.9.3. Historical context.

The date of this letter to Timothy can be placed shortly after Paul's third missionary journey. (AD 53-57) The approximate date of writing is AD 60, at least eight years after Paul's three year stay in Ephesus. (Timeline NIV Study Bible: 1703)

Ephesus in contrast to Corinth, was an old city. Dating it back to approximately 1000 years by the time of Paul's ministry, places its foundational history in the era of King David and King Solomon's reigns. Chronologically controlled first by Athens, then the Lydians, followed by the Persians who held the colony until Alexander the Great captured it in the 4th century BC. For two hundred years Ephesus became established as a crown in Greek empire and the 3rd largest city after Athens and Alexandria. Seized by the Roman Empire under Caesar Augustus (27 B.C) it flourished as a city of prosperity and prominence. As the capital of the Roman province of Asia it earned the title of 'First and Greatest Metropolis of Asia'. (www.abrock.com/Greece-turkey/ephesus.html)

From its beginning, Ephesus was a melting pot of cultural, political, religious and social influences. By the time of Paul's ministry because of the diversity of culture, cult, and ethnicity it had become a hot bed of conflict, hostility and ethnic hatreds. It was in this setting that Paul planted the Ephesian church.

4.9.4. Cultural Context.

Philo of Alexandria, a contemporary of Jesus and of Paul, held a Platonic view of woman in the creation and thereby her role in society. Along with his prevailing influence throughout the Mediterranean, and his adoption of the philosophies of Greek mythology, in to his Jewish and Christian beliefs, the danger of this false teaching proved a serious threat to the early church.

One of Philo's dominant images of salvation is one that sees a woman "do away with womanish qualities that pollute the rational male soul". (Rust J 2002) Thus he argues that as a woman's role is for child bearing which is associated with sexuality her need is to become an unpolluted 'virgin', in order to progress toward God.

Philo's philosophy therefore relates very closely to the deity, Artemis of Ephesus, herself being a virgin, yet the goddess of fertility.

Paul wrote to Timothy concerning false teachers against the cultural back drop of life in Ephesus in the first century. Ephesus culture was intricately woven within their worship of 'Artemis of the Ephesians' their divine protector. She was venerated as 'The Mother Goddess', 'Queen of Heaven', and 'Saviour Lord'. She was imbued with supernatural power over the spiritual world. While retaining her virginal state, she was the goddess of fertility and child birth. (She was known as the Ephesian Artemis, and was believed to be connected to but separate from the Greek Artemis who was the goddess of hunting). As she was worshiped as the provider of salvation through childbirth, a parallel can be drawn to understand Paul's implied meaning of a woman being "saved through childbearing", if she continues in faith, love and holiness with propriety." (1 Tim 2:15) The role of Artemis in understanding the context in which Paul wrote to Timothy, is one that needs to be carefully considered.

The sacrificial practice of her worshipers involved vast sums of money, bringing the foundation of the city's economic and political prominence. Therefore Artemis worship became an indispensable pillar in the cultural milieu that was Ephesus.

The claim that the letter's context is one which deals with false teachers, it would therefore make sense that it was a particular woman that was being referred to. As Ephesus was dominated by their worship of Artemis, it is entirely possible that the woman being addressed was propagating false teaching possibly referring to the power of a woman apart from a man.

Linda Bellville posits:

"...One explanation is that they were influenced by the cult of Artemis, in which the female was exalted and considered superior to the male. Its importance to the citizens in Ephesus in Paul's day is evident from Luke's record in the two-hour long chant, "great is Artemis of the Ephesians" (Acts 19-37). It was believed that Artemis (and brother Apollo) was the child of Zeus and Leto. Instead of seeking fellowship among her own kind, she spurned the attentions of the male gods and sought the company of a human male consort. This made Artemis and all her female adherents superior to men." (Pierce and Groothuis 2005:219)

In such case Paul's injunction that women should learn (before they teach?) in quiet submission was a provision for their equality with men and a safe guard against false teaching. The fact that the requirement that they be quiet and learn in full submission denotes a position of learning that is proper for all students. Learning must happen *before* teaching! (Lisser R 1996)

Ephesus was also the centre for the magical religions.

"Of all ancient Greco-Roman cities, Ephesus, the third largest city in the empire, was by far the most hospitable to magicians, sorcerers and charlatans." (Arnold C E. 1989)

In addition, present in the melting pot that was Ephesus were the 'Imperial Cults'. Cults established for the worship of Caesar and other Roman political leaders.

Such religious, political and economic diversity provided the cultural context for his letter to Timothy.

4.9.5. Grammatical Context.

1 Timothy 2:11- 15.

“A woman should learn in quietness and full submission. I do not permit a woman to teach or have authority over a man; she must be silent. For Adam was formed first, then Eve. And Adam was not the one deceived; it was the woman who was deceived and became a sinner. But women will be saved through childbearing – if they continue in faith, love, holiness with propriety.”

4.9.6. Definitions.

Teach/ Have Authority:

Teach: Verb. *'didasko'* Strong's Concordance # 1322

Definition:

1. To teach, to hold discourse with others in order to instruct them.
2. Deliver didactic discourses, to be a teacher, to discharge the office of a teacher.
3. Conduct one's self as a teacher.
4. To teach one to impart instruction, instil doctrine into one (the thing taught or enjoined to explain or expound a thing), to teach one something.

(www.biblestudytools.com/lexicons/greek/)

Authority: noun. *Authenteo* Strong's Concordance # 831

The NIV translation, translates the meaning of the Greek word *'authentio'* to mean rightly using authority to serve others...and attribute its meaning to being an authority that is rightly used by men over women. However, earlier

translations render the meaning to be 'to dominate and control' and relate this injunction to women in their position to the male leaders in Ephesus.

According to Duncan and Hunt the word 'authority' in Greek means judicial or governing authority; so it refers to the authoritative preaching of the Word. (Duncan and Hunt 2006:73)

However what they fail to provide is a reference to support their case.

Conversely, Cunningham and Hamilton are more honest in their hermeneutic.

"The meaning of the Greek word that is translated to mean 'to have authority' in the NIV is cloudy. Why? For one thing, it's a word that appears only once in the New Testament. Also, this word appears very little in other ancient literature. This makes it difficult for experts to agree on its meaning. Scholars continue to debate whether this Greek word carries a positive meaning (such as rightly using authority to serve others) or a negative one (such as domineering, manipulating, even murdering others). The main thing to note is that this is not the normal New Testament word for authority. It was an unusual word used in specific circumstances." (Cunningham and Hamilton: 2000:222)

Linda Belville illiterates the following:

"Earlier translations were not so quick to do so,"... (translate '*authentio*' to mean authority over). This was largely owing to dependence on ancient Greek lexicographers and grammarians. In fact there is virtually an unbroken tradition, stemming from the oldest versions and running down to the 21st century that translates 'to dominate rather than to exercise authority over'".

She lists the oldest versions of the bible (Old Latin. 2nd – 4th century) through to a wide range of modern translations. (Beck J, Blomberg C.2001:127)

In such case the problem lies within its lack of use elsewhere in Scripture, where the word for 'authority' is '*exousia*'. This term relates to rightful authority, and it cannot be attributed to anyone other than Christ. Matthew 28:19-20 states:

"All '*exousia*' has been given to me in heaven and on earth. Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you; and lo I am with you always, even to the end of the age."

Gilbert Belzekian, deals with the struggle over the difficulty in a proper translation. He breaks down such problems as such:

- The debate is over whether the prohibition (of women teaching men), is one of authority or usurpation.
- The prohibition is discordant with the rest of his clear teaching and practice.
- It stands out in its singularity. This is a principle of major importance as to why it is not repeated elsewhere in the epistles?
- Church ministry is mentioned elsewhere (Romans 12; 1 Cor. 12; Ephesians 4). Yet there is no mention of the exclusion of women. (Belzekian G. 2006:175)

Many Complementarians view the word 'authority' as it relates to women leaders, based on the nature of the ministerial nature of the office. They argue that a male, being created with intrinsic gifts of leadership, are uniquely qualified for positions of authority. Thomas Schreiner in an article written for 'Rediscovering Biblical Manhood and Womanhood' states:

".....women participated in ministry in the scriptures, but their ministry was a complementary and supportive ministry, a ministry that fostered and preserved male leadership in the church. Thus the ministry of women in the church was notable and significant, but it never supplanted male leadership; instead it

functioned as a support to male leadership.” (As quoted in *Women in the Church*: Grenz and Kjesbo: 199)

Conversely, an Egalitarian view is that church structure is always subservient to mission. “Central to the task of completing the work of the church is the giftedness of God’s people. Ministry occurs as all people use their Spirit-endowed gifts to carry out the mandate Christ has entrusted to the entire fellowship.” (Grenz and Kjesbo: 215)

The word *‘authenteo’* is intrinsically linked with the word *‘didasko’* – usurping authority while teaching. The injunction here, I believe is that a woman must be taught and mature in the faith in order to teach anyone in the congregation. At the time this letter was written, the majority of women in Ephesus were uneducated, and it was at Paul’s insistence that a woman MUST learn, an opportunity that had not been open to them previously. Priscilla, however had been raised in Rome where women were afforded an education. After having had extensive opportunity to learn from Paul, she taught Apollos alongside her husband, explaining to him the way of God more adequately. (Acts 18:26)

The fact that Paul was joined by several women in his struggle for the gospel, women he referred to as ‘fellow workers’, stands in contrast to his seeming prohibition against women teaching authoritatively. Paul brought special attention to several notable women, and the roles women in general were expected to fulfil.

He expected women to prophesy which involves bringing a word from God for encouragement, revelation, and guidance. It was as such a role of delegated authority.

There were prophets.

Acts 21:8-9. “Leaving the next day, we reached Caesarea and stayed at the house of Philip the evangelist, one of the Seven. He had four unmarried *daughters who prophesied.*”

Acts 2:17-18

“In the last days, God says, I will pour out my Spirit on all people. Your sons and daughters will prophesy, your young men will see vision, your old men will dream dreams. Even on my servants, both men and women, I will pour out my Spirit in those days, and they will prophesy.”

1 Corinthians 11:4-5. “Every man who prays or prophesies with his head covered dishonours his head. But every woman who prays or *prophesies* with her head uncovered dishonours her head—it is the same as having her head shaved.”

There were pastors.

Nympha, Lydia and Chloe, were notably the head of their households. As the early churches met in homes, in all probability these women would be the pastors of the believers who met there.

Colossians 4:15. “Give my greetings to the brothers and sisters at Laodicea, and to *Nympha* and the church in *her* house.”

Acts 16:14. “One of those listening was a woman from the city of Thyatira named *Lydia*, a dealer in purple cloth. She was a worshiper of God. The Lord opened her heart to respond to Paul’s message. When she and the members of *her* household were baptized, she invited us to her home. “If you consider me a believer in the Lord,” she said, “come and stay at *my* house.” And she persuaded us.”

Acts 16:40. "After Paul and Silas came out of the prison, they went to *Lydia's house*, where they met with the believers and encouraged them. Then they left."

1 Corinthians 1:11. "My brothers and sisters, some from *Chloe's household* have informed me that there are quarrels among you."

There were deacons.

Paul referred to Phoebe as deacon, commended her for her role in the church, and requested that she be received as befitting a respected leader in the church.

Romans 16:1-3. "I commend to you our sister *Phoebe, a deacon* of the church in Cenchreae, I ask you to receive her in the Lord in a way worthy of his people and to give her any help she may need from you, for she has been the benefactor of many people, including me."

Acts chapter 6:1-4 records the account of the choosing of the seven who were to serve in the church, the requirement was that they be full of the Holy Spirit and of wisdom. These men were 'servants' or 'ministers'. The Greek word for servant is '*diakonos*', from where we get the word 'deacon'. It is clear by the fact that both Stephen and Philip held the office of deacon, and they were also powerful teachers and workers of miraculous signs. See Acts 6:8; 7:1-59; 8:4-6; 12:12. Therefore is there any reason why those women referred to as deacons wouldn't have a similar authority?

There was at least one female apostle.

Romans 16:7. Greet Andronicus and *Junia*, my fellow Jews who have been in prison with me. They are outstanding among the *apostles*, and they were in Christ before I was.

Much debate has centred on whether Junia was a man or a woman. Several translations have added an 's' to the end of her name making it 'Junias', a male definitive. Others defending a Complementarian position posit that Andronicus and Junia were mentioned as being considered outstanding *by* the apostles. Nevertheless in light of those scriptures that clearly mention women as leaders, the point is that she was clearly a woman of stature.

4.9.7. Theology.

4.9.7.1. Egalitarian View.

A fair exegesis of a difficult passage of scripture should always take considerable care to make the comparison to the many clear scriptures that seemingly contradict a particular doctrine. One such scripture from Paul's letter to the Colossians provides a clear contradiction to a Complementarian view concerning a woman's entitlement to preach and teach:

Colossians 3:16-18: (Paul speaking to the *whole* congregation.) "Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly as you teach and admonish one another with all wisdom, and as you sing psalms, hymns and spiritual songs with gratitude in your hearts to God. And whatever you do, whether in word or deed, do it all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through Him." (NIV)

Interestingly the study notes explain what is meant by the word 'Hymns':

"Some of the most important doctrines were expressed in Christian hymns preserved for us now only in Paul's letters." (NIV Study Bible:1857)

An Egalitarian theology based on the understanding of the word '*authority/authentein*' to mean to dominate, usurp and manipulate, within its context in 1 Timothy 2:12, brings freedom for godly women to fully utilize their gifts. An understanding of the letter's purpose to be one of warning and protection of the church against false teachers, releases it from gender constraints, as it

addresses serious issues facing the Ephesian church. The second serious issue the church was facing was the order in which it was attempting to function. A clear structure of leadership was needed to steer the besieged congregation in a setting of spiritual, economical and physical danger.

An understanding of the proper context, and in light of other clear scriptures, a theology is established based on the principle of leadership being a matter of gifting and not gender.

4.9.7.2. Complementarian View.

A Complementarian theology drawn from an understanding of the word '*authority/ authentein*' to mean 'rightly using authority to serve others'...and attribute its meaning to being an authority that is rightly used by men over women, serves to restrict a woman's role in the church. The definition of the word as such finds difficulty when it is referenced to the word '*exousia*' (being the common use for Jesus' delegation as the authority over the church). This however is the view that is held by many respected and influential leaders and theologians and serves to relegate a woman's role to subservient ministries. Gender then becomes the general requisite for leadership over and above gifting.

4.9.8 General contextualization.

The split over the meaning of the words 'teach' and have 'authority over' has far-reaching and serious implications in church practice. The doctrine and practice of a church whose leadership hold to a Complementarian view struggle over limits and exceptions of when a woman can teach men. The tension comes over questions such as "What about Sunday school and youth ministry – at what age does a boy become a man?" "May a woman teach a mixed audience when it is not from a pulpit, or a formal gathering?" "Are women missionaries exempt from limitations?" "May a woman teach her sons when they are over a certain age?" "How do we explain the anointed women teachers, leaders, prophets and governors mentioned in both the Old Testament and New Testament?" "May a

woman preach and teach but not hold an eldership office?”etc. The lack of a clear working principle has seen shifting consensus among the Complementarian churches, causing divisions, disputes and their women being marginalised.

An Egalitarian approach to church leadership however, has not fully succeeded either. In practice there are dangers of attracting hurting yet domineering women with their own agendas. Excesses can occur when a woman views the apparent safety of an ‘equal opportunity’ church as a vehicle to assert her own authority, her own personal agenda, over and above male God-ordained leaders. Humility, a servant attitude, character and competence are attributes that qualify a person for leadership, and provide an essential prelude to gifting.

4.9.9 Specific Contextualization.

Within a personal context, the challenges that I have faced have been almost insurmountable. Confusion, doubt, lack of confidence, accusations and persecutions, has all been some major obstacles that I have had to and continue to have. I have found however that I have grown stronger in my convictions that God calls according to His criteria and by keeping my heart open to Him I can rest in that assurance. The Holy Spirit is the One who leads us into all truth, and being God, will not contradict His Word or His character. I feel peace that my part in the Great Commission is His will, and that He has equipped and called me to function by His grace. My mission therefore is to be all that God has called me to be and do, and the debate over a woman’s role in church leadership has motivated me to correct any injustice and prejudice, in a manner that would reflect God’s grace.

Conclusion.

In conclusion the dispute over the meanings of ‘teach’ and ‘authority’ that has raged in the last century has caused a chasm between churches and individuals that has seen disastrous results. The ambiguity of the meaning of ‘*authenteo*’ can only be understood when compared with clear scriptures and the witness of the

Holy Spirit. How, who, where and when a woman may teach cannot be decided on man's authority. As Head of the church we may only minister under Christ's authority, not our own or man's understanding of these texts.

4.10. Order of Creation

1 Timothy 2:13-14.

"For man was made first, then Eve. And Adam was not the one deceived: it was the woman who was deceived and became a sinner.

4.10.1 Grammatical Context.

Definition: Order. 'Protos'

-Foremost. In time, place, order, or importance.

- Before, beginning, best, chief.

- First of all.

Strong's #4413.

The debate over the definition of 'order', in the creation account is one that has been fought vigorously between theologians within both the Complementarian and Egalitarian camps. As the Greek word '*protos*' is defined in both the chronological sense and in a hierarchical sense, both have a claim on its correct meaning within this context.

Graeme Coddington posits: "Although these verses present us with some translation difficulties, it would seem that once again the wording is ambiguous. Most scholars attempt to understand what is meant by these verses by an appeal to the passages in 1 Corinthians 11. This often results in a particularly dangerous

form of circular reasoning, as they use this passage to prove their interpretation of 1 Corinthians 11. (Coddington G 1996:10)

He goes on to suggest that there is no hint in Genesis 1 and 2 of an order of ranking in function as to the male and female. Both were told to preside over the garden and both were invited to directly commune with God. To follow a Complementarian reasoning of a hierarchy, we would have to make the conclusion that animals are ranked higher than both male and female. If the order were to be reversed so that Adam was superior to the animals then it can only make sense that Eve is of a higher order than Adam!

A Complementarian argument for a hierarchical order can be articulated by Piper and Grudem. They argue:

“...the question that evangelical feminists must come to terms with is why God should choose to create man and woman sequentially. It won't do to say, “Sequence doesn't *have* to mean leadership priority”. The question is: “What *does* this sequence mean?” Why didn't God create them simultaneously out of the same dust?” “We think the most natural implication of God's decision to bring Adam onto the scene ahead of Eve is that he is called to bear the responsibility of headship. That fact is validated by the New Testament when Paul uses the fact that “Adam was formed first, then Eve” to draw a conclusion about male leadership in the church.” (Piper and Grudem. 2006:81)

It appears to me that the fact that Piper and Grudem refer the case of their argument that God chose to create Adam first, to a matter of 'headship' confirms Coddington's assertion of circular reasoning by appealing to 1 Corinthians 11.

In appealing to the order of creation for man's leadership, Complementarians rely on the following verse to prove their claim.”

“And Adam was not the one deceived: it was the woman who was deceived and became a sinner.” (Verse 14)

They assert that the mode of her deception was in usurping the headship of her husband, and in listening to the serpent, caused creation to fall. It was Eve's rebellion against her husband's headship (and therefore God's order) that resulted in her sin. Her punishment therefore was to endure pain in childbirth and accept her husband's rule over her. However, in my opinion the logic of this interpretation is flawed due to the Complementarian position that the created order was established before the fall. My question would be "surely, Eve was presented the temptation (deception) to take the fruit in order to become 'like God'?" It was in listening to the serpent and persuading Adam who then *willingly* sinned. Their rebellion was against God's command directly.

So what alternative/s are we forced to consider when understanding what is meant in appealing to the order of creation in the Ephesian context? The previous verses focus on Paul's ban on a woman teaching or having authority over a man. It is because a woman is more easily deceived than a man as is often an argument from the Complementarian camp. To my view that opinion is flawed because when warning against false teachers, Paul does not name any women. However Paul does name two *men* specifically - Hymenaeus and Philitus. (2 Timothy 2:17) This could possibly be that their form of false teaching was more dangerous ("their teaching will be like gangrene") It would also seem that by not mentioning a woman by name, the false teaching/deception that was being propagated could be corrected by proper learning. The issue then being that deception is a human tendency not a gender propensity.

4.10.2. Theology

4.10.2.1 Egalitarian View.

As Complementarians appeal directly to the order of the creation of male and female to set the principle of male authority, as an eternal principle, Egalitarians argue that the order in which male and female were created has no relevance to the role of women. They hold to the theory that a sequential order is indicated as

humankind was created after the animals. There is no indication that animals were created in an order of rank so the question posed would be: “why the shift to a hierarchical order when mankind is created?” The Egalitarian assertion that it was only after the Fall, and due to a reversal in God’s created ideal, that the gender relationship was tainted. Through Christ, equality was re-established as a part of the redemption of mankind, and it is upon that truth their theology and resultant doctrine find their basis.

4.10.2.2. Complementarian View.

As previously mentioned I am of the opinion that much of the Complementarian theology is influenced by the societal norms and religious philosophies within which the epistles were written. As a Syncretist and a highly influential philosopher, Philo brought much Platonic, Jewish history and Greek mythology into the early church. His understanding of the Bible according to Plato’s teaching was entirely dualist and allegorical.

His view of the creation account is quoted from Philo, in Jason Rust’s article:

“While the first man did have a body it was rightly ruled by his rational soul, thereby allowing the man to live in a state of harmony and excellence. Trouble knocked, however, when the woman was created. Seeing the woman begat desire in the man, followed by “bodily pleasure, which is the beginning of the wrongs and violation of law...” It was in turning to the woman and submitting to sexual desire that the man became involved in the created world in a new way and brought on himself “mortality and wretchedness.” (Philo Creation:152. quoted in Rust J 2006:3)

Complementarian views of the order of creation that sees man’s godly right to dominance produces a theology that is static, concrete and applicable without a context.

4.10.3 General contextualization.

Within its general contexts both views stake their claim to a proper understanding of the mind of God in His Creation purpose. Yet, as Paul wrote to the Corinthians.

1 Corinthians 2:15-16:

“The person with the Spirit makes judgments about all things, but such a person is not subject to merely human judgments, for, “Who has known the mind of the Lord so as to instruct him?” But we have the mind of Christ.”

Therefore an arrogant stance on this matter is certainly opposed, but any theology we may adhere to needs to be held reverently before God, as our Creator

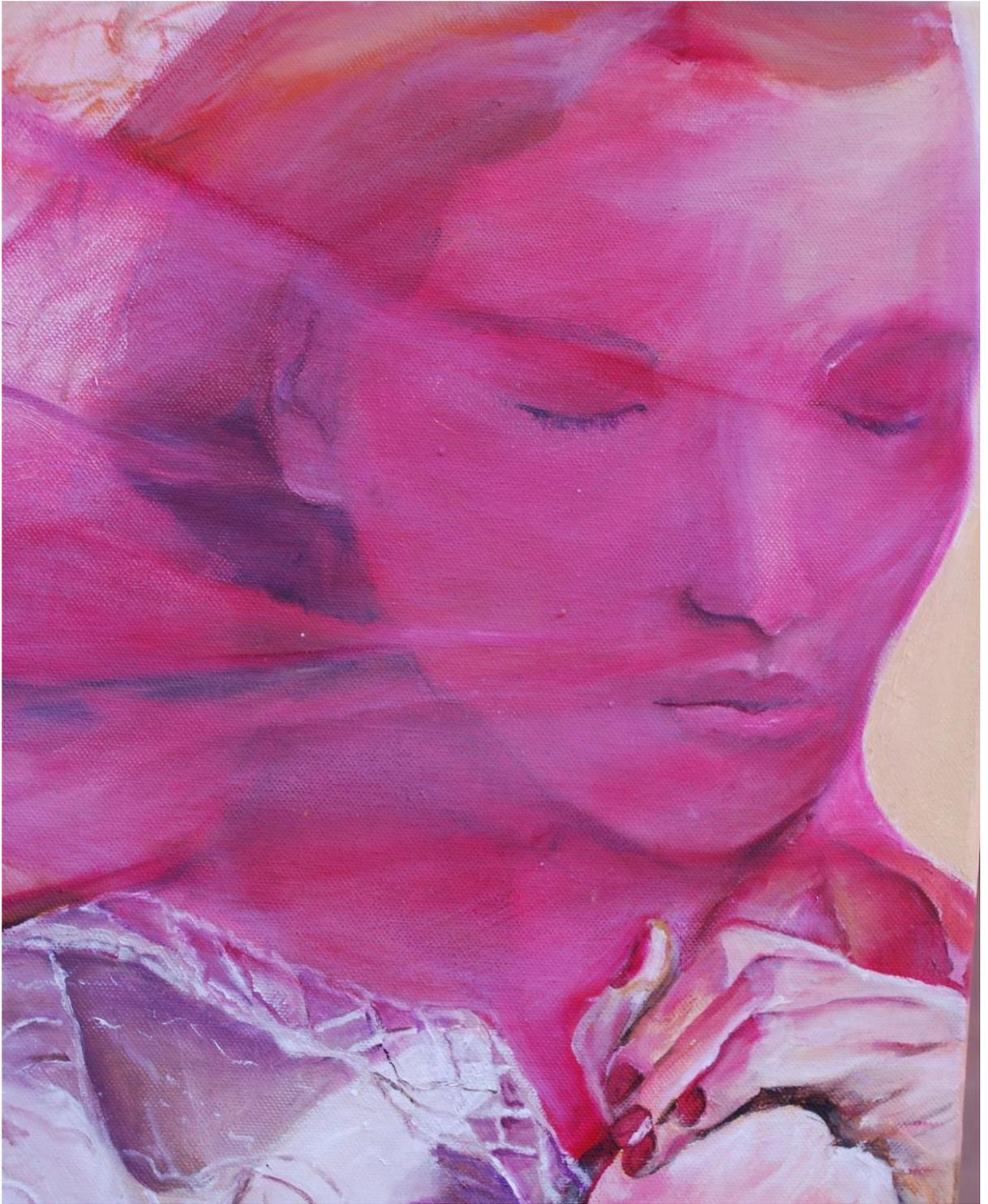
Yet we are assured that we have the ‘mind of Christ’ and therefore must adhere to His character, teaching, and practice. The role of The Holy Spirit is one that cannot be ignored especially when seeking an understanding of Creation. The use of dogmatic statements that serve to disempower God’s church should especially be circumspect. The ramifications promise consequences to the church’s mandate to fulfill the Great Commission, therefore any theology developed needs to make that cognizance.

4.10.4 Specific Contextualization.

I am fortunate to belong to a church that supports an Egalitarian stance toward leaders according to their gifts rather than gender. However, I have learnt that any freedom I have been given needs to be managed by love and humility. In love I feel that in my freedom I can choose to conform when necessary out of obedience to Christ. However, when my conscience dictates that to do so would undermine God’s purpose for my life, I will endeavor to use my freedom to confront through The Holy Spirit’s leading

Conclusion.

To conclude, the explosive debate surrounding the order of creation and male dominance/ female subjection, has torn apart relationships between churches, within churches and in homes. The question over God's original intention for the male/female roles as being one of dominance and submission or whether it is one relating to the consequences of the Fall, is the apex of the debate. My prayer is that we will have the 'mind of Christ' in any attempted understanding of these difficult texts.



Chapter 5.

A Strategy for Empowering Women to Fulfill God's Calling on Their Lives.

REDEEMING PANDORA

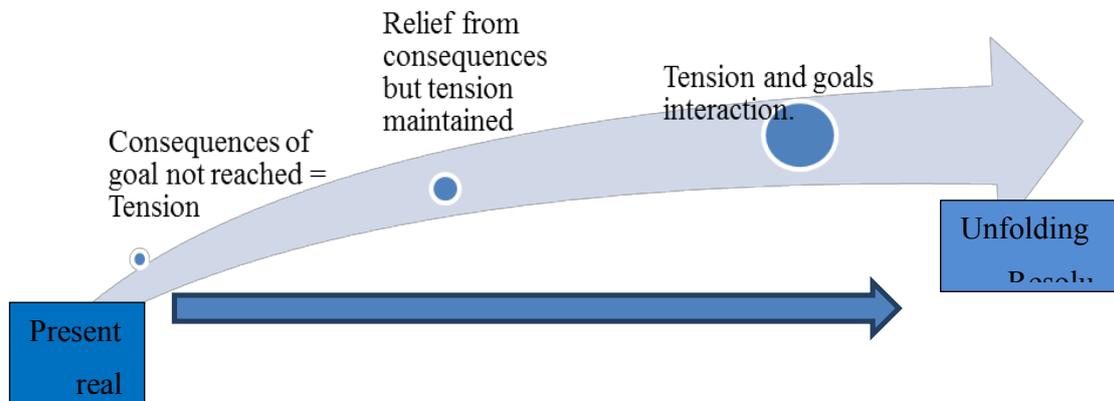
5.1 Introduction

My overall goal for this thesis has been to establish a strategy for implementing a tool with which to present a better understanding of this complex issue. My intention is to produce a fictional novel that will utilize the insights gleaned through this thesis. Chapter 5 will therefore focus on presenting a structure on which to build an outline for this creative venture. My objective in writing this book is that I may offer an opportunity for readers to enter into the lives of the characters and events in history that have influenced our understanding of God's intent in creating a woman. In so doing I envisage producing an accessible format available to anyone who may be wrestling with their own convictions and calling.

5.2. The Process / Structure.

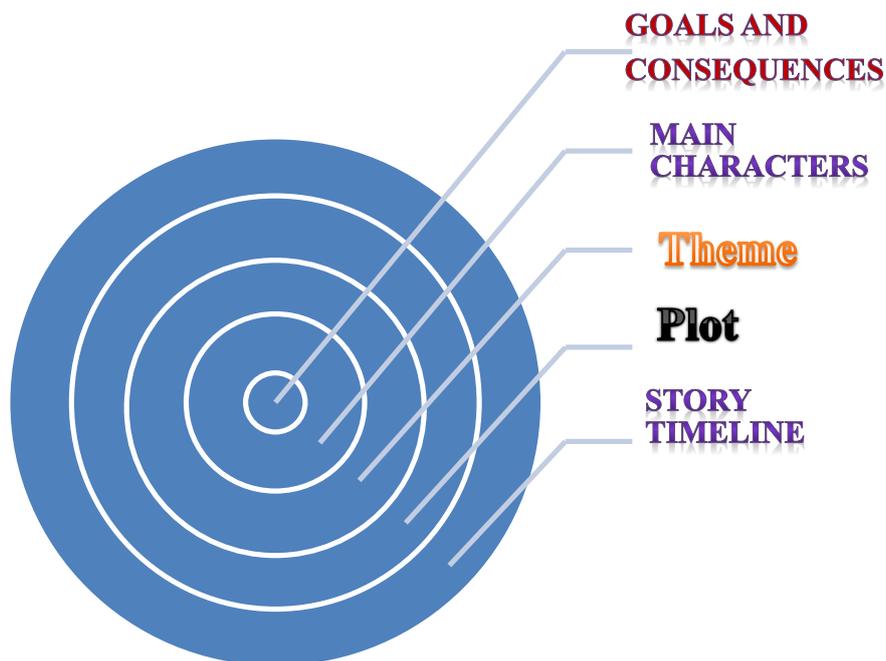
In forming a plot for the events in the story, I propose to begin with the goal in mind. Chasing behind the goal will be the consequences of not achieving the desired outcome. An outline for the plot will include the requirements (goals and consequences), that will need to be met and provide the signposts along the way. In doing so, the reader will be taken through the journey from the present reality to the goal, interspersed with events that will provide the tension necessary to keep the reader emotionally connected. The following diagram illustrates this concept:

Diagram 5.1



In breaking down the process of formulating the story I propose to frame its development through the following stages:

Diagram 5. 2



5.3. Goals and Consequences.

My overall goal in writing this story is to present an outcome that will empower women to deeply consider their roles in church ministry.

However, the specific goal of this story is to allow the reader to follow Pandora (representing the justification for a misogynist treatment of women) in her struggle for redemption through Christ. Goals along the way are presented as obstacles for her to overcome. Tensions arise as Pandora struggles through the maze of antagonistic voices and the attitudes of opposing forces. The temptations loom large to acquiesce and give up her quest; the consequences of which would prove devastating. As she searches through the meaning and impact of her legacy, she will meet women along the way suffering the consequences of her reputation. She will often be accompanied and encouraged by Eve, with whom she is able to share her fears and frustrations. They commonly have felt the pain and have grieved over the experiences of being misunderstood and misrepresented throughout history.

5.3. Main characters.

In order to structure the plot, the identification of the personalities of the key characters needs to be clear.

Pandora. (Main Character)

She was created by Zeus to be a punishment to mankind for their part in the rebellion and anarchy of Prometheus and Epimetheus, in stealing fire from the Gods. Beautiful and innocent, as the first woman to appear in the accounts of creation in Greek mythology, her future was doomed.

God.

Although it is impossible to understand the mind of God, we can ascertain considerable insight through His Word and the Holy Spirit. To begin to

comprehend His plans and purposes for creating man-kind, an awareness of His Holiness responded to by awe and reverence is a crucial requisite.

Jesus.

Our Redeemer, Saviour and King. He is God in the flesh, the exact representation of the Father who carried our sins, conquered death, and took the curse. He is the centre and the purpose of history.

Adam.

God's pinnacle creation occurred on the sixth day when He created man-kind, male and female. He recognized the need for a companion for Adam that would be his counterpart. A helper; a woman was created out of his side to share in his delegated dominion. They enjoyed an uninhibited relationship with God and with one another.

Eve.

She was the mother of the human race, beautiful, innocent, strong and authoritative, and tragically deceived by the serpent. In becoming the progenitor of the sin of mankind, one of the 'curses' became her subservience to her husband. What had once been a mutual loving response to each other became tarnished, shattering God's original intention for a relationship of equality.

Satan / Zeus.

As the antagonists in the story, their malevolent characters and desires are purposed in their intentions to destroy God's creation. Their very nature is evil and through their lies, deceit, and accusation the bondage and destruction of the objects of God's love, is their wicked pursuit. Through manipulating mans' sin nature they seek to utilize the iniquities of pride, insecurity, shame and the need for control to achieve their objective.

Paul.

The apostle chosen by God to proclaim the gospel to the gentiles, he planted many of the early churches. As the pastor and teacher of these churches he wrote the epistles to the fledgling communities and leaders. These letters were the prominent tool Paul used to correct, care for, rebuke, and encourage the new believers. As they were steeped in the influences of the pagan religions of the time, Paul's task was extremely challenging.

Philo.

A syncretist blending the philosophies of the Greeks, Judaism and Christianity, he blurred the boundaries between each. A contemporary of Jesus and of Paul, his influence in the early church provided a way for the ancient abuses to creep in.

5.4. Theme.

The theme of this novel is justice and release for all who feel disempowered because of gender prejudice. The story provides a journey towards the purpose of God in His redemption plan and covers events, beliefs and attitudes from creation to the early church. As readers are invited to enter the lives and experiences of the characters, a personal journey is offered. The highlights and the contrasts between an emotional moral view of God's intention in creating male and female and the injustices resulting from a misogynist mind set creates the tension. In relating emotionally to the characters in their pursuit of justice the reader is offered the opportunity to respond to the struggles involved in reaching for their freedom. The felt pressures stirred over the grey areas of either the moral intention and the rational understanding of God's intent will provide the option for the readers to come to their own conclusions.

5.5. The Plot.

The story begins at the creation of Pandora. A prologue sets the scene:

Her head was heavy and confusion hung like a fog in her brain. Helpless in the midst of a powerful force, the numb sensation slowly succumbed to reason. A roar of laughter crashed around her senses and penetrated the core of her being with terror. The menacing mirth sent her cowering in fear behind something solid....a rock?

The impact of experiencing a solid reality provided some distraction from the mocking cruelty of the VOICE.

It was solid. She had never experienced anything like it. Her world had always been ethereal. As her eyes began to adjust to the light she discovered more solid, definite shapes. Fascinated she pulled herself to her feet, something she had never before experienced.....standing on solid ground!

A blinding bolt of lightning - a roar that shook the firmament – the voice of her creator thundered from the heavens. The paralysing presence of Zeus. “Behold! The declaration of the god of gods. My gift to mankind! Pandora!

The story follows an eternal viewpoint outside of time, thus providing a perspective seen by God. This provides the environment from which Pandora is able to view the events of her life concurring past, present and future. She is able to find her security and reassurance from God directly and witness the impact of her legacy throughout history. Her love story with Epimetheus and her curiosity over the exquisite jar given her by Zeus, are seen in relationship with the consequences befalling her. Her curiosity provided the means of her temptation to ignore the prohibition of breaking the seal of the jar. Her disobedience to her creator revealed her destiny as the progenitor of all evil, curses, and disease. Her purpose as the one to justify the often brutal treatment of women, took form. The horror over the magnitude of the consequences arising from her disobedience, threaten to destroy her. There is no hope of redemption and in his cruelty Zeus forces her to face her shame daily, eternally, agonizing over the treatment of her descendants.

Concurrently the devastating consequences of Eve’s temptation and disobedience have provided Satan with the opportunity to besiege her with his

lies and accusations. Eve, the mother of humanity has had much experience garnered from years of watching her legacy of shame played out in the lives of her daughters.

Pandora and Eve have watched their destinies cross repeatedly throughout history as cultures, religions and philosophies have converged. However God in His mercy has revealed His eternal plan for redemption of all that was lost in the beginning. His love had provided a way back to Himself once and for all. The words of His Son echo throughout eternity. "IT IS FINISHED!" The journey towards the acknowledgment and appropriation of this truth provides the plot for this story

5.6. The Story Line.

Chapter 1.

A Conversation with God.

Pandora finds herself in a space of peace and tranquility. It is a spiritual place and material at the same time, the marriage of the ethereal and the physical. It is here that she begins a communion with God.

Chapter 2.

A Love Story Destroyed

The experience of her one and only unconditional love, Epimetheus had valued her and desired her. Her longing for intimacy had been her eternal quest, but overwhelming grief had been her constant companion. Her shame had been fuelled by accusations and constant reminders. Hope is dashed and self-condemnation is her just deserves.

Chapter 3.

The Greek Legacy.

A former goddess, Pandora was despised by the other deities. An outcast amongst her own and her descendants despised by society. God reveals a

glimpse of His plan in creation and the distortion of His will. The counterfeit creation story of Greek mythology became a tool for Zeus to wield power and control. Hope ignites in her heart, but is quickly snuffed out.

Chapter 4.

Eve.

A meeting with her counterpart is sudden and surprising. She was not at all like one would expect from someone in her position.

Chapter 5.

The View from Above.

The evil plot unfolds and the birth and growth of misogynist attitudes and practice are revealed. Sequenced in no particular order, stories of abuse are witnessed. However interspersed without history are events of great victory.

Chapter 6.

Deities from the various cultures locked in bitter battle for supremacy, yet unified through their view of women. They bring persuasive arguments for their cases, and both Pandora and Eve become confused and due to their shame, agree. Their quest is abandoned.

Chapter 7.

Patriarchy and God's Order in Creation.

God's will? God's silence. Eve and Pandora are sinning in the worse possible way in their disobedience to God. Shame grows in power.

Chapter 8.

Jesus.

The Love Story; Perfect and irresistible. Healing and the offer of wholeness. Dignity restored and the curse removed. Eve and Pandora are arrested by grace. Redemption is achieved.

Chapter 9.

Redemption Stolen.

Anger and disappointment overtake Pandora and Eve, the perceived resolution of their quest, had been a cruel illusion. The lies of Satan have a ring of truth. Hope is snuffed out once again.

Chapter 10.

The Cries of the Daughters.

The pleas and desperation of women throughout history rise through the heavens. Visions of particular occurrences of despicable treatment shake and awaken the souls of Pandora and Eve. Emotionally charged they rally to the task of continuing their pursuit.

Chapter 11.

Jesus is God.

From the beginning of eternity He exists. His unfolding plan through eternity is revealed in a glimpse. The central point is the cross enshrouded in redemption through the resurrection. Rejoicing in Heaven. The hearts and minds of Pandora and Eve are at peace.

Chapter 12.

Paul and Philo.

The early church faces many challenges as the philosophies, mythologies and religious practices prevalent in the cultures of the time threaten to destroy the fledgling Christian community to die in its first generation. Pandora and Eve watch the unfolding drama in the security of God's presence. Their journey continues.

Epilogue.

The reality of the damage caused to the church and by the church by the fierce debate over the role of women in church leadership positions has produced devastating consequences. Dissension and division have been tearing apart relationships in and between churches and is an issue that needs to be faced. The stakes are too high to be ignored. Being sure of what you believe and why, could provide a starting point for constructive dialogue. Humility and grace are the vehicles provided for the journey towards healing. God's glory is the goal.

Hebrews 12:1-3

“Therefore, since we are surrounded by such a great cloud of witnesses, let us throw off everything that hinders and the sin that so easily entangles. And let us run with perseverance the race marked out for us, fixing our eyes on Jesus, the pioneer and perfecter of faith. For the joy set before him he endured the cross, scorning its shame, and sat down at the right hand of the throne of God. Consider him who endured such opposition from sinners, so that you will not grow weary and lose heart.”

5.7. Accessibility and Distribution.

My intention for providing access to this story is to publish it as an E-Book. Amazon Books (www.amazon.com) provides a facility for authors to self-publish, they offer their expertise in editing, formatting, creating covers and acquiring an ISBN, amongst other requirements. They handle accessibility, arrange the system of payment to the author and help organise the tax requirements. Readers can therefore gain access through Amazon and copies can be downloaded onto their computers or Kindles.

In order to promote this book I intend to draw awareness through ministry opportunities, arranging teaching and equipping seminars, my website (which is currently under construction) and face book.

Where people cannot afford a copy, yet desperately desire one I will arrange costs and payment. My idea is to keep it accessible and available as a ministry tool in my quest to correct injustice and redeem the daughters of Pandora.

Chapter 6.

Conclusion.

In my final chapter I will produce a summary of my research and conclusions. Under the format of my proposal that forms chapter 1, I will present my deductions and suppositions derived from this thesis.

6.1. Final Summaries.

1.1.2 Chapter 2

The Roots and History of Misogynist Thoughts and Practices.

In chapter 2, I set out to explore the various philosophies, religions and politics that proliferated throughout the ancient Hebrew, Greek and Roman Empires, and how they have influenced our present understanding of the role of women in church leadership positions. My research has attempted to adopt a christocentric model from which to view the prevailing philosophies and societal practices throughout history covering Judaism, Greek and Roman philosophers, politicians and physicians and first century Palestine in comparison to the ministry of Jesus. In exploring the roots of modern misogynist philosophy, I was first of all compelled to look into the controversy surrounding the interpretation of the Genesis account of Creation and The Fall. (Chapters 1-3) One of the pivotal debates has centred on God's original order in Creation and how that affects gender roles. There are those scholars, with whom I agree, that believe that our understanding of God's Word on the Creation account provides the foundation for God's intent for mankind. They posit that the purpose of the relationship between male and female can be understood through their interpretations of these passages of Scripture. Were male and female both made in the image of God? What is meant by a 'Helper'? What were their unique roles? Are the

'curses' of The Fall punishments to be enforced or consequences of disobedience? Are we to seek liberty from or acceptance of these? How does Christ's redemptive work on the cross apply?

A reading of the Old Testament reveals a strong patriarchal society base in Hebrew history. The practice of polygamy and ownership reveals an attitude that places a reduced value on women. There are many stories relating horrendous treatment of women without comment. The problem becomes therefore a speculative one. - Does the Bible have anything to say to women? Does God endorse their treatment? How does the good news of salvation apply in relation to the patriarchal and misogynist practices found in the Old Testament? It is these and other vital questions that I have had to wrestle with in this thesis, and is the very same questions that continue to fuel the fierce controversy.

In exploring the roles that the Greek and Roman philosophies and religion have had on our understanding of God's intention for women, I have seen an insidious influence affecting our views. The Greek poets - Homer (8th Century B.C), through his works in '*The Odyssey*' and '*The Iliad*', and Hesiod (7th Century B.C) in his work '*The Theogyny*', formed the backdrop for the gods and goddesses of Greek religion. (Specific to our study has been the myth of Pandora as the progenitor of all evil). Semonides' (6th Century B.C.) Views of an animal ontology of woman provided a base for all modern misogyny. Physicians - Hippocrates viewed a woman's health solely based on her gynaecology and related it directly to her purpose as a reproductive agent, and later Galen (2nd Century A.D.), who rejected any notion of a woman's value, insisting instead on Aristotle's view of her as being a deformed male. The philosophers (5th Century B.C. – 4th B.C.) – Socrates, Plato and Aristotle, built on the foundations of the poets and it was through Alexander's conquests in the 4th century B.C, that such thought spread throughout much of the known world.

The Roman Empire, which arose in the 2nd century, after their conquest of Alexander's territories, adopted much of Greek thought and religion. Gods and

goddesses were given Roman names and influenced every sector of society. It was through the Vestal religion that the notion of a man being the priest of his own home arose. A wife was responsible to keep the sacred home fires burning, the centre around which the priest functioned. Punishment for the serious crime of neglecting the fire could result in harsh punishment or even banishment. As in Greek society, the lack of authority a woman had over her own body and over the life of her new born as one example, illustrates the fact that she held no status as an equal in marriage or in life.

These attitudes throughout history, from three of the most influential cultures, have greatly impacted on how women were viewed and were to be treated.

Such was the case on the scene into which Jesus stepped. Assuming as a given that Jesus the Son is God in the flesh, and that in order to understand the will and intention of God we need to explore the teachings and practices of Jesus. In His relationships with women we can garner a picture of God's heart for His children. Those proponents of a hierarchal view of gender roles often base their arguments on the fact that Jesus chose only 12 men as His disciples. As previously discussed in chapter 2, in first century Israel, women were considered second-class citizens akin to slaves. The fact that they are mentioned as avid followers of Jesus is unusual – both that they would be allowed to follow him with his disciples, and unusual that the authors of Jesus' biographies would mention their presence at all.

As women were not afforded the education of their brothers, their duties were relegated to caring for the home, children and the instruction of younger women. The very notion that a woman could learn from a Rabbi was unthinkable.

Although Jesus rose above the social norms of the time, and often chose to do something specifically controversial in order to challenge the authorities, it was not His mission to cause *unnecessary* antagonism, or to distract His disciples to temptation. It was His desire though that those who wish to be taught were given every opportunity regardless of gender.

As discussed, there was another far more important reason why Jesus chose who He did. In bringing a New Covenant, Jesus brought the fulfilment of the Old. The Abrahamic Covenant provided the state of Israel with twelve tribes as the foundation of a people chosen by God. Likewise as Jesus came to fulfil the law, this Kingdom would find itself built upon the testimony of the twelve disciples. Therefore I am not persuaded that Jesus' choice of males would discount women as leaders, as is proven by His dealings with some prominent women in His life.

These women filled their roles in the life of Jesus as:

The vessel of divinity (Mary, Jesus' mother); Apostles (Mary Magdalene); Prophets (Elizabeth, Anna); Evangelists (Samaritan woman at the well); ministers (Martha, Mary, Woman with the alabaster jar); the recipients of revelation (Martha); Benefactors (Joanna, Susannah); Witnesses to the crucifixion and resurrection (Mary Magdalene, Mary the Mother of Jesus and Mary the mother of James and John).

Therefore, enough evidence exists to conclude that Jesus' intention was to elevate and dignify the women of His generation. He came at a time in history that was steeped in patriarchal and misogynist ideologies and norms. Women were afforded no opportunity for equality with men, and yet He treated them with the same respect. He allowed women to be ministered to and to minister to Him. He taught women and equipped them to participate fully in His Great Commission. He confronted injustice as a subversive in His treatment of women. He did not however cause controversy when to do so would have detracted from His mission, yet His behaviour must be duly noted.

6.1.3. Chapter 3.

The findings of an empirical study that focused on a random selection of males and females in leadership positions in various predominantly white, affluent English speaking churches in the Johannesburg area.

In chapter 3 I revealed the results of an empirical study conducted through questionnaires and interviews amongst various church leaders. Views of those who held to either a Complementarian or an Egalitarian stand, participated. I discovered ample misunderstanding on both sides as to what constitutes either position. Egalitarians were often perceived as dangerous feminists with less than altruistic motives, while Complementarians were often perceived as women-hating misogynists. While there does exist such extremes, and there are often overlaps, I discovered a need to take into consideration such perceptions when presenting my findings.

The Egalitarian position states that a male and a female are created equal in being and in function, and is often associated with the term 'feminism'. This term unfortunately is one that is seen as provocative, giving rise to suspicion and antagonism amongst those who hold to a Complementarian position. This is often what gives rise to much misunderstanding. However, when broken down over a spectrum, I have identified the broad sub-groups. Complementarians argue that a hierarchal order (the affirmation of male authority over females) was established before The Fall supporting their contention that God intended that a woman is to be subject to her husband. The spectrum of adherence to how rigidly this doctrine should be applied was likewise broadly categorized as illustrated in chapter 3.

From my collected data, I discovered that the most vitriolic opinions were expressed by males within the Complementarian camp, whilst the women often compliantly accepted and defended the doctrines of their church affiliations. From this response I deduced that those male leaders could possibly be responding to their own insecurity and fear.

Finally, the conclusion I've reached from this study is a sad indictment on the church. The unnecessary pain and misunderstanding has resulted in a tragic division in the church. Sadly, a resultant disempowerment of those individuals who have felt called by God to ministry leadership has led to a heartrending loss

to the Body of Christ. My conviction of the need to educate, demonstrate, heal and empower the marginalized in our churches remains steadfast.

6.1.4. Chapter 4.

An exegesis of a selection of key words and concepts found in 1 Corinthians 11: 3-16 and 1 Timothy 2:8-14 that pertain to the controversy surrounding women's role in church leadership.

In Chapter 4 I undertook the challenge of producing a hermeneutic that would bring about a deeper understanding of the meaning of Paul's words to the Corinthians and to Timothy in Ephesus, as pertaining to the conduct of women in these first century churches.

Within a contextualized exposition, I used a Historical/ Cultural/ Grammatical hermeneutic model. Contained in this process I have discussed both the Egalitarian and the Complementarian viewpoints, theologically considering both general and specific contextualization.

The significance of constructing a picture of the societal and religious practices was supportive of a better understanding of the contrasting doctrines. This was of significant import to our discussion in ascertaining the influence of misogynist ideologies, philosophies and religions that had become normative within those societies.

I discovered a strong link between the teachings of Philo of Alexandria, and the issues that provoked Paul into addressing the resultant abuses.

The grammatical contexts of the particular words and concepts discussed, is pivotal to the debate. The controversy over the meaning of the word 'head' (*kephale*) in 1 Corinthians 11 has raged throughout the millennia. The definition of this word can intelligently be supported by both the Complementarian and the Egalitarian camps. However I chose to define the word as a concept that can be harmonised with the practices of Paul in how he related to women.

Further debate has raged over the concept of 'the glory of' (*'kabod'*). Theologians have argued on one side that the woman was created by God mediatory through man. (Jamieson Fausset Brown) Others retort that both male and female were created in the image and glory of God.

Controversial concepts found in 1 Timothy 2, include the argument as to what Paul meant when he forbade a woman to teach or to have authority over a man. Taken within the religious and cultural context and the resultant false teaching in Ephesus at the time, I have quite reasonably deduced that the injunction was made to a specific issue.

As the situation in Ephesus was one whereby the cult of Artemis was sacred, a woman in the church could in all probability have been using authority in a domineering, manipulative manner. A Complementarian response is to found their interpretation of authority to mean 'rightly using' to a permanent injunction. This is made by appealing to the order in which Adam and Eve were created. They posit the suggestion that the sequence of creation is the determinant to the order of authority. In making their claim they often refer to the relationships within the God-head. Grudem and Piper for example, draw heavily on a Trinitarian Theology that purports a hierarchal order of authority between the Father, then the Son and the Holy Spirit. Based upon such an erroneous doctrine (it was deemed heretical by the early church fathers in the 5th century) is their argument for the subordination of woman to man.

The fact that Paul was joined by several women in his struggle for the gospel, women he referred to as 'fellow workers', stands in contrast to his seeming prohibition against women teaching authoritatively. Paul brought special attention to several notable women, and to the roles women in general were expected to fulfil. Various prominent women are mentioned in scripture filling roles such as, prophets, pastors, teachers, evangelists, and at least one apostle. As such they were given authority and responsibility for working towards spreading the gospel. It seems highly unlikely therefore that Paul would forbid women from ministering from their giftedness, and lay down a permanent prohibition.

My concluding opinion garnered from my exegesis of these key words and concepts can be summed up as follows:

God created male and female in His image and glory. He was their Source, and their Authority. There existed an uninterrupted relationship between God's creation and Himself, therefore there was not the need for another mediator. The consequences of their disobedience resulted in a perversion of their relationships between themselves and their Creator. Therefore I am persuaded that God's original intent for male and female is equality in creation and function. As sin gained its dominion, mankind moved into depravity and the relationship between the sexes became poisoned.

6.1.5. Chapter 5.

The outline for a fiction novel drawing on the research I have completed for this thesis is presented in chapter 5.

The essential need for a strategy for empowering women to have the confidence to stand in their calling has been the motivating factor for this study. The idea of a fiction novel that would provide a means for readers to gain insight into the lives of the characters shaped my intention to offer an accessible means for learning. I intend to publish the novel with the view of using it as a ministry tool at any opportunity I am afforded. Amazon.com offers one such opportunity. Access to an e-book through the website and with the advent of the Kindle, literature can easily be down loaded. It is my desire that in reading this story, people will be encouraged to dig deeper into God's word finding for themselves a revelation of His will and purpose in creating woman.

My Final Conclusions.

After much prayer and soul-searching I have found peace through the witness of the Holy Spirit - the defining guide in this thesis. It is most crucial that as the

Teacher, the Guide and the Counsellor, it is His wisdom and leading upon whom I have relied. However it is His will that we seek the truth in His Holy Scriptures, evidence, and research to confirm in our own hearts His intentions. It has been on that venture that I have embarked.

Through my research and the study of scripture for this thesis I have arrived at a firm belief that God's intention for the male/female relationship is one of equality in both creation and function. I maintain that a distortion of this ideal relationship came as the consequences of The Fall, as distrust, blame and competition entered and divided. The dispute over whether a hierarchal order existed before The Fall or as its consequence is one that has split the church. The result has been catastrophic for women throughout history, as there are those who insist on enforcing a rigid application of their views. Those who have perpetuated the opinion that God's intention for women is their subjugation to men have given rise to much abuse throughout millenia.

I have discovered that many of the misapplications of God's purposes in creating woman have become magnified throughout history, as man has continued to turn their backs on God and immerse themselves in the pagan nations around them. A plurality of gods and worship were enticingly offered as the Hebrew population became assimilated with those countries. A woman became a commodity, and valued only for her productivity in the family and society. Misogyny, polygamy, and the partisan authority of the male became a reality in the nation of Israel.

Centuries later at the rise of the Greek Empire, poets introduced a multiplicity of gods and goddesses. Their myths sought to explain creation and the introduction of sin. They drew heavily on the account of the Creation story as related in Genesis and the role of Eve in The Fall. Their account of the reason for evil in the world rested squarely at the feet of the gods' formation of a woman, Pandora. She provided for the gods, a punishment for mankind for their disobedience and anarchy. Her role in Greek thought determined the way women were viewed and treated. Greek philosophers built their ideas around the notion of the poet's creation accounts resulting in the judicial formalization for the roles and value of women. As the empire spread throughout the known world, Hellenization of the

existing nations occurred. Greek religion and philosophy infiltrated societal norms.

The Roman Empire followed, adopting many of the god's and philosophies of the Greeks. And therefore the influence of the misogynist norms continued unabated, until God intervened.

I am convinced that Jesus, as reflecting perfectly the person of God, reinstated His plan to redeem mankind to their original relationships, with Himself and each other. In His death He carried the sins, took the punishment and nullified the curse that had resulted from the entrance of sin. He once again dignified all of mankind, regardless of gender, race, class and those designated as outcasts. He brought the good news of equality for all.

However, in following the mission instigated by Jesus, Paul faced the challenges intrinsic to the duplicities within the cultures of the first century. The first churches were made up of believers from multiple backgrounds, religions and politics. Many of them were uneducated slaves who were steeped in pagan religion and its influence. It is my deduction that Philo, a respected theologian and philosopher and a contemporary of Jesus and Paul, used his syncretist beliefs in influencing the teachings of the apostles. Abuses had inevitably infiltrated the churches, and Paul held the burden of responsibility to correct, admonish and bring order. It was in these contexts that Paul wrote the bulk of his letters, and specifically those he addressed to the Corinthians and to Timothy in Ephesus. The fact that his words would subsequently cause division, hostility and misappropriation in the churches that followed, would, I believe have grieved him as bringing shame on the gospel and the redeeming work of Christ.

I believe it is a sad indictment on the church as it has reneged on its profession of grace, humility and unity bringing a distorted message to the world around us. The numbers of those who see the church as being hypocritical, unloving and irrelevant should be alarming to those of us who claim to be the body of Christ. Those churches that are dogmatically enforcing their views for the subordination of females are I believe, bringing insult to the intelligence and dignity of women inside and outside the church. This is a grievous situation.

However, to offer complaints and passive appeals for equality is utterly ineffectual and unhelpful. Suggestions for teaching and demonstrating through example offered by many Egalitarian respondents to my questionnaires and interviews are invaluable for instigating change. It is my desire to publish the novel outlined in chapter 5 as a ministry tool to educate and bring empowerment to anyone who may be confused as to God's plan for those women called to church leadership.

My prayer is that all of us in the Body of Christ may remain open to the whisper and conviction of the Holy Spirit as we seek to bring glory to God.

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