

Today for my 2 cents: I would like to address the issues of female pastors, are they Biblical?

Below is an article from the C.A.R.M. website that I agree with, for it is based on the scriptures. Matt has done an excellent job pointing to the truth of scripture and addressing common objections.

I feel it is imperative the we be Biblically correct, not politically correct.

Should Women Be Pastors and Elders?

by [Matt Slick](#)

In a social climate of complete equality in all things, the biblical teaching of only allowing men to be pastors and elders is not popular. Many feminist organizations denounce this position as antiquated and chauvinistic. In addition, many Christian churches have adopted the "politically correct" social standard and have allowed women pastors and elders in the church. But the question remains, is this biblical?

My answer to this question is, "No, women are not to be pastors and elders." Many may not like that answer, but it is, I believe, an accurate representation of the biblical standard. You make the decision after reading this paper.

First of all, women are under-appreciated and under-utilized in the church. There are many gifted women who might very well do a better job at preaching and teaching than many men. However, it isn't gifting that is the issue, but God's order and calling. What does the Bible say? We cannot come to God's word with a social agenda and make it fit our wants. Instead, we must change and adapt to what it says.

In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth, the garden of Eden, and Adam and Eve. He put Adam in the garden and gave him the authority to name all the animals. Afterwards, God made Eve as a helper to Adam.¹ This is an important concept because Paul refers to the order of creation in his epistle to Timothy when he discusses the relationship between men and women in the church context. Let's take a look.

"But I do not allow a woman to teach or exercise authority over a man, but remain quiet. For it was Adam who was first created, and then Eve. And it was not Adam who was deceived, but the woman being quite deceived, fell into transgression" ([1 Tim. 2:12-14](#) -- all quotes from the Bible are from the NASB). This passage has several interesting areas of discussion, but for our purpose we will focus on authority. At the very least, there is an authority structure set up by God. The woman is not to have authority over the man in the church context. But this does not extend to the political/economic world. In the Old Testament Deborah was a judge in Israel over men. Also, in the New Testament, Phoebe played an important role in the church at Cenchrea (Romans 16). There is no doubt that women supported Paul in many areas and were great helpers in the church (Act 2:17; 18:24; 21:8). But what Paul is speaking of in 1 Tim. 2 is the relationship between men and women in the church structure, not in a social or political context.

When we look further at Paul's teachings we see that the bishop/overseer is to be the husband of one wife ([1 Tim. 3:2](#)) who manages his household well and has a good reputation ([1 Tim. 3:4-5, 7](#)). Deacons must be "men of dignity" ([1 Tim. 3:8](#)). Paul then speaks of women in verse 11 and their obligation to receive instruction. Then in verse 12, Paul says "Let deacons be husbands of one wife..." Again, in [Titus 1:5-7](#), Paul says, "For this reason I left you in Crete, that you might set in order what remains, and appoint elders in every city as I directed you, namely, if any man be above reproach, the husband of one wife, having children who believe, not accused of dissipation or rebellion. For the overseer must be above reproach as God's steward..." Notice that Paul interchanges the word 'elder' and 'overseer'.

In each case, the one who is an elder, deacon, bishop, or overseer is instructed to be male. He is the husband of one wife, responsible, able to "exhort in sound doctrine and to refute those who contradict" ([Titus 1:9](#)). We see no command for the overseers to be women. On the contrary, women are told to be "dignified, not malicious gossips, but temperate, faithful in all things" ([1 Tim. 3:11](#)). Why is it that it is the men who are singled out as the overseers? It is because of the created order of God that Paul references (Gen. 1-2; [1 Tim. 2:12-14](#)). This is not merely a social custom that fell away with ancient Israel.

Additionally, in the Old Testament in over 700 mentions of priests, every single one was a male. There is not one instance of a female priest. This is significant because priests were ordained by God to hold a very important office of ministering the sacrifices. This was not the job of women.

Therefore, from what I see in Genesis 1-2, 1 Timothy 2, and Titus 1, the normal and proper person to hold the office of elder/pastor is to be a man.

What About Galatians 3:28?

"There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free man, there is neither male nor female; for you are all one in Christ Jesus," ([Gal. 3:28](#)).

This verse is often used to support the idea that women can hold the offices of elder and pastor because there is neither male nor female in Christ. The argument states that if we are all equal, then women can be pastors.

Unfortunately, those who use this verse this way have failed to read the context. Verse 23 talks about being under the Law "before faith came" and how we are brought closer to Jesus and have become sons of God by faith. We are no longer under law, but grace and we are "Abraham's offspring, heirs according to the promise," (v. 29).² The point of this passage is that we are all saved by God's grace according to the promise of God and that it doesn't matter who you are, Jew, Greek, slave, free, male, or female. All are saved the same way, by grace. In that, there is neither male nor female.

This verse is not talking about church structure. It is talking about salvation "in Christ." It cannot be used to support women as pastors because that isn't what it is talking about. Instead, to find out about church structure and leadership, you need to go to those passages that talk about it: 1 Timothy 2 and Titus 1.

Being a Pastor or Elder is to be in Authority

God is a God of order and balance. He has established order within the family ([Gen. 3:16](#); [1 Cor. 11:3](#); [Eph. 5:22-33](#); [Col. 3:18-21](#)) and the church ([1 Tim. 2:11-14](#); [1 Cor. 11:8-9](#)). Even within the Trinity there is an order, a hierarchy. The Father sent the Son ([John 6:38](#)) and both the Father and the Son sent the Holy Spirit ([John 14:26](#); [15:26](#)). Jesus said, "For I have come down from heaven, not to do My own will, but the will of Him who sent Me," ([John 6:38](#)). It is clear that God is a God of order and structure.

In creation, God made Adam first and then Eve to be his helper. This is the order of creation. It is this order that Paul mentions in [1 Tim. 2:11-14](#) when speaking of authority. Being a pastor or an elder is to be in the place of authority. Therefore, within the church, for a woman to be a pastor or elder, she would be in authority of men in the church which contradicts what Paul says in [1 Tim. 2:11-14](#).

But Doesn't This Teaching Belittle Women?

No, male leadership does not belittle women. Jesus was given his authority by God the Father ([Matt. 28:18](#)). He was sent by God ([John 6:38](#)). He said the Father was greater than He ([John 14:28](#)). Did this belittle Jesus? Of

course not. Women are of great value in the church and need to be used more and more according to the gifts given them.

Does the wife's submission to the husband mean that she is less than the husband, less important, or belittled? Again, not at all. Not having a place of leadership in the church does not mean a woman is less of a person, less important to God, or inferior. All are equal before God whether it be Jew, Gentile, free, slave, male, or female. But in the church, God has set up an order the same way he set one up in the family. The chain of command is Jesus, the man, the wife, and the children.

What About Women Who Say They are Called By God to Be Pastors?

There are women pastors in the world who love their congregations and have stated that they are called by God to be pastors. Of course, I cannot agree with this considering the previous analysis of the biblical position. Instead, I believe they have usurped the position of men and gone against the norm of scriptural revelation. Additionally, those who state that they are called by God because of the great job they are doing and the gifting they have received are basing their theology upon experience and not scripture.

The issue is simple: are they submitting to the word of God or are they making the word of God submit to their desires?

What About a Missionary Woman Who Establishes a Church?

Scripture establishes the norm. As Christians we apply what we learn from the word, to the situations at hand. So, what about the situation where a woman missionary has converted a group of people, say in the jungle somewhere, and she has established a church? In that church, she is then functioning as a pastor and teacher having authority over men in the church. Should she not do this?

First of all, she should not be out there alone. She should be with her husband or, at the very least, under the oversight of a church body in the presence of other women and men. Missionary work is not a lone endeavor to be handled by single women.

Second, if in some highly unusual set of circumstances there is a woman in a lone situation, it is far more important that the word of God be preached and the gospel of salvation go forth to the lost than not. Whether it be male or female, let the gospel be spoken. However, I would say that as soon as there is/are males mature enough to handle eldership, that she should then establish the proper order of the church as revealed in scripture and thereby, show her submission to it.

Does this also mean that women shouldn't wear jewelry?

"Likewise, I want women to adorn themselves with proper clothing, modestly and discreetly, not with braided hair and gold or pearls or costly garments; 10 but rather by means of good works, as befits women making a claim to godliness. 11 Let a woman quietly receive instruction with entire submissiveness. 12 But I do not allow a woman to teach or exercise authority over a man, but to remain quiet. 13 For it was Adam who was first created, and then Eve," ([1 Tim. 2:9-13](#)).

Some argue that if we are to forbid women to be elders then the context of [1 Tim. 2:9-13](#) demands that we require women to not have braided hair, wear gold, or have costly garments. Since no one wants to put that sort of a demand on a woman (since it is cultural), then why should we also demand that they not be elders since it would logically follow that it was also a culturally based admonition?

The problem here is that multifaceted. First, the objection ignore what the scriptures plainly teach about the elder being the husband of one wife. Second, it fails to address the real issue of biblical headship residing in the male. Third, it fails to properly exegete the scripture in question.

In [1 Tim. 2:9-13](#) Paul tells us that women should be modestly dressed. He uses the example of then present day adornment as an example of what not to do, definitely culturally based assessment by Paul. Notice that Paul emphasizes good works and godliness as a qualifier (as does Peter, see [1 Pet. 3:2](#)). This is not a doctrinal statement tied to anything other than being a godly woman in appearance as well as attitude.

In verse 11, Paul says that a woman should quietly receive instruction. Please note that "The word, *heusychia*, translated "quietness" in [1 Timothy 2:11](#) and silent in verse 12, does not mean complete silence or no talking. It is clearly used elsewhere ([Acts 22:2](#); [2 Thes. 3:12](#)) to mean "settled down, undisturbed, not unruly. A different word (*σιγαου*) means "to be silent, to say nothing" (cf. [Luke 18:39](#); [1 Cor. 14:34](#))."³ Paul is advocating orderliness in this verse.

Then in verse 12-13, Paul says, "But I do not allow a woman to teach or exercise authority over a man, but to remain quiet. 13 For it was Adam who was first created, and then Eve." Notice that Paul directly relates the authority issue with the created order. He does not do this with the woman's dress code. Therefore, the dress code can be seen as cultural and the authority issue as doctrinal since the later is tied to the creation order and the dress code and authority issue are not, especially since they are separated by the conjunction "but" which is showing contrast, i.e., here we have one thing, but over here we have another.

Conclusion

God's word clearly tells us that the elder is to be the husband of one wife. A woman cannot qualify for this position by virtue of her being female. Whether anyone likes it or not is irrelevant to the fact that this is what the Bible teaches.

A response to a paper arguing for women being pastors

Following is a letter written by a pastor to a friend of mine. My friend asked me to review it. I'm hoping that my review finds its way back to the Pastor and that the Pastor is encouraged to stand more tightly with the word of God. But, who am I to correct a pastor? I'm no body. But, all of us are subject to the word of God and it is through an appeal to Scripture, correcting interpretive errors, and pointing out errors in logic that we hope to encourage the pastor and readers to adhere more closely to God's word in this matter.

The opinion of CARM is that the world is slowly creeping into the Christian Church in various forms such as contemplative prayer, and over-board concern for seeker sensitivity, in various forms of political correctness, i.e., women pastors, being a manifestation of the latter error.

As Christians we are obligated to follow the word of God in all that it has revealed whether it is convenient or inconvenient and whether or not the world approves. We answer to God.

The original letter is in brown the text and CARM's response is in green. We have replaced the name and initials of the church with "-----".

Finally, we are hesitant to be critical of a fellow pastor. The Bible says that we are to be careful when addressing elders in the church. We mean no disrespect to the pastor of the congregation who we believe loves the people of God. But, since we are all in the same boat, we are sinners, we need a body of Christ to help us stay on track.

ORIGINAL: SEVERAL OF OUR FAMILY MEMBERS ARE CONCERNED WITH THE RECENT ADDITION OF A FEMALE TO THE STAFF WITH THE TITLE, 'PASTOR.' CAN "-----"yeah BIBLICALLY SUPPORT SUCH A DECISION (THE ORDAINING OF WOMEN)?

Allow me to first address those of you who have come to (Church name removed) for any length of time and have heard me address the role of men and women both in the home and the church. If you have attended the "-----" Pre-marriage Class," you know that I believe the Bible (our final authority) teaches that the man is the head of the home even as Christ is the head of the Church. ([Eph 5:23](#)) Furthermore, since I can remember, I have said (and not to everyone's liking) that "matriarchal" systems do not work anywhere in the world because it is contrary to God's plan. I have not changed my position. This is what I believe and it is what I believe the Bible teaches. This is evidenced in cultures where the male is absent; it is equally emphasized where a single mother must assume responsibilities created specifically for the man. (How our single moms need our prayers and support!) Therefore, to those of you that believe because we have added to our staff a woman "pastor" I have changed my position on this matter, be assured, I have not.

Secondly, I believe the real struggle with having a woman assume "pastoral" responsibilities is not so much in her role as with her "title." I'll address this in just a moment. Allow me to first state the Church's position on "women pastors" as set down in our guidelines for a Church plant.

CHURCH PLANT - CRITERIA

e. As to the following controversial issues which have torn apart, rather than united, the church, [three are named - Eternal Security, Tongues and Women in Ministry] a plant must hold the following posture concerning ... Women in Ministry:

CARM: While it is true that it is a three above named issues have divided the church, it has not been because the issues are not discernible. Rather, it is due to Christians have not been gracious. "Love is the perfect bond of unity," ([Col. 3:14](#)). Division occurs when Christians lack the proper grace and love from our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. Nevertheless, we should not guarantee unity of the cost of doctrinal truth. There are times to divide.

ORIGINAL: Women in Ministry

We believe, as Scripture teaches, that a woman may possess every spiritual gift that a man possesses. However, we strongly hold that God has clearly given specific roles to woman and men, even as He has given specific roles to a husband and wife. [Ephes. 5:23](#) clearly states:

CARM: First, this Pastor's initial premise is in error. Contrary to what he states, it is not possible for a woman to possess every spiritual gift that a man possesses. A woman cannot be a father. Furthermore, the spiritual gift of being an elder/pastor is something only the male is called to per divine revelation. The Bible says that the bishop/overseer is to be the husband of one wife ([1 Tim. 3:2](#)). Again, in [Titus 1:5-7](#), Paul says, "For this reason I left you in Crete, that you might set in order what remains, and appoint elders in every city as I directed you, namely, if any man be above reproach, the husband of one wife, having children who believe, not accused of dissipation or rebellion. For the overseer must be above reproach as God's steward..." Notice that Paul interchanges the word 'elder' and 'overseer'. It is God who gives gifts to the Church and one of the gifts is the pastor/elder. By definition, a pastor is an elder.

Second, let's take a look at God's word concerning eldership. We must know what God's word says specifically about pastoring/eldership before we draw our conclusions. (We have provided an outline of information on eldership at the end of this paper from which the following is extracted.)

1. The Term "Elder" The Greek term is presbuteros and depending on context means elder, an old man, a leader in the church. The term is used. It is used of the elder of two persons ([Luke 15:25](#), or more, [John 8:9](#)); of a person advanced in age ([Acts 2:17](#); in [Heb. 11:2](#)); of the forefathers in Israel ([Matt. 15:2](#); [Mark 7:3,5](#)); of members of the Sanhedrin ([Matt. 16:21](#); [26:47](#)); of those who managed public affairs in the various cities ([Luke 7:3](#)); of those who were the heads or leaders of the tribes and families, as of the seventy who helped Moses ([Num. 11:16](#); [Deut. 27:1](#)). This included:
2. Regarding the Office:
 1. The pastor is an elder who preaches and/or teaches ([1 Tim. 5:17](#)).
 1. The pastor (elder) is to equip the body of Christ ([Eph. 4:11-13](#)).
 2. Must be a man ([1 Tim. 2:9-13](#)).
 1. All uses of "elder" are in the masculine except for [1 Tim. 5:2](#) where it means older women.
3. The Responsibilities of Elders in the NT Church:
 1. Must shepherd the flock ([1 Peter 5:2](#)).
 2. They have the tasks of teaching ([1 Tim. 5:17](#); [Titus 1:5,9](#)).
 3. They have the tasks of acting as judges ([Acts 15:2,6,22-29](#); [16:4](#)).
4. Qualifications for an elder
 1. Must be above reproach ([Titus 1:6](#); [1 Tim. 3:2](#))
 2. Husband of one wife ([Titus 1:6](#); [1 Tim. 3:2](#)).
 3. Household must be in order with children who believe ([Titus 1:6](#); [1 Tim. 3:4](#)).
 4. Not a new convert ([1 Tim. 3:6](#)).
 5. Self controlled and temperate ([Titus 1:7](#); [1 Tim. 3:2](#)).
 6. Honorable, hospitable, seeking good ([Titus 1:7](#)).
 7. Have a good reputation ([1 Tim. 3:7](#)).
 8. Able to exhort (teach) sound doctrine ([Titus 1:9](#); [1 Tim. 3:2](#)).
 9. Able to refute false teaching ([Titus 1:9](#)).

Important: Please take special note of section two outlined above where the declaration from God's Word is that the pastor/elder is to be male and that the elder is one who teaches. A pastor of a church stands in the pulpit, the place of authority and teaches from God's word. By nature, the teaching of God's word, in the pulpit, is an authoritative act. This is why it is to be done by an elder who is appointed in the church. Let's look further into God's word.

[1 Peter 5:1-3](#), "Therefore, I exhort the elders among you, as your fellow elder and witness of the sufferings of Christ, and a partaker also of the glory that is to be revealed, 2 shepherd the flock of God among you, exercising oversight not under compulsion, but voluntarily, according to the will of God; and not for sordid gain, but with eagerness; 3 nor yet as lording it over those allotted to your charge, but proving to be examples to the flock.

1. In [1 Peter 5:1-3](#), every occurrence of the word "elder(s)" is in the masculine form in the Greek.
2. The elder is to shepherd the flock. A pastor is a shepherd.
3. The elder/pastor oversees the flock.
4. Therefore, the pastor is an elder of the church.

Since God has declared the elder is to be the husband of one wife (at the very least a male), it is not possible for a woman to hold this position. Therefore, this Pastor's premise that "a woman may possess every spiritual gift that a man possesses" is shown to be incorrect. Furthermore, the word of God declares the pastor/elder is to be male.

If this Pastor in his initial paper were to build upon such a faulty premise, his conclusions are suspect. Let's see.

ORIGINAL: For the husband is the head of the wife as Christ is the head of the church, his body, of which he is the Savior.

We therefore believe that a woman can be ordained and function in any role if that role is under the authority of a male Senior Pastor. In other words, our understanding of Scripture is that a woman should not function in the role of Senior Pastor when a qualified male is present.

CARM: We fail to see the connection between his first (and erring) premise and the conclusion he draws. The Bible makes no condition of acceptability of a woman being an ordained pastor as long as there's a male Senior Pastor present. This is a fabrication. It is not in the Bible. Furthermore, the Scripture that he quotes in [Ephesians 5:23](#) is dealing with the husband-and-wife relationship and not with the church elder authority. Therefore, this person has misused the Scripture and is misapplying it. In other words, he has made the exit difficult fallacy of transferring the context of one verse over to another. This is a common and serious mistake.

ORIGINAL: Here is Biblical support for the above position. Scripture clearly states that "There is neither Jew nor Greek, slave nor free, male nor female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus." [Galatians 3:28](#) Obviously, Paul is speaking of our spiritual place in the Kingdom of God -- for some were still Jews and Greeks by birth, male and female by gender, and slave or free by position. However, in Christ we have been set free from the law of sin and death therefore we are "one in Him." This is the heart of God and this is what we should look for throughout Scripture - the heart of God.

CARM: There are two problems with the above paragraph. First, [Galatians 3:28](#) is dealing with salvation, not with church headship. This is a verse that is very frequently misused in support of the position that a woman can be a pastor/elder. The context of [Gal. 3:28](#) is dealing with there being **no differentiation in salvation among nationality and gender. It is not talking about eldership.** Therefore, it does not lend itself to the issue of male headship in the Christian Church. This is a serious exegetical error made by this pastor.

Second, what is "the heart of God" that the pastor introduces here? Though it is commendable to seek the heart of God, we must be careful when using a subjective and biblically undefined statement when trying to build a doctrine. Granted that the heart of God can mean many things, but without an explicit statement in scripture concerning it, what right does this Pastor have to use the phrase in support of his position?

Incidentally, the only two occurrences of the phrase "the heart of God" occurs in [Ezekiel 28:2](#), and 6, "...Yet you are a man and not God, although you make your heart like the heart of God... 6 Therefore, thus says the Lord God, 'Because you have made your heart

Like the heart of God, ⁷ Therefore, behold, I will bring strangers upon you..." As you can see, its definition is not given. Since it is best to let the Bible interpret the Bible, it is not wise to introduce this phrase in an attempt to support the Biblical position about women pastors . . . especially since the word of God seems to be clear that the pastor is an elder and the elder is to be male.

Original: What is God's heart concerning women in ministry? That is the question I would like to answer. By addressing this issue we answer the question: "Can a woman be ordained and can she hold the title of 'pastor'?"

The word "pastor" derives its meaning from English-French culture based on a Latin word which means "to feed." Literally - "a herdsman," or one "who feeds and cares for the sheep." With this in mind, does God permit a woman to feed and care for "his own?" This is the question at hand. So rather than play games with semantics, let's go to the Book and see if God has used women to "pastor" his own.

CARM: This Pastor is in danger of the fallacy of equivocation. To equivocate means to change the meaning of words during a discussion without clarifying that change. The word "pastor" in the Bible (as is the context of this discussion) is by definition a male since the pastor is an elder and the elder is to be the husband of one wife. But to use the definition of the word pastor to mean one who cares for his own and then say that since a woman cares for her own, therefore she's a pastor, is a violation of the biblical use of that term which occurs only once in [Eph. 4:11](#) -- which usage is in the masculine form in the Greek.

The issue is not if a woman can care for her own, or care for people. We agree that women have a great ability to nurture. God undoubtedly recognizes this since he created that ability in them. But, if it is true that a woman's nurturing ability qualifies her as big a pastor, then why is God so clear about the elder being the husband of one wife? (The answer deals with a concept called Federal Headship which we will address at the end of the paper).

This pastor has failed to consider the logic of his position. If pastoring means watching out and caring for people in your charge, then unbelievers can be pastors as well since they too can oversee people in their charge with great care. Does this then mean that unbelievers can be pastors? This is the kind of logic that this pastor is using in his argument and it is obviously fallacious.

ORIGINAL: I believe our first example of a woman shepherding a flock, under the authority of a male senior shepherd, was Miriam. She appeared to be the Pastor of Creative Arts. In [Exodus 15:20-21](#) we read: Then Miriam the prophetess ... took a tambourine in her hand, and all the women followed her, with tambourines and dancing. [21] Miriam sang "

Not only does Miriam direct the choir, drama and dance, but she speaks for God - she is a prophetess. In fact, the words that God has given her are repeated by all ... even to this day.

The fact that Miriam spoke for God and helped Moses shepherd the Israelite nation becomes even clearer when she and her brother Aaron speak against Moses (their brother). Both Miriam and Aaron said: "Has the Lord spoken only through Moses?" they asked. "Hasn't he also spoken through us?" In verse six of this Chapter, God says He has spoken through Aaron and Miriam through dreams and vision, but with Moses face to face. (This is a great lesson in not lifting up one's hand against God's "senior pastor," but that is another matter we will address at a later time.)

CARM: Miriam was the Pastor of Creative Arts? He is reading into the text far too much.

Miriam was a prophetess, not an elder or a pastor. The Old Testament setting was not the same as the New Testament church. Paul and the apostles knew very well about Miriam and you find no reference to her in support of women eldership. What you do find in scripture are distinct and clear declarations that the elder/pastor is to be male. There is no qualification in scripture for "under the headship of a male" in the female pastorate.

We know that many people would like to include this in the Scriptures so as to make more palatable the idea of equality among the sexes (because they are listening to the secular). However, like it or not, the male and female each have their respective roles as stated in scripture. The elder is to be the husband of one wife. A pastor is an elder as is demonstrated in [1 Peter 5:1-3](#). Therefore, a pastor, in the church context, is to be male. The author of this article should not take an Old Testament non-church-context about a prophetess and transport it into the pastoral epistles' church-context thereby overriding the clear declaration of Scripture regarding who is to be the elder.

ORIGINAL: The second example of a woman shepherding God's people is found in Judges. (Remember, we are looking for God's heart - the spirit of the law evidenced by example.) [Judges 4:4-5](#) tells us, Deborah, a prophetess, the wife of Lappidoth, was leading Israel at that time. [5] She held court under the Palm of Deborah between Ramah and Bethel in the hill country of Ephraim, and the Israelites came to her to have their disputes decided. Two significant details are addressed by the Spirit in these two verses:

CARM: This is the first mention of what he means by "God's heart". He defines it as the spirit of the law evidenced by example. He offers a subjective definition by using the phrase "spirit of the law". Do not be swayed by the appeal of subjective, heart-oriented words and phrases. Instead, stick to what God toward actually says or you will end up in error.

ORIGINAL: 1) As a wife, Deborah is submissive to her husband's headship - "Deborah ... the wife of Lappidoth." As a woman serving with pastoral gifts is submissive to the male senior pastor's authority - recall Jesus appointed no woman apostles - so the wife is to submit to her husband's authority (wherever and whenever it does not transgress the Word of God). With that said, let us keep in mind that Jesus and the apostles used many woman to help care for and bring the lost to salvation. ([Mark 15:41](#); [Luke 8:2](#); [John 4: 28-20, 39](#); [Act 18:18,26](#); [Col 4:15](#))

CARM: Where is the senior pastor in the life of Deborah as revealed in the Old Testament citation? It is not there. Remember, the idea of a pastor in the Christian Church is just that, in the Christian Church which is founded on Jesus Christ. Jesus appointed apostles and the apostles appointed elders. The apostles taught us that the pastor is an elder who teaches ([1 Tim. 5:17](#)) and that the elder is to be a man ([1 Tim. 2:9-13](#); . We repeat this on purpose. [1 Peter 5:1-3](#))

What this author has done is take a New Testament word and church office, ignored the definitive declaration of the pastoral epistles regarding the gender of the elder, and then impose upon an Old Testament context upon the New Testament concept.

Remember, unbelievers can have pastoral gifts, helping, guiding, protecting, teaching, etc. Does this qualify them for being called a pastor? The way this author is using the term you would have to say that even unbelievers would be qualified as pastors since what he's doing is taking the term pastor, using a broad definition of it (excluding the male eldership qualification), and applying it to Old Testament women and then transferring it back to the New Testament church. This is very poor biblical interpretive methodology.

ORIGINAL: 2) Deborah led Israel, that is she was the final authority. This was not God's plan (that a woman would govern men - as the chapter bears out in the story of Barak and Jael), but as our Church Plant Criteria states, where no man is present, or better worded, where no man assumes his God-given role, God will use a woman. (Women do this today. As single mothers, they assume a double role, and God graciously assists - but that is not His plan.)

CARM: Correction, God was the final authority in Israel.

The fact that there are women pastors particularly in the American church, is a sign of two important failures. First, it demonstrates that there are many churches that do not take the word of God seriously in the matter of male headship. Second, it further demonstrates the failure of men to heed the call of God, to step up and be responsible as godly men, and to stand for righteousness whether they (or church congregations and pastors) like it or not. To rationalize that because men are not doing their job, that God OKs women to do it, is a double edged sword. If it is true that God uses women when the men will not do what they're supposed to do, then it is because of the sin of men that women are pastors! The sword should cut at the heart of men who fail to answer the call of God.

Nevertheless, let's look at an exceptional case. Let's say that there was a woman pilot transporting 20 orphans during a war situation and they crash on a deserted island where they live isolated for two decades. Furthermore, this woman pilot is also a Christian and she takes the responsibility of teaching young children, male and female, about the Lord. In a sense, she's functioning as a pastor. Should we be so bold as to say that she should not teach the young manor that she is not functioning in a pastoral sense? Of course not. It is most certainly better at the gospel be preached than not.

But, are we to conclude that a woman and orphans on a deserted island qualifies the exception to the rule in regular churches? Are we to say that since is acceptable on a deserted island that we should do it in regular churches? Not at all. exceptions to the rule do not make the norm.

It seems that the author of the article is saying that because men are not doing what they're supposed to be doing, then it is then OK for women to be pastors. However, the pastor's church has hundreds of men upon which to draw (we are told there are several thousand attendees). If there are no men capable in a church of several thousand, then we assume that the pastor is not discipling various men in that church to bring them to the place of eldership. In other words, he is not doing his job in this respect. The right thing to do is raise up men and disciple them so that they can be elders according to the Scriptures.

ORIGINAL: The other reason why Deborah is used to shepherd (lead) Israel is because she was a prophetess - that is she heard and spoke for God. She was a prophet just as Moses, Samuel, Elijah and Daniel were prophets. Hence, because of her "spiritual gift," the people looked to her for counsel, direction and arbitration.

CARM: True. But does that mean that she is qualified to be an elder in the New Testament Christian church context? No. Furthermore, there are no more prophets and prophetesses in the Old Testament sense, of which Deborah was. (See [Luke 16:16](#)) Remember, the pastor is an elder who teaches ([1 Tim. 5:17](#)) and that the elder is to be a man ([1 Tim. 2:9-13](#); [1 Peter 5:1-3](#)).

ORIGINAL: So today, women who have spiritual gifts should not be denied a place in ministry because they are woman. The church can be enriched by the spiritual gifts God gives to women. Women have insights and natural intuitions that are peculiar to their gender - their contribution to the church, like the home, is invaluable. Again, the caution is to make sure those gifts are used in the role God has defined. God places every gift in context. When we decide to remove the context set by Scripture we turn life into death, the blessing into a curse.

CARM: We are not saying that women should be denied a place in ministry because they are women. We believe that women are greatly gifted and underutilized in the church. Even though we personally believe that many women may be far better than many male pastors, what I feel and what we want have no bearing whatsoever on what the word of God says. Again, the pastor is an elder who teaches ([1 Tim. 5:17](#)) and that the elder is to be a man ([1 Tim. 2:9-13](#); [1 Peter 5:1-3](#)).

The pastor of this article is correct in his last statement in the above paragraph. He should abide by it.

ORIGINAL: This could easily become a book - or at least a "Master's thesis." And, I am not unaware that I have not addressed the arguments to why women should not serve in pastoral capacities. However, it is not my purpose to do so in this format. My purpose is to simply state the position of the Trustees and Advisory Board of Prayer Ministries, Inc.

CARM: Actually, he did not address the issue of the clear declaration that the elder is a person who teaches ([1 Tim. 5:17](#)) and that the elder is to be a man ([1 Tim. 2:9-13](#); [1 Peter 5:1-3](#)), the husband of one wife. This is a very solid and essential declaration of scripture that, so far, he has not even touched. If he has not even examined such clear teaching of Scripture, can we trust his conclusion about women being pastors?

ORIGINAL: In conclusion, a final look at the married couple who accompanied St Paul on his second missionary journey - Aquila and Priscilla, and Nympha (Colossians 4) - whose home served as the church at Colosse, along with Phoebe who served in Cenchrea, makes it quite clear that women were certainly given pastoral responsibilities under the authority of men who were appointed as elders (senior pastors). Paul's letters continually place Priscilla's name in front of her husband's because she was the "type A" personality in the relationship (Acts 18; [Romans 16:3-5](#)) whose gifts were not only recognized by her husband but by the church at large.

CARM: Really? Where are they designated as pastors and elders? The Greek word for elder is 'presbuteros' in the pastoral epistles where it refers to church hierarchy and authority. In the pastoral epistles dealing with church authority and office, it is always without exception used in the male gender.

Here is the faulty argument that he is using.

1. A pastor is someone who exercises care over another.
2. Cite a woman, or women, in a home who cares for others.
3. State that she is qualified to be called a pastor.
4. Conclude that we can have female pastors in the church.

This is an absurd leap of logic.

ORIGINAL: Although Paul told the women in the Corinthian church to keep silent, he certainly did not give those instructions to Priscilla or Nympha. Why? Because both of these woman understood the word of God and were able to explain it with accuracy. ([2 Tim 2:15](#)) If the Holy Spirit allowed Deborah to govern a nation and Priscilla and Nympha to serve as assistant pastors in Corinth and Colosse, would it not behoove us to follow the same pattern? The answer is unequivocally "yes."

CARM: The reason Paul told the women in the Corinthian church to be quiet was most probably due to lack of proper order and the gathering of believers in the Corinthian context. Most probably, Paul did not need to construct Priscilla or Nympha to be quiet because there was no problem with the order and manners that they possessed. Obviously, Paul would not make the blatant mistake of saying to some women be quiet while encouraging others to speak if there was not a contextual reason for both. The pastor has not examined the contextual reasons yet he makes broad conclusions.

Nevertheless, how does this mean that a woman can be a pastor or elder? It does not. Furthermore, there is no problem at all with woman being able to understand and teach the word of God. But as we have seen the Scriptures clearly teach, the pastor is an elder who teaches ([1 Tim. 5:17](#)) and that the elder is to be a man ([1 Tim. 2:9-13](#); [1 Peter 5:1-3](#)). In order for this pastor to support a woman pastor in his church, is to ignore the pastoral epistles -- as he has done in his defense of his position -- and is a serious mistake.

CARM: Observations

1. This pastor who authored the original paper began with an erring premise, i.e., that a woman can possess any spiritual gift a man possesses in the church.
2. He is reading way too much into the context of Old Testament verses, i.e., citing Deborah "with pastoral gifts is submissive to the male senior pastor's authority."
3. He is erringly transporting Old Testament contexts into New Testament concepts of pastors.
4. He has misapplied [Galatians 3:28](#) which is dealing with salvation, not with pastoring and eldership.
5. He has not looked at the pastoral epistles regarding the qualifications for an elder which clearly defined them as being male. This is perhaps his biggest mistake.
6. He has used to broad definition of the term pastor and then applied overly broad definition to different contexts.

We are sure there are many who will not be happy the analysis of this pastor's defense of his position. All we can say is that we are they need to, as Christians, stick to the word of God and not listen to what they feel is right. The logic is simple and the Scriptures are clear. We do not need to rip verses from their context and commit interpretive fallacies when trying to uphold an agenda that we want the word of God to support.

What is Federal Headship?

Federal Headship is foreign to the modern mind, but it is a biblical concept. It is the teaching that the father is the one who represents his family, his descendents. Proof of this can be found in [Heb. 7:8-10](#).

"Here mortal men receive tithes, but there he receives them, of whom it is witnessed that he lives. 9Even Levi, who receives tithes, paid tithes through Abraham, so to speak, 10for he was still in the loins of his father when Melchizedek met him."

Levi was a distant descendent of Abraham, yet it is said that Levi paid tithes to Melchizedek even though he wasn't born. How is this so? We know that Levi did not physically carry out the act of paying tithes, but we do know that Abraham did and we also know that Abraham was the representative head of his descendents. This is how it can be said that Levi also paid tithes to Melchizedek.

Federal Headship also finds its place in the Epistle of Romans when Paul says in [Rom. 5:12-14](#),

"Therefore, just as through one man sin entered the world, and death through sin, and thus death spread to all men, because all sinned-¹³ (For until the law sin was in the world, but sin is not imputed when there is no law. ¹⁴Nevertheless death reigned from Adam to Moses, even over those who had not sinned according to the likeness of the transgression of Adam, who is a type of Him who was to come."

The Bible knowledge Commentary says, "The federal headship view considers Adam, the first man, as the representative of the human race that generated from him. As the representative of all humans, Adam's act of sin was considered by God to be the act of all people and his penalty of death was judicially made the penalty of everybody." [1](#) Also, "The federal headship of Adam presupposes and rests upon his natural headship. He was our natural head before he was our federal head. He was doubtless made our federal representative because he was our natural progenitor, and was so conditioned that his agency must affect our destinies, and because our very nature was on trial (typically if not essentially) in him. Whatever, therefore, of virtue in this explanation the natural headship of Adam may be supposed to contain the federal theory retains." [2](#) Therefore, it should be clear that Adam represented us and when he fell, we fell.

But some may object and say that this is not fair. They will say that we should not be held responsible for Adam's sin because we never sinned. If this is the position that they want to hold, then let's take a look at the cross and see why Federal Headship is important in relation to Jesus.

Jesus represented His people

[1 Cor. 15:45](#) says, "The first man, Adam, became a living soul. The last Adam became a life-giving spirit." The "last Adam" is a reference to Jesus because of the similar relationship that exists between them both. That is, both Adam and Jesus are representative heads. Please consider [1 Cor. 15:22](#) that says, "For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ all shall be made alive." This is teaching us that Adam and Christ are heads of groups. Notice "in Adam" and "in Christ" referencing our position in relationship to both of them.

If Adam did not represent mankind, then Jesus could not represent the Christians when He died on the cross. As Adam's offense resulted in condemnation to all people, so also, Jesus' sacrifice results in justification for those who believe in Him ([Rom. 5:18](#)). It is because of Federal Headship -- legal representation -- that we are able to be saved at all. As Adam's sin was imputed³ to us because of the Fall, our sin was likewise imputed to Jesus on the cross and Jesus' righteousness is imputed to us when we receive Him. In other words, if it was not for the biblical idea of Federal Headship (of one person representing others), then Jesus could not have represented us on the cross. If Jesus did not represent us on the cross, then it could not be said of us that "...you have died and your life is hidden with Christ in God," ([Col. 3:3](#)); and, "Now if we have died with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with Him," ([Rom. 6:8](#)).

Jesus represented us so completely on the cross that it can be said that we have died with Him. If it were not for Federal Headship, this would not be possible and we could not have died to sin.

Conclusion

Federal Headship is a biblical concept with some very important ramifications. Because of the biblical concept, we are able to enjoy salvation; we have died to sin, and we can rest in Christ who represented us before the Father in His satisfaction of the Law of God.

Final Remarks

So how does the teaching of federal headship applied to the issue of women pastors. Quite simply, federal headship teaches us that the male is to be an authority in the church. This authority is based upon the fact that Christ represented his people on the cross and that Jesus, being a man, was called a the second Adam. As Adam represented all of mankind, Jesus represented his people. The natural order is established with male headship in the church, Jesus is the head, and in the family where the husband is the head of the wife. There is no mention in Scripture were a woman can be a pastor (in violation of the pastoral epistles teaching that the elder is to be male), as long as there is a male head over her. By definition, a person in the pulpit, on Sunday morning, preaching the word of God, is in a place of authority. Such authoritative proclamation of the gospel is the responsibility of the elder in the church. Again, the elder is a person who teaches ([1 Tim. 5:17](#)) and that the elder is to be a man ([1 Tim. 2:9-13](#); [1 Peter 5:1-3](#)), the husband of one wife.

Appendix

1. The Term "Elder"

1. *PRESBUTEROS* - elder, an old man, a leader in the church. The term is used
 1. of the elder of two persons ([Luke 15:25](#), or more, [John 8:9](#)).
 2. of a person advanced in age ([Acts 2:17](#); in [Heb. 11:2](#)).
 3. of the forefathers in Israel ([Matt. 15:2](#); [Mark 7:3,5](#)).
 4. of members of the Sanhedrin ([Matt. 16:21](#); [26:47](#)).
 5. of those who managed public affairs in the various cities ([Luke 7:3](#)).
 6. of those who were the heads or leaders of the tribes and families, as of the seventy who helped Moses ([Num. 11:16](#); [Deut. 27:1](#)). This included:
 1. acting as judges in apprehending murderers ([Deut. 19:12](#)).
 2. conducting inquests ([Deut. 21:2](#)).
 3. settling matrimonial disputes ([Deut. 22:15](#); [25:7](#)).
 4. If theirs was a city of refuge they also heard pleas for asylum ([Joshua 20:4](#)).
 7. of those qualified by the Holy Spirit who exercised spiritual care and oversight of the local congregation.
2. *EPISKOPOI* - overseers, bishops
 1. Titus equates bishop and elder in [Titus 1:5-9](#).

2. Regarding the Office:

1. The office of Elder is a divinely appointed office as defined in the Pastoral Epistles.
2. Elders are apparently appointed by the laying on of hands ([1 Tim. 4:14](#); [2 Tim. 1:6](#)).
3. Should receive double honor in the church ([1 Tim. 5:17](#)).
4. The pastor is an elder ([1 Peter 5:1-3](#)).
5. The pastor is an elder who preaches and/or teaches ([1 Tim. 5:17](#)).
 1. The pastor (elder) is to equip the body of Christ ([Eph. 4:11-13](#)).
6. Must be a man ([1 Tim. 2:9-13](#)).
 1. All uses of "elder" are in the masculine except for [1 Tim. 5:2](#) where it means older women.

3. The Responsibilities of Elders in the NT Church:

1. Must shepherd the flock ([1 Peter 5:2](#)).
2. Must voluntarily exercise oversight upon the flock ([1 Peter 5:2](#)).
3. Must live as examples to the flock ([1 Peter 5:3](#)).

4. Anoint and pray for the sick ([James 5:14](#)).
5. They have the tasks of teaching ([1 Tim. 5:17](#); [Titus 1:5,9](#)).
6. They have the tasks of acting as judges ([Acts 15:2,6,22-29](#); [16:4](#)).
4. Qualifications for an elder
 1. Must be above reproach ([Titus 1:6](#); [1 Tim. 3:2](#))
 2. Husband of one wife ([Titus 1:6](#); [1 Tim. 3:2](#)).
 3. Household must be in order with children who believe ([Titus 1:6](#); [1 Tim. 3:4](#)).
 4. Not a new convert ([1 Tim. 3:6](#)).
 5. Self controlled and temperate ([Titus 1:7](#); [1 Tim. 3:2](#)).
 6. Honorable, hospitable, seeking good ([Titus 1:7](#)).
 7. Have a good reputation ([1 Tim. 3:7](#)).
 8. Not addicted to wine ([1 Tim. 3:3](#)).
 9. Not greedy ([1 Tim. 3:3](#)).
 10. Able to exhort (teach) sound doctrine ([Titus 1:9](#); [1 Tim. 3:2](#)).
 11. Able to refute false teaching ([Titus 1:9](#)).
 12. They must be ready to earn their own living if necessary ([Acts 20:17](#), [33-35](#)).

1. [1](#). Walvoord, John F., and Roy B. Zuck, *The Bible Knowledge Commentary*, Wheaton, IL: Scripture Press Publications, 1983, 1985.
2. [2](#). Hodge, A. A., *Outlines of Theology*, Escondido, CA: Ephesians Four Group, 1999.
3. [3](#). To impute means to reckon to another's account, to credit to another's account.

Another response to a paper arguing for women being pastors

The following is a response from the pastor who's original article was [answered here](#). We have reproduced it along with CARM's response. I was under the impression that I had permission to reproduce his original article and have since received confirmation that I may reproduce it as well as this one. I apologize if there was a misunderstanding in this matter previously.

Is the issue of women pastors serious enough to warrant multiple responses? The answer is most assuredly yes. The reason is because the Christian church has a tendency to move into apostasy; after all, we are sinners by nature. But when the Scriptures clearly teach on a topic, and if the Christian were to go against that clear teaching, it then becomes necessary to address the issue.

Please understand that it is not the position of CARM that women are to be belittled, or are subservient to men. CARM's position is that women are underutilized and underappreciated in the church. But this does not mean that it is okay to violate scripture's teaching concerning eldership. The Scripture is our guide and we must submit our preference to it -- whether or not it is popular, comfortable, or likeable. To do otherwise is to sin against God.

Of course, there will be those who say that this is a debatable issue and that we should not declare someone's opinion to be authoritative and then force that opinion upon others. Doesn't [Rom. 14:1-12](#), when speaking of debatable issues, declare that we should be gracious to those with whom we disagree? Yes, it does, but we must realize that because someone debates an issue does not mean it is inherently debatable. Mormons, for example, will debate whether or not people can become gods since they affirm it is possible. But the Scriptures clearly teach they cannot ([Isaiah 43:10](#)). Therefore, just because it's debated does not mean it is debatable.

Basically, there are three reasons why those who claim to be Christians will affirm that women can be elders and pastors.

1. They are ignorant of what the Bible truly teaches in this matter.

2. They are listening to the opinions of non-Christian society and are projecting those preferences upon the scriptures.
3. They are not regenerate, do not have the Spirit of God in them, and cannot discern spiritual matters ([1 Cor. 2:14](#)).

Taking God's word seriously is the obligation of every Christian who should submit his/her preferences to it. But, sadly, this is not happening enough in the Christian church today. We must all be mindful of the warning of [2 Tim. 4:1](#), "For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but wanting to have their ears tickled, they will accumulate for themselves teachers in accordance to their own desires." Christians should never be so arrogant as to say, "Thank you Lord that I am not like other people who gather to themselves teachers who tickle their own ears." (See [Luke 18:10-14](#)).

What we need in Christianity is more people who will stand for the truth of God's Word instead of trying to water it down in order to meet the needs and preferences of the politically correct or the unregenerate. To such a heresy CARM says boldly, **may it never be!**

CARM calls out to Christian men to stand upon the word whether it is popular or not, whether it is easy or not, and whether it costs them or not. Women pastors exist because of the failure Christian men, and this failure extends all too often into the pulpit.

The elders and pastors of Christian churches need to be called to account for allowing women pastors. They need to be rebuked publically.

- [1 Tim. 5:19](#), "Do not entertain an accusation against an elder unless it is brought by two or three witnesses."²⁰ Those who sin are to be rebuked publicly, so that the others may take warning."

CARM takes this warning seriously which is why the first article from the same pastor did not include his name or the church. It was my contention show respect to a pastor who leads God's flock. Therefore, in this paper I still seek to show that same respect. Nevertheless, this pastor is in error as will be shown in the analysis of his defense of his position.

Should we leave a church over this?

Is this an issue worth leaving a church over? In my opinion (Matt Slick, president of CARM) **yes it is**. If a pastor cannot discern such clear teaching of Scripture and instead imposes upon the word of God faulty exegesis and faulty logic (as he has done and does do in his response), then in my opinion, I would be forced to leave. I would not be able to trust his judgment concerning the rest of the word of God. Again, this is my opinion.

What about those who have invested years in a church when a woman pastor is introduced? Should they leave or just stick it out in silent disagreement? It is ultimately up to the individual Christian to answer this question. But, I offer my opinion. If I were to continue to attend that church, then am I not publicly displaying my support for the eldership of that church in its actions and teaching in this regard?

If more Christians across the world were to study biblical theology, stand up for it, and sacrifice some comfort, then the pulpits would be that much better. Truth is truth. Stand on the truth.

Also, if the elders of the church approved of having a woman pastor, then I would not be able to trust them either since they are not acting as competent elders and are not refuting error. Please consider the following twelve qualifications of being an elder.

1. The elder must be above reproach ([Titus 1:6](#); [1 Tim. 3:2](#)).

2. The husband of one wife ([Titus 1:6](#); [1 Tim. 3:2](#)).
3. Have children who believe ([Titus 1:6](#); [1 Tim. 3:4](#)).
4. Not be a new convert ([1 Tim. 3:6](#)).
5. Should be self controlled and temperate ([Titus 1:7](#); [1 Tim. 3:2](#)).
6. Must be honorable, hospitable, seeking good ([Titus 1:7](#)).
7. Have a good reputation ([1 Tim. 3:7](#)).
8. Not be addicted to wine ([1 Tim. 3:3](#)).
9. Not be greedy ([1 Tim. 3:3](#)).
10. Able to exhort (teach) sound doctrine ([Titus 1:9](#); [1 Tim. 3:2](#)).
11. Able to refute false teaching ([Titus 1:9](#)).
12. Must be ready to earn his own living if necessary ([Acts 20:17, 33-35](#)).

Points 10 and 11 above are applicable here. If the elders (who must be male per #2) of a church do not correct the teaching of having a woman pastor, then they are not doing their job and should not be elders.

Is this making a mountain out of a mole hill? No, it is not. The Scriptures teach that an elder must be the husband of one wife. The authority issue related to it is based not on culture but on God's created order (as will be demonstrated below). Therefore, CARM takes the position of standing on God's Word and believing what it says in spite of political correctness, social influence, or personal preferences, as every Christian should do.

Finally, it is my understanding that I had permission to use the pastor's article in my [earlier examination](#) which is why I reproduced his previous work and analyzed it. I also have received permission to use this response from him to which I'm also examining. This is to be commended on the part of the pastor.

Apparently, someone asked him why he did not include two important verses in his analysis of the issue of women pastors. Following is his published response.

ORIGINAL: "Dear Pastor,

Thank you so much for your article declaring your stand on women as pastors. In your response you clear that many of my questions, but I still have two:

- 1) 1 TIM 2:12 regarding not permitting a woman to teach or to have authority over a man, and
- 2) 1 TIM 3:12 the standard for deacons.

Thank you for your time. I await your response.

Mr. A."

ORIGINAL: "Dear Mr A,

"Thank you for your kind letter asking for explanations regarding [1 Tim 2:12](#) and [1 Tim 3:12](#). If you took notice (which I'm sure you did), I purposely did not address the issues that can be argued concerning women in ministry. I have found that to argue these issues accomplishes little. Well, actually it does accomplish something -- division. Instead, I simply presented a case which I believe had clear Biblical support for woman to function as ordained ministers of the gospel in Biblical context. Everything in life has a Biblical context -- love, sex, hate, confrontation, war, peace, dancing, mourning, killing, marriage, money, work, prayer, holiness, people in ministry, etc.. God clearly defines and contextualizes. This is what keeps the universe (God's creation) in proper balance with His approval (blessing) or disapproval (curse).

CARM: There is nothing wrong with division per se. The Bible speaks about division in the church in positive and negative light.

- [1 Cor. 11:18-19](#), "For, in the first place, when you come together as a church, I hear that divisions exist among you; and in part, I believe it. ¹⁹ For there must also be factions among you, in order that those who are approved may have become evident among you."
- [1 Cor. 1:10](#), "Now I exhort you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that you all agree, and there be no divisions among you, but you be made complete in the same mind and in the same judgment."

[1 Cor. 11:19](#) uses the Greek word "haireses" for "factions". We get the English word heresy from this Greek word. A heresy is a false teaching, something that deviates from orthodoxy. If we see that the Scriptures declare something clearly (orthodoxy), and if someone teaches contrary to that clear teaching, then he or she is teaching heresy.

The Scriptures teach that there is a place for division and that is when opposing teachings that are contrary to sound doctrine. But division can only occur when the truth is known and those who abide with the truth should correct those who do not.

By way of correction, the pastor said, "God clearly defines and contextualizes. This is what keeps the universe (God's creation) in proper balance with His approval (blessing) or disapproval (curse)." I am not sure what he is trying to say here, but he is inserting a subjective and undefined opinion by which he is trying to establish how God operates in creation. The truth is that the universe is "in proper balance with his approval" because of God's omnipotent power to sustain the universe combined with his grace to continue to sustain it. This grace is solely and completely based upon his goodness and finds its focus and realization the person of Jesus Christ, God in flesh, who was crucified, died, and rose bodily from the dead.

ORIGINAL: As to the two questions you raised, here are my answers: The entire passage reads: "A woman should learn in quietness and full submission. ¹²I do not permit a woman to teach or to have authority over a man; she must be silent. ... ¹⁵But women will be saved through childbearing--if they continue in faith, love and holiness with propriety. [1 Tim 2:12](#)

ORIGINAL: Paul is addressing the attitude that woman should possess (as does Peter in [1 Peter 3:1](#)). As to women teaching or having authority over a man, God says in Proverbs that sons are not to forsake their mother's teaching or their father's instructions ([Prov 1:8](#); [Prov 6:20](#)). Again, please note that God is defining roles. The woman is allowed, in fact is instructed, to teach, but her teaching comes under the authority of the husband, just as in the Church a woman's teaching should come under the authority of a man. (In the case of GCCC, Pastor Debbie's teaching comes under the authority of her Senior Pastor who happens to be a man. Smile!) Paul, in this passage, is setting down an order of things. He is not saying that a woman cannot teach or give input. If that were so, God would not have completed man with the creation of woman. If you recall, Jesus submitted to his mother's request, before His time had come, in performing His first miracle at the Wedding in Canaan of Galilee. ([John 2: 4-5](#)) Mary was not silent.

CARM: Notice how he says it is "the entire passage" and yet he omits two important verses in the heart of the passage he references. The actual entire passage is as follows (with the verses he omitted underlined), "But I do not allow a woman to teach or exercise authority over a man, but to remain quiet. ¹³ For it was Adam who was first created, and then Eve. ¹⁴ And it was not Adam who was deceived, but the woman being quite deceived, fell into transgression. ¹⁵ But women shall be preserved through the bearing of children if they continue in faith and love and sanctity with self-restraint," ([1 Tim. 2:12-15](#)).

First, Paul clearly says that he does not allow a woman to teach or exercise authority over a man, but to remain quiet. In other words, she is to be silent in the regard of teaching and exercise authority over men in the church since 1 Timothy is a pastoral epistle dealing with church topics. Some people have said that this is only Paul's opinion. Fine, if it is Paul's opinion, that it carries profound weight since the opinion of the apostle Paul outweighs any opinion of any pastor in the pulpit today and it should be followed.

Second, Paul is laying the issue of teaching and authority not in culture, but in the created order. Please take note that this pastor skipped over two verses (after saying it was the entire passage) and went to verse 15. How are we to understand what is being said if the passage is "guttled"? If someone were to only read versus 12 and 15, he could get the idea that Paul is merely stating an opinion and that we can, somehow, demote his opinion to a social custom that is no longer valid. But when you see that Paul is basing his teaching on God's created order ("For it was Adam who was first created, and then Eve"), the issue of authority and teaching takes on a whole new level of seriousness. It is something that Paul is equating as doctrine, not opinion, and not as a cultural norm. Therefore, those who say that this is only an opinion and/or it is a cultural norm, are simply wrong since Paul ties it to the created order.

Third, [1 Pet. 3:1](#), says, "In the same way, you wives, be submissive to your own husbands so that even if any of them are disobedient to the word, they may be won without a word by the behavior of their wives." This pastor is correct when he says that this verse deals with the attitude that a wife should have.

Fourth, I cannot help but notice how this pastor uses Old Testament scripture to interpret New Testament revelation. It is true that we should not forsake the teaching of our mothers or the instruction of our fathers. But these truths do not apply to the qualifications of an elder (detailed in [the previous paper](#)). Furthermore, to use these verses in such a way demonstrates a lack ability to properly apply interpretive methodology. It is an exegetical error of mixing unrelated contexts and is to be avoided since it leads to error. To go to Proverbs where we are taught to listen to the wisdom of our parents and then say that this somehow can be applied to the idea of a woman being a pastor is very poor interpretive methodology.

Fifth, the reason Jesus submitted to Mary his mother was because he was made under the law ([Gal. 4:4](#)) and since he was under the law, he was under obligation to honor his mother and father according to that Law ([Exodus 20:12](#)). Honoring your mother and father does not mean that a woman can be made an elder or a pastor in the church. Christ's submission to his mother is not dealing with the issue of church eldership. The two contexts are not related and this pastor should know better than to erringly apply the passage about Christ submitting to his mother to the issue of Christian eldership in the church.

Sixth, the pastor has inadvertently set up a contradiction in Scripture without dealing with the solution. He has cited where women are to be silent and then demonstrates where Mary was not. He has set Scripture against itself in an attempt to support his position. The truth is that the 1 Timothy passage is dealing with church order and church authority where the passage in John is dealing with Christ in subjection to his mother. They are completely different topics and contexts which should not be blended into an inadvertent apparent contradiction, nor should they be united to affirm a position that is contrary to biblical teaching. This is a serious problem.

ORIGINAL: We could go on. God told Abraham to heed Sarah's instructions and send Ishmael away with his mother, Hagar. ([Gen 21:10](#); [21:12](#)) Sarah was not silent. The angel of the LORD appeared to Manoah's wife (not Manoah) who then told her husband about Israel's next deliverer. (Judges 13) She was not silent. An entire nation submitted to the leadership of Deborah. ([Judges 4:4](#)) Deborah was not silent. Apollos, the gifted evangelist and apologist, submitted to the teaching of Priscilla. (Act 18:26) Priscilla was not silent. It is clear that Paul cannot be saying a woman cannot teach or speak. He is addressing the posture women must possess as mothers and teachers of the word, for God does not contradict Himself.

When we look at this passage in its entirety, it appears that a woman's salvation is conditional upon bearing children and holy living. Salvation is not predicated upon "good works" but upon His grace. What I am saying here is - this is not an easy passage to understand. Therefore, to take one sentence and build an entire doctrine around it is dangerous. Furthermore, if you hold to the position that "a woman must be silent and not teach men" it contradicts Biblical precedent set by the Old Testament - (see my last article "Women in Ministry," Bulletin Vol 4, Issues 169-170) and New Testament pattern as well.

For instance in [Acts 21:8-9](#) we are told that Philip had four virgin daughters who preached. The Bible does not say they only preached to women. They were given by the Holy Spirit the gift to preach and "they were not silent."

CARM: Again, citing Old Testament and New Testament references where women are not silent is an inadvertent contradiction because the pastor has not resolved the apparent discrepancy dealing with the passages and 1 Timothy where Paul declares women to be silent. I have resolved that apparent contradiction above by looking at each contextually. It is not the position of CARM nor the Bible, that women are not to speak at all. Paul's admonition deals with the context of authority and relates it to the created order and this relates to women eldership and pastor-ship.

It is not simply that Paul is addressing "the posture of women as mothers and teachers of the word." Paul is dealing with the issue of authority when speaking of church order. The fact is that the male is the authority in the home just as Christ is the authority over the man. Likewise, the male is the authority in the church. Why? Because Adam was created first. Let me explain further.

Federal Headship

There is a concept in the Bible known as "Federal headship." It is the teaching that the father is the one who represents his family, his descendents. Proof of this can be found in [Heb. 7:8-10](#).

"Here mortal men receive tithes, but there he receives them, of whom it is witnessed that he lives.⁹ Even Levi, who receives tithes, paid tithes through Abraham, so to speak,¹⁰ for he was still in the loins of his father when Melchizedek met him."

Levi was a distant descendent of Abraham, yet it is said that Levi paid tithes to Melchizedek even though he wasn't born. How is this so? We know that Levi did not physically carry out the act of paying tithes to Melchizedek, but we do know that Abraham did and we also know that Abraham was the representative head of his descendents. This is how it can be said that Levi also paid tithes to Melchizedek.

Federal Headship also finds its place in the Epistle of Romans when Paul says in [Rom. 5:12-14](#),

"Therefore, just as through one man sin entered the world, and death through sin, and thus death spread to all men, because all sinned-¹³(For until the law sin was in the world, but sin is not imputed when there is no law.¹⁴ Nevertheless death reigned from Adam to Moses, even over those who had not sinned according to the likeness of the transgression of Adam, who is a type of Him who was to come."

Who sinned first, Adam or Eve? It was Eve who sinned first. But, through whom did sin enter the world, through Adam or Eve? It entered through Adam, not Eve, even though she was in the world and sinned first! Why? Because it was Adam who represented mankind and not Eve (Federal Headship!). The Bible Knowledge Commentary says, "The federal headship view considers Adam, the first man, as the representative of the human race that generated from him. As the representative of all humans, Adam's act of sin was considered by God to be the act of all people and his penalty of death was judicially made the penalty of everybody."¹

As Adam represented all mankind, Jesus represented his people. [1 Cor. 15:45](#) says, "The first man, Adam, became a living soul. The last Adam became a life-giving spirit." The "last Adam" is a reference to Jesus because of the similar relationship that exists between them both. That is, both Adam and Jesus are representative heads. Please consider [1 Cor. 15:22](#) that says, "For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ all shall be made alive." This is teaching us that Adam and Christ are heads of groups of people. Notice "in Adam" and "in Christ" referencing our position in relationship to both of them.

This has serious implications even for salvation. If Adam did not represent mankind, then Jesus could not represent the Christians when He died on the cross. As Adam's offense resulted in condemnation to all people, so also, Jesus' sacrifice results in justification for those who believe in Him ([Rom. 5:18](#)). It is because of Federal Headship -- this legal representation -- that we are able to be saved at all. As Adam's sin was imputed² to us because of the Fall, our sin was likewise imputed to Jesus on the cross and Jesus' righteousness is imputed to us when we receive Him. In other words, if it was not for the biblical idea of Federal Headship (of one person representing others), then Jesus could not have represented us on the cross. If Jesus did not represent us on the cross, then it could not be said of us (the Christians) that "...you have died and your life is hidden with Christ in God," ([Col. 3:3](#)); and, "Now if we have died with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with Him," ([Rom. 6:8](#)).

Why is this important?

If you have followed this, then you can understand why Paul, who taught the concept of Federal headship, references the issue of authority resting with the male and not with the female. This is why he cites the created order about Adam being created first, not Eve, since Adam represented mankind, not Eve. This means that by nature it is not the position of the woman to be in spiritual authority over a man and that is why Paul says, in the context of dealing with teaching authority in the church, the woman is to remain silent. In other words, she's not to exercise authoritative teaching over men in the church which is why Paul says that elders are to be the husband of one wife -- they must be male!

An elder and a pastor are automatically in positions of spiritual authority in the church body. This is not how it is supposed to be. Again, this is why Paul says that the elder is to be the husband of one wife. He naturally assumes the male responsibility and male authority concept and the Christian Church.

In light of this, if a woman is a pastor in a church it is because the people who put her there do not understand proper biblical theology regarding male headship and God's created order therein . . . not to mention the clear teaching were Paul says that the elder is to be the husband of one wife.

Lest anyone think that a pastor is not an elder, let's look at [1 Peter 5:1-3](#) and [1 Tim. 5:17](#).

- [1 Peter 5:1-3](#), "Therefore, I exhort the elders among you, as your fellow elder and witness of the sufferings of Christ, and a partaker also of the glory that is to be revealed,² shepherd the flock of God among you, exercising oversight not under compulsion, but voluntarily, according to the will of God; and not for sordid gain, but with eagerness;³ nor yet as lording it over those allotted to your charge, but proving to be examples to the flock."
- [1 Tim. 5:17](#), "The elders who direct the affairs of the church well are worthy of double honor, especially those whose work is preaching and teaching."

The elders is to shepherd the flock, exercising oversight (authority) and some elders preach and teach. Therefore, a pastor, is an elder.

ORIGINAL: Leaving the next day, we reached Caesarea and stayed at the house of Philip the evangelist, one of the Seven. [9] He had four unmarried daughters who prophesied.

The word here is "preach." The passage further implies that although they had the gift to preach, they did not possess the gift to foretell. But, that addresses another question for another time.

CARM: Let's look at [Acts 21:9](#) which the pastor cites, "Now this man had four virgin daughters who were prophetesses," (NASB). He says that "the word here is 'preach'". I looked at the Greek for this verse and the ones immediately before and after it. I found no "preach" in the verses. I assume the pastor is referring to the word "prophettesses". Strongs Enhanced Lexicon on the word "prophetess".

- 4395 propheteuo { prof-ate-yoo'-o } from 4396; TDNT - 6:781,952; v AV - prophesy 28; 28 GK - 4736 { profhteuvw }
 - 1) to prophesy, to be a prophet, speak forth by divine inspirations, to predict
 - 1a) to prophesy
 - 1b) with the idea of foretelling future events pertaining esp. to the kingdom of God
 - 1c) to utter forth, declare, a thing which can only be known by divine revelation
 - 1d) to break forth under sudden impulse in lofty discourse or praise of the divine counsels
 - 1d1) under like prompting, to teach, refute, reprove, admonish, comfort others
 - 1e) to act as a prophet, discharge the prophetic office.

If I am not mistaken, the most common word for "preach" used in the New Testament is kerusso.

- 2784 kerusso { kay-roos'-so } of uncertain affinity; TDNT - 3:697,430; v AV - preach 51, publish 5, proclaim 2, preached + 2258 2, preacher 1; 61 GK - 3062 { khruvssw }
 - 1) to be a herald, to officiate as a herald
 - 1a) to proclaim after the manner of a herald
 - 1b) always with the suggestion of formality, gravity and an authority which must be listened to and obeyed
 - 2) to publish, proclaim openly: something which has been done
 - 3) used of the public proclamation of the gospel and matters pertaining to it, made by John the Baptist, by Jesus, by the apostles and other Christian teachers

I hope that this on the part of the pastor is a simple and honest mistake when looking at the original Greek text. Nevertheless, the reference this pastor sites in [Acts 21:9](#) incorrectly references the word preach as being derived from the original Greek. In fact, it seems that his understanding of the passage contradict what the passage itself says.

ORIGINAL: If you hold to the position that women should not teach or preach then every mother should be removed from the home and every woman Sunday school teacher should be removed from the classroom. This cannot be what the Apostle Paul is saying because, as I have stated, it contradicts Old and New Testament pattern and theology. Paul is addressing the attitude and posture a woman should exhibit, and her role as one submitted to male authority; he is not removing her from office. If she has been gifted with a calling, as in the case of Debbie Groller, then she should use her gift and she should be accepted by the congregation as one ordained by the LORD.

CARM: I'm trying to be respectful to this pastor since the Bible tells us in [1 Tim. 5:19](#), "Do not entertain an accusation against an elder unless it is brought by two or three witnesses." As a Christian theologian I am under obligation to follow the Scriptures and so I seek to be truthful to the word of God. Nevertheless, I must point out that this pastor has made a serious error in his conclusion. He has failed to understand the issue of authority of men over women in the church (because it was Adam who was created first) and has failed to apply the concept of Federal headship which further designates the necessity of male leadership in the church. Furthermore, he has extended his error into a misapplication of the issue of Sunday school teachers. A woman Sunday school teacher is not an elder or a pastor (at least it should not be). And, to be consistent, a woman should not teach (in an authoritative context) men in Sunday school. This does not mean that a woman could not give a testimony, or an opinion about what a Scripture means, or relate a valuable experience in the presence of men. But she is not to assume the position of teacher (when it entails an authority position) over men. Like it or not, that is what the Bible says.

ORIGINAL: As to your second question "a deacon must be the husband of one wife and manage his children and his household well." ([1 Tim 3:12](#)) I do not see any conflict here. Since God is "no respecter of persons" and "there is neither male nor female in the body of Christ" then the same standard and requirements for a man

would hold for a woman (in context of a woman's submission to male leadership). She would need to be the wife of one husband and manage her children. (I believe Debbie meets these requirements.) Throughout the Bible, we are often given only one gender (the male) when indeed the female gender is likewise included. [John 3:36](#) tells us "He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life: and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him. Does this exclude women from salvation since only the male pronoun is used? Certainly not! I believe the same is true of those who qualify for ministry by gifts given to them by the Holy Spirit.

CARM: This pastor has repeated his earlier error. God is "no respecter of persons" is [Acts 10:34](#) in the KJV. Let's look at the context.

- [Acts 10:33-37](#) (KJV), "Immediately therefore I sent to thee; and thou hast well done that thou art come. Now therefore are we all here present before God, to hear all things that are commanded thee of God. ³⁴ Then Peter opened his mouth, and said, Of a truth I perceive that God is no respecter of persons: ³⁵ But in every nation he that feareth him, and worketh righteousness, is accepted with him. ³⁶ The word which God sent unto the children of Israel, preaching peace by Jesus Christ: (he is Lord of all:) ³⁷ That word, I say, ye know, which was published throughout all Judaea, and began from Galilee, after the baptism which John preached."
- Note: [Romans 2:11](#) says, "For there is no partiality with God." The context is dealing with both Jew and Greek

The context is dealing with the preaching of the word of God to both the Jew and Gentile. There is no partiality with God when it comes to acceptance of people due to nationality, race, sex, etc. This context has nothing to do with pastoring, or teaching in the church, or authority in the Christian Church. To apply this context to the topic at hand, is a mistake.

The phrase, "there is neither male nor female in the body of Christ" is a reference to [Gal. 3:28](#). Let's look at its context.

- [Gal. 3:26-29](#), "For you are all sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus. ²⁷ For all of you who were baptized into Christ have clothed yourselves with Christ. ²⁸ There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free man, there is neither male nor female; for you are all one in Christ Jesus. ²⁹ And if you belong to Christ, then you are Abraham's offspring, heirs according to promise."

The context of this passage is dealing with salvation and not with pastoring, or teaching, or authority in the Christian Church. As I have stated above, to apply this context to the topic at hand is a huge mistake. The result of such application is false teaching.

The error of this pastor is very obvious since he misapplies the conclusion by stating that a woman must be the wife of one husband. I am honestly perplexed at why he would try and use this to support the position that women can be pastors. The Bible nowhere states that a woman must be the husband of one wife in order to be an elder. But it does very clearly state that the elder is to be the husband of one wife ([Titus 1:6](#); [1 Tim. 3:2](#)). Whether or not the reader of this paper agrees or disagrees, or likes or dislikes this, is irrelevant to the truth of what is taught. If you are a Christian and you understand that this is indeed what the word of God says, then you should submit to it. What you like or dislike has no bearing on what is true. God is the author of truth and we as Christians need to submit to what God has said. He has his reasons and his ways are above ours.

Nevertheless, the pastor goes on in the above paragraph to draw other irrelevant conclusions not supported by his argument or by the text at hand. Since I have analyzed them, put the verses in context, and demonstrated that they cannot be misapplied as he has done, his conclusions have been demonstrated to be erroneous.

ORIGINAL: In closing, may I say that there is ONLY one teacher and that is the Holy Spirit. I may have the gift to preach and teach, but what a person receives and takes home is up to him or her. People accept what they want to accept and they reject what they want to reject. Therefore, each person decides who is his or her teacher - is this not true? Whether the instrument is a man or woman, what we hear from God is up to us. Those who heard the testimony of the "Woman at the Well" could have easily rejected her message because she was a woman; instead, they received her message and were gloriously converted.

Ultimately, this responsibility (authority) in deciding who our teacher is has been entrusted to us and we will answer to what it is we have accepted as truth. (That does not negate the responsibility of those called to Pastor and teach, and as Scripture tells us: "they have the greater accountability.")

CARM: I am dismayed by this closing comment and am cautious about addressing it. I sincerely desire not to bring any disrespect on this pastor. But, there is a problem in his approach.

As a teacher he is responsible before God to present the truth. Instead of laying the responsibility of what he teaches (and is received) at the feet of the hearers, he needs to focus on what he is responsible for an a presentation of God's Word. The pastor is responsible to present the truth according to scripture regardless of whether or not anyone accepts it. I have demonstrated that his position is against scripture. The pastor needs to adjust his position and align it with the revealed Word of God. Doing so demonstrates proper action. Nevertheless, is good that the pastor has admitted that he is responsible to teach the truth. He should do so and abandoned the error of woman eldership/pastor-ship.

ORIGINAL: This is what I believe. It is what I believe the Bible teaches concerning women in ministry and the ordaining of women to ministry, and I believe I have the mind of God on these matters. It is my prayer that our gracious Lord through the Spirit of the loving God would settle this issue in your mind, heart and spirit and grant you peace as you continue to faithfully support and serve the Lord at GCCC.
Pastor Bruce Sofia

CARM: Pastor Bruce can believe all he wants about him having the mind of God on this matter. But since his position is contrary to scripture, he does not have the mind of God in this matter.

[1 Pet. 3:15](#) says, "but sanctify Christ as Lord in your hearts, always being ready to make a defense to everyone who asks you to give an account for the hope that is in you, yet with gentleness and reverence."

I am glad that Pastor Bruce has attempted to defend his position for the instruction of [1 Pet. 3:15](#). Unfortunately his position is unscriptural. Therefore, I politely offer the opportunity to attend his church and publicly debate him on this issue. Since he has stated he is not interested in debating this, I assume he will drop it. Nevertheless, I consider this topic to be very important in the Christian Church since in my 25 years of apologetics I have learned that oftentimes the first inkling of apostasy in a group is the acceptance of women into the pulpit. Please understand that I greatly support women being used in the church, just not as elders or preachers since it is against Scripture.

This is important. If a pastor of a church allows a woman pastor to preach from the pulpit (a definite place of authority), then those who see this will be more likely to accept this unbiblical position. However, since the word of God commands all Christians to give an answer for the reason of the hope that lies within them, I am doing that very thing in responding to Pastor Bruce's error as well as respectfully offering him to publicly defend his position before the congregation which he pastors by having a public debate on this issue.

- [Acts 17:17](#), "So he [Paul] was reasoning in the synagogue with the Jews and the God-fearing Gentiles, and in the market place every day with those who happened to be present."

- The word in Greek for "reasoning" is *dialogomai* and it means to dispute, reason with, preach unto, speak, etc.

Also, I must be clear and stating that I do not believe Pastor Bruce to be ungodly, unloving to his congregation, or that he is trying to mislead his people. Such an assertion would be unfounded. I believe he is acting with integrity according to his own conscience. However, I also firmly believe that he is in great error in this topic, that it has serious ramifications, and that he should alter his position to be in line with Scripture.

1. [1](#). Walvoord, John F., and Roy B. Zuck, *The Bible Knowledge Commentary*, (Wheaton, Illinois: Scripture Press Publications, Inc.), 1983, 1985.
2. [2](#). To impute means to reckon to another's account, to credit to another's account.