

"Both read the Bible day and night,
But thou read'st black
where I read white."

William Blake, *The Everlasting Gospel* (1818)

"We seek the truth, and we will endure the consequences." - Charles Seymour (1885-1963)

"But God will have a people upon the earth to maintain the Bible, and the Bible only, as the standard of all doctrines and the basis of all reforms. The opinions of learned men, the deductions of science, the creeds or decisions of ecclesiastical councils, as numerous and discordant as are the churches which they represent, the voice of the majority—not one nor all of these should be regarded as evidence for or against any point of religious faith. Before accepting any doctrine or precept, we should demand a plain 'Thus saith the Lord' in its support" (GC 595).

"When the religion of Christ is most held in contempt, when His law is most despised, then should our zeal be the warmest and our courage and firmness the most unflinching. To stand in defense of truth and righteousness when the majority forsake us, to fight the battles of the Lord when champions are few—this will be our test. At this time we must gather warmth from the coldness of others, courage from their cowardice, and loyalty from their treason" (5T 136; LDE 180; RH Jan 11 1887).

"We have far more to fear from within than from without" (1 SM 122).

"In a time of universal deceit - telling the truth is a revolutionary act." George Orwell

Introduction: War

While the world was watching the Olympics, and worried about the difference between hundreds of a second, fractions of a point, and metal counts between the nations, Russia effectively surrounded part of the Ukraine and prepared for a hostile take-over. Month later, the fear has not subsided as I am speaking (8-9-14). Media outlets report of yet another massive troop build-up at the border to Eastern Ukraine.

War - it seems so outdated. Men fighting over land. Tanks, soldiers, trenches. To me that seems so 19th/20th century. Didn't we stop that with WWII, Korea, Vietnam? According to Jesus, there will be "wars, and rumors of wars" (Mt 24:6) till the end.

But don't you think for a minute that war is only about Russia rattling its sword, North Korea sneezing, or trouble in Iraq, Israel, and the Gaza strip. We have had a war here in the US for a generation now, and I'm not talking about the drug war. I want to alert you to another war, one that is being waged on you and your family. And it's knocking on our church doors. I am talking about an unprecedented assault on gender. The concealed weapons are rabid culture, raw emotions, and misguided interpretations of Scripture.

- On Facebook you now have a choice for “Gender”: Male, Female, or *Custom* - Do you want fries with that?!
- In August last year (2013) California governor Jerry Brown signed AB1266, which allowed transgender kids K-12 (K-12! K-12??!) to use the bathroom of their choice, along with letting them select which boy or girl sport they want to participate in.
- The Supreme Court has already struck down sections of the federal Defense of Marriage Act (DOMA). In 2008 thousands of Californians brought a proposition to the ballot, later famously known as proposition 8. It consisted of 14 words: "Only marriage between a man and a woman is valid or recognized in California". The gay lobby in California was absolutely thunderstruck when Prop 8 received a majority vote and passed. Unfortunately, it was later blocked and overturned by liberal judges and Jerry Brown.

No doubt, under the relentless drumbeat of a rather aggressive gay lobby (and this will not be a gay-bashing sermon), the tide of public opinion is shifting towards favoring LGBTIQ policies and attitudes. And they're knocking on church doors, too:

- On May 31 2013, the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA; 4 million members) elected Erwin Guy as their first openly gay bishop.
(<http://religion.blogs.cnn.com/2013/06/03/lutherans-elect-first-openly-gay-bishop/>)
 - The Methodist church (NY Conference) recently (3-10-14) withdrew its procedures against United Methodist minister Thomas Ogletree for performing his son's same-gender wedding. Ogletree called it "an act of pastoral faithfulness and fatherly love"
(http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2014/03/10/thomas-ogletree-gay-wedding-trial_n_4936579.html)
 - the Presbyterian church in America has approved gay weddings and marriage - incidentally, this has not helped their growth; in fact, they have lost members in droves.
 - There is the movie Seventh-Gay Adventists. You heard that right. SGAs. I politely but vigorously opposed the producer of that movie on our campus in Keene. Though portrayed as a neutral movie, "just to catalyse conversation", it really has as its agenda the establishment of a LGBT support group on every Adventist college campus. Sympathy with sin. Tolerance of trespassing. Allowance for adultery. Fornication freedom. (Parents, I will be kosher in my language, but some terminology is unavoidable - I encourage age-appropriate debriefing this afternoon). This is not being embarrassingly intolerant on my part; I'm opposed because SGAs profoundly misunderstand human nature and the Gospel, and the movie ultimately cheats our young people out of a biblical sanctification experience. Since we have all fallen short of the glory of Christ, we must all rely on the cleansing blood of Jesus, and we must all overcome. What we don't overcome will overcome us.
 - Then there is www.wearesdas.com If you suffer from low blood pressure, take a look.
 - Would you like a sample of the flavor? "And a God of love does not require a life of celibacy and loneliness of people who are born with this orientation" (Spectrum, 3-17-14, "Report from the Cape Town Conference").
- Another time we can address the "born with this orientation" misunderstanding. The last 100 years has shifted homosexuality from something I do to somebody I am.
- In April 2014 a SDA Union (Netherlands) voted to not revoke the membership of LGBTI church members

Ingo in Germany

Let me share with you something that's not from a movie or the internet (got your attention, eh?):

I was about 13 or 14 years old, not an SDA, never been to summer camp, never attended a week of prayer, or been to a Bible study. Downtown Stuttgart, Germany, on a Saturday night. I don't know what I was doing as a 13-year-old Saturday night after dark . . . (It's Saturday night - do you know where your kids are? Including electronically?!). Some men were fighting, and a large crowd had gathered to watch. Then cops showed up and broke up the fighting, and the crowd dispersed. That's when a guy elbowed me and offered to buy me a coke. Nice guy! My parents never bought me a coke! My dad thought Coke's are moth juice, brrrrrr, and videos on Facebook confirm that! So the guy took me to - as far as you're concerned - a restaurant, and bought me a coke. Then he suggested we'd go for a walk. So we went for a walk. Awkward, but what did I know about anything?! I'm a neo-pagan, secular, post-modern, unconverted, unchurched European teenager. We got to this park bench in Schloßgarten, Stuttgart, and he invited me to sit down. Mind you, I had never dealt with anything like this within the context of a sermon, week of prayer, camp, Pathfinders, etc. I was naive and clueless. The man offered me a couple hundred dollars - and for the sake of little ears and hearts I'll leave the story at that. . . . I'll tell you at the end of the sermon what happened next. . . . Actually, after 3 seconds of my head spinning and all moral wheels turning, I . . . I got up and left. Amen?! Otherwise, I wouldn't be standing here right now! I personally believe that Satan launched a frontal assault on my life at that moment because just a few years later I became a Seventh-day Adventist.

I should also mention that I had an uncle in Germany who was married to a man.

In this context I must share a quote with you - and you need to hear this quote. This will boggle your mind. It's one sentence long, very crisp and clear, with unmistakable language: "I was referred to Romans 1:18-32, as a true description of the world previous to the second appearing of Christ" (CG 440). Hello?!

Context: "A terrible picture of the condition of the world has been presented before me. Immorality abounds everywhere. Licentiousness is the special sin of this age. Never did vice lift its deformed head with such boldness as now. The people seem to be benumbed, and the lovers of virtue and true goodness are nearly discouraged by its boldness, strength, and prevalence. **I was referred to Romans 1:18-32, as a true description of the world previous to the second appearing of Christ.** It is sin, not trial and suffering, which separates God from His people and renders the soul incapable of enjoying and glorifying Him. It is sin that is destroying souls. Sin and vice exist in Sabbathkeeping families. It is the special work of Satan in these last days to take possession of the minds of youth, to corrupt the thoughts and inflame the passions; for he knows that by so doing he can lead to impure actions, and thus all the noble faculties of the mind will become debased, and he can control them to suit his own purposes" (CG 440).

Note that Ellen White considers this an impure action, not an incidental orientation.

Now let me make one thing clear: I extend both arms of the Gospel to any human in any condition with any past, any lifestyle, and any sin record. No question. I have baptized same-gender-attracted people despite concerns by the church board. **But the solution lies not in tolerance of sin but in transformation of the sinner**, according to the Word of God in 1 Cor 6:9-11:

"Do you not know that the unrighteous will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived. Neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor homosexuals, nor sodomites, nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners will inherit the kingdom of God. **And such were some of you.** But you were washed, but you were sanctified, but you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus and by the Spirit of our God."

Did you catch the tense of the verb in this verse? "Such were some of you." Past tense! Past! History! Closed chapter. New chapter! New creation (2 Cor 5:17)!

Recently I listened to 10 hours+ of testimonies by ex-gay men who had come out in favor of an abstinent or heterosexual lifestyle. All their testimonies had two things in common: 1) confusion about gender in their early life, 2) a loss of authority when it comes to Scripture. Conversely, recognizing Gen 1:26-27 brought them back to God's parameters for gender, along with a proper respect for the authority of the Bible.

But this is not a sermon about same-gender relationships. A different issue has pestered the church now for over a generation. Women's ordination. There, I said it! The last 2 years I have wrestled with this issue day and night. Trust me, ladies, this will not be a political speech, a woman-bashing session, an endorsement of abuse or neglect.

I used to be indifferent or in favor of women's ordination. I read books from both ends of the spectrum, and they both made sense! And who in their right mind would tell a woman in the 21st century that she cannot hold an office just because she is a woman? And often doing a better job than many men!

I personally have heard the following opinions and objections on the topic:

The Top 10 Objections

1) Opinion: "I think". A colleague of mine (a Ph.D. from the sciences!) once told me: "I have never studied this issue, but I think . . ." Really? Is this how we Seventh-day Adventist arrive at truth?! "I have never studied this issue, but I think." Let's just move on to the next objection.

2) Culture: "They think". Culture expects it. Culture demands it. [head-shaking] **I'm of the stubborn mindset that the church ought to change the world, not the world the church.** But the brackish waters of the world are sweeping into the boat of the church more and more. A lot of the Bible is counter-cultural. Sabbath did not fit my German culture when I looked for a summer job; in fact, I had to settle for less income at my summer job to keep Sabbath. Foot-washing - you have got to be kidding! That's in my space! But the Lord said you need to participate. The entire Gospel is a scandal to the Jews and foolishness to the Greeks, yet here we are.

"Now all these things happened unto them for ensamples: and they are written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the world are come. Wherefore let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall." Has God changed from a God of order? No; He is the same in the present dispensation as in the former. Paul says: "'God is not the author of confusion, but of peace.' He is as particular now as then. And He

designs that we should learn lessons of order and organization from the perfect order instituted in the days of Moses for the benefit of the children of Israel" (1 T 653).

3) Ability: "I can". "Women are capable of doing ministry just like men, and they are often better at it." I agree! Some women make fabulous pastors, with apparently stellar church growth and success. But this argument was also used by the rebellion of Korah, Dathan, and Abiram (Num 16). Why do we do what we do? Because we can. That's an insufficient argument for faith and practice. If something pertains to the Lord, then the Lord's principles ought to be considered. It's His book, not mine. It's His church, not mine!

4) Resignation: "Can't do anything about it". A conference president recently told me, "Ingo, this train has already gained too much traction. You can't stop it!" I don't know much about trains. But if a train is moving at an unsafe speed or in a direction it shouldn't, you put on the brakes. Once stopped, you might even reverse its direction!

An educator was once told that competitive sports in our institutions are like horses that are out of the barn. Well, y'all, we're in Texas, and when the horses are out of the barn but shouldn't be, you get what's called a halter, put it around the neck of the horse, and lead them critters back in the barn, give 'em some water and hay and shut the gate!

5) Emotions: "I feel". "It just doesn't seem right." Experienced-based theology is one of the worst things the Devil has come up with.

"In the face of the most positive commands of God, men and women will follow their own inclinations, and then dare to pray over the matter, to prevail upon God to allow them to go contrary to His expressed will. Satan comes to the side of such persons, as he did to Eve in Eden, and impresses them. They have an exercise of mind, and this they relate as a most wonderful experience which the Lord has given them. But true experience will be in harmony with natural and divine law; false experience arrays itself against the laws of nature and the precepts of Jehovah" (CH 109).

6) Our Youth: "We are losing our youth." If we don't ordain women, they will perceive it as an injustice, esp. in Europe, and leave the church even more.

No, sorry, **I think we're losing our youth because we have surrendered our prophetic signature and forsaken our fingerprint to cultural opinion and worldly accommodation.** Why stay in a church that makes no difference? Why be part of a church that resembles the world?

People have left the Adventist church over the Sabbath. How counter-cultural! How ineffective in retaining members! Biblical principle overrides practical inconveniences every time.

7) Distraction: "Isn't this just a distraction from our mission?!"

Yes and No. Yes, of course it is. But so much is at stake: the authority of the Word of God, and our submission to it. If we concede on this issue, what else will we compromise? Sabbath? If we just say, "This is a distraction - let's just move on" then we're sweeping a festering sore under the rug, only for it to flare up later - and bigger.

I'm not a loud mouth on this; but I have to neutralize the acidic corrosion that is gnawing at the foundation of our faith. The other side speaks much louder, has a much slicker campaign going. Let me give you one example: The NAD Committee that studied women's ordination was comprised of 14 members. Now listen to this: at the outset, 12 were in favor of WO, 2 against. That's what's called a stacked committee. Who would write the Majority report, and who would write the Minority report was a no-brainer before they ever started studying!

8) But what about . . . The Exception Clause

What about China? What about churches that don't have qualified men? What about Missionary Tay, who was told by Ellen White to baptize even though he was not ordained?! Let me respond to these concerns:

- a) **We do not establish rules based on exceptions.** Exceptions are based on rules, not the other way around.
- b) The case of J Tay is a simple one: no ordained ministers were available, so Ellen White used common sense and instructed him to baptize. This did not change her general stance on ordination and baptism. (See xyz source).
- c) China: I'm suspicious when I'm forced into a conclusion. And I have heard some women leaders in China don't want to get ordained - that's an American political ambition superimposed onto another culture . . .

Ellen White of course conceded that circumstances alter cases: "It is not always men who are best adapted to the successful management of a church. If faithful women have more deep piety and true devotion than men, they could indeed by their prayers and their labors do more than men who are unconsecrated in heart and in life" (19MR 56). But note that the role of pastor/elder is not specified here, and the issue is unconsecrated men.

9) **The Call from God:** Who am I to judge a woman's sense of the calling of God? Again, the Sabbath serves a simple litmus test here: Do we dismiss our understanding of the Sabbath when a Baptist "feels" called by God to ignore Sabbath for the sake of the resurrection, and therefore keeps Sunday holy? Our ultimate authority are not subjective impressions but the objective revelation of God through His Word.

10) GOLF: Gentlemen Only, Ladies Forbidden

I recently received this e-mail: "I told my husband that I am not so sure but both ends of the argument are in the wrong. On one end the women (and their supporters) are demanding ordination and at the other end men (and their supporters) have dug their heels in with the same attitude; both sides being rigid, unbending, unyielding, close minded and absolutely certain that they are right." e-mail, 9.25.14 to Ingo Sorke

Let us take a brief look at this gender issue through the lens of creation.

The Old Testament: The Creation of Adam

The creation story is arguably the most profound piece of text ever penned by mortal man. These first 3 chapters of Holy Writ offer a depth on life and reality as we know it that stands unparalleled in literature. Solitary confinement in jail with just those verses could prevent insanity and boredom for a long time. But let me focus on the creation of man right away. We should note that the creation of humans took a special, second act of speaking on God's part: Gen 1:24: animals - Gen 1:26: people - God speaks twice. Then follows the famous - and poetically worded - statement on gender and the image of God:

"So God created man in his *own* image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them" (Gen 1:27).

Those are the gender options for human beings, period. It doesn't matter how I feel, what I would like to wear, what my relationship to pink is, what my voice sounds like, to whom I am attracted, my testosterone or estrogen level, humans are born male or female. 99.x% of them. I know nature causes aberrations. But ultrasound or not, the question during or after pregnancy still is, in all cultures, for the last 6,000 years, rich or poor: boy or girl?

The sentence is so simple: "male and female". While the text spells equality, shared rulership, equal value, etc., I want to point out something rather obvious. Humans have gender, and the genders are *not* the same. Men don't have babies (sorry, Schwarzenegger!). And I know there have been men on the news and on Facebook that are pregnant; sorry guys (no pun), you were a woman in the first place!

Oh, I know about seahorses, and female spiders that eat their males, and monkeys, etc., but I'm not a seahorse, I'm not a spider, I'm not a monkey, I'm not a dog, I'm a child of the living God! And I happen to be a man! I confirmed on Facebook: Male. Not female. Not a custom option. Just one option: Male.

And gentlemen: my 3-quarter-ton pickup doesn't make me a man. Smoking cigars and drinking Johnny Walker wouldn't make me a man. Nor does watching other men on TV run after a round or egg-shaped leather ball make you man. Manhood is not developed on the couch with a bag of chips in one hand and a soda or the remote in the other. Manhood is developed in character, in being a Bible student, in learning how to pray, in learning how to treat women - appropriately, in taking out the trash, in making right decisions, in leading a family. **Being a man does not mean being rough with the girls but being right with the God who made the girls! Rudeness is not the cousin of testosterone - respect is.**

From the start of humanity, there is gender differentiation. Notice this:

- Adam was created first, a fact that Paul picks up later in his letter to Timothy (2:12-13)
The argument that animals were created before Adam and therefore those animals should rule over Adam is silly at best and ludicrous at worst. Bible interpretation does require a minimum amount of common sense.
- Gen 2:18: "a helpmeet" identifies someone who is functionally different from the one being helped (the term is used for God in Ps 30:11; 54:4 to simply indicate this differentiation)
- God brought Eve to Adam (Gen 2:22), not the other way around: Eve was created from Adam for Adam.

"Eve was created from a rib taken from the side of Adam, signifying that she was not to control him as the head, nor to be trampled under his feet as an inferior, but to stand by his side as an equal, to be loved and protected by him" (AH 25).

"When God created Eve, He designed that she should possess neither inferiority nor superiority to the man, but that in all things she should be his equal" (3T 484). I think Ellen White speaks of value here, not function, because dozens of other quotes by the same author differentiate responsibilities between male and female.

"Under God, Adam was to stand at the head of the earthly family, to maintain the principles of the heavenly family. This would have brought peace and happiness. . . . When Adam sinned, man broke away from the heaven-ordained center. [now listen to this!] A demon became the central power in the world. Where God's throne should have been, Satan placed his throne" (CPTS 33).

Incidentally, you will hear that Adam and Eve were priests in the Garden of Eden based on common language, like "tending and keeping" (so-called sanctuary terms), and the *ketunet* they wore. These are common terms, used in many contexts. It does not make Adam and Eve priests, esp. not prior to sin.

Illustration: word parallels do not always translate into parallels of meaning. For example, a police officer in Keene, TX, "pulled" a lady from a car. And the local dentist "pulled" a tooth out of my mouth. Therefore: police office = dentist = police officer! "Much study has made them mad" (Acts 26:24). (This stretch of parallels is esp. popular with Ps 68:11).

The Fall

We have to zero in what exactly went wrong in the Garden. Let me take you to the very moment when Eve is about to take the forbidden fruit. And let me share a secret with you that might help you Monday morning: Before sin happened in Eden, separation happened between Adam and Eve. There is a progression. We don't just sin. Isolation leads to transgression, and we linger before we step over the line.

Angels had warned Eve of wandering from her husband's side: "The angels had cautioned Eve to beware of separating herself from her husband while occupied in their daily labor in the garden; with him she would be in less danger from temptation than if she were alone" (PP 53). In fact, **Adam "mourned that he had permitted Eve to wander from his side"** (PP 56).

Did you catch that? **The lack of male leadership is to be blamed for Eve's initial misstep.** The original sin in the Garden of Eden involved a role reversion, with Eve in charge, and Adam taking the back seat. And sure enough: who gets blamed for sin in the world, and death, and the entire gamut of misery that comes with? That's right - Adam, not Eve! Check out Rom 5:12,14; 1 Cor 15:22. **Men, you are responsible for your families.**

And then that heart-wrenching voice by God Himself: "Adam, where are you" (Gen 3:9)? Little did Adam know that God's tear-drenched question 6 millennia later . . . Of course it's a rhetorical question. God knew where Adam was. The mind of God can pinpoint the location of a sinner better than Google Maps

or my Garmin Nuvi or your Tom Tom you got last Christmas. The question gave Adam a chance to think about the distance he had created by accepting that fruit against God's express will. "Remember therefore from where you have fallen" (Rev 2:5).

Now notice something; God warns Eve in order to protect her: "Your desire [*teshuqah*] shall be for your husband, and he shall rule [*masha*] over you" (Gen 3:16). This pair "desire" and "rule" shows up only two more times in the Old Testament: Gen 4:7 and SS 7:11.

In Gen 4:7, Cain is told that "sin lies at the door. And its desire *is* for you, but you should rule over it" (Gen 4:7).

Coming in such close context of Gen 3:16, the parallel of this word pair is difficult to miss. In simple terms, the desire to wander from her husband and walk down the forbidden path will continue, but must be resisted. How? Not by a tyrannical, dictatorial rule of the husband, but by the loving care for the woman. Why? To protect the entire family from evil.

The danger persists: "But I fear, lest somehow, as the serpent deceived Eve by his craftiness, so your minds may be corrupted from the simplicity that is in Christ" (2 Cor 11:3).

Gentlemen, it's time to put the remote away, get off the couch, and take care of your family!

"When I was a child, I spoke as a child, I understood as a child, I thought as a child; but when I became a man, I put away childish things" (1 Cor 13:11). Boys have to become men at some point. And let me tell you, I know it hurts my family when I'm a boy, not a man.

Let me give you a couple of Old Testament examples how this male headship works in an appropriate manner:

Abraham: "For I have known him, in order that he may command his children and his household after him, that they keep the way of the LORD, to do righteousness and justice, that the LORD may bring to Abraham what He has spoken to him" (Gen 18:19 NKJV). The success and survival of the covenant community is at stake, folks!

The Sabbath Commandment (Ex 20:8-11): you will quickly note that the woman of the house is missing. "Oh that's just male-patriarchal chauvinism." I don't think so. The daughter is there! The maid servant is there! I think this is a rather loud hint that man was to be in charge of Sabbath-keeping in his family! Listen to this statement by Ellen White: "The Sabbath was committed to Adam, the father and representative of the whole human family" (PP 48). After all, Ellen White calls Adam "the monarch" of creation (ST April 29, 1875). Incidentally, the other commandments are directed to the male. Are women responsible to the law, just like men? Of course. But the wording is directed at the men of the household. Ellen White agrees:

"The husband and father is the head of the household. The wife looks to him for love and sympathy and for aid in the training of the children; and this is right. The children are his as well as hers, and he is equally interested in their welfare. The children look to the father for support and guidance; he needs to have a right conception of life and of the influences and associations that should surround his family;

above all, he should be controlled by the love and fear of God and by the teaching of His word, that he may guide the feet of his children in the right way.... The father should do his part toward making home happy. Whatever his cares and business perplexities, they should not be permitted to overshadow his family; he should enter his home with smiles and pleasant words. The Lawmaker and Priest—All members of the family center in the father. He is the lawmaker, illustrating in his own manly bearing the sterner virtues: energy, integrity, honesty, patience, courage, diligence, and practical usefulness. The father is in one sense the priest of the household, laying upon the altar of God the morning and evening sacrifice" (AH 211-212).

To this end, Adam was created taller than Eve (White, ST January 9, 1879, Art. B, par. 13); and similarly commanding angels are physically taller than their subordinates (EW 145). This speaks of a pre-fall hierarchy among unfallen angels! Headship and subordination are not regretful products of the fall. Abuse and pain are.

"The Lord has constituted the husband the head of the wife to be her protector; he is the house-band of the family, binding the members together, even as Christ is the head of the church and the Saviour of the mystical body. Let every husband who claims to love God carefully study the requirements of God in his position. Christ's authority is exercised in wisdom, in all kindness and gentleness; so let the husband exercise his power and imitate the great Head of the church" (AH 215).

"There is One who stands higher than the husband to the wife; it is her Redeemer, and her submission to her husband is to be rendered as God has directed—as it is fit in the Lord" (White, AH 116).

Finally, you will notice that it is Adam who is explicitly expelled from the Garden, not Eve (Gen 3:23-24), although both were banned of course.

Surprisingly, Adam doesn't appear in the Bible all that much: only about 30x. There is one mention that is not explicit in the Bible but it is described by the pen of inspiration. It is the moment when Adam meets Jesus in Heaven for the first time - you want to miss neither quote nor moment!

"As the ransomed ones are welcomed to the City of God, there rings out upon the air an exultant cry of adoration. The two Adams are about to meet. The Son of God is standing with outstretched arms to receive the father of our race—the being whom He created, who sinned against his Maker, and for whose sin the marks of the crucifixion are borne upon the Saviour's form. As Adam discerns the prints of the cruel nails, he does not fall upon the bosom of his Lord, but in humiliation casts himself at His feet, crying: "Worthy, worthy is the Lamb that was slain!" Tenderly the Saviour lifts him up and bids him look once more upon the Eden home from which he has so long been exiled" (GC 647).

The New Testament, Headship, and Gender Roles

It should be reiterated that no opponent of women's ordination
 1) endorses any form of abuse, physically or emotionally
 2) speaks against women engaging in many forms of ministry

Before we delve into some key New Testament texts I must address the term *ordination* itself. After all the claim is made that the term and its practice are of Roman Catholic origin.

The term is indeed Latin, and it is used by the Catholic church. But, I checked my Catholic Catechism - an official Catholic publication - and they use the following terms: Abraham, Adam, Advent, altar, Old Testament, Amen, marriage, family, prayer, church, righteousness, Bible, etc. You get my point? Just because another faith community uses the same term does not mean that a) it means the same, b) it shouldn't be used anymore. But let me read you the key text on New Testament ordination:

"Then He ordained twelve, that they might be with Him and that He might send them out to preach" (Mk 3:14). Oh, how many people tell me that the Greek word doesn't mean "ordained" - that's just KJV. It just means "appointed", or "made". Sure, but it can also mean *ordained!* In 1 Kgs 12:31; 13:33 of the Septuagint the same term is used for Jeroboam *making [epoiesen]* priests.

According to Luke, Jesus deemed this event so important that He spent all night in prayer (Lk 6:12). Jesus' practice finds its roots in the laying on of hands to set apart for special purpose in Deut 34:9, and is not an isolated activity, as Acts 6:6; 13:3; 1 Tim 5:22 reveal.

The Ordination of the Twelve (DA ch. 25)

Ellen White is rather specific in defining the selection and ordination of the Twelve:

"the twelve were called to the apostolate" (DA 290).

"As in the Old Testament the 12 patriarchs stand as representatives of Israel, so the twelve apostles were to stand as representatives of the gospel church" (DA 291).

"Jesus was preparing the disciples for ordination" (DA 293).

"When Jesus had ended His instruction to the disciples, He gathered the little band close about Him, kneeling in the midst of them, and laying His hands upon their heads, He offered a prayer dedicating them to His sacred work. Thus the Lord's disciples were ordained to the gospel ministry" (DA 296).

"Later, when choosing seventy elders to share with him the responsibilities of leadership, Moses was careful to select, as his helpers, men possessing dignity, sound judgment, and experience. In his charge to these elders at the time of their ordination, he outlined some of the qualifications that fit a man to be a wise ruler in the church.

The same principles of piety and justice that were to guide the rulers among God's people in the time of Moses and of David, were also to be followed by those given the oversight of the newly organized church of God in the gospel dispensation. In the work of setting things in order in all the churches, and ordaining suitable men to act as officers, the apostles held to the high standards of leadership outlined in the Old Testament Scriptures. They maintained that he who is called to stand in a position of leading responsibility in the church "must be blameless, as the steward of God; not self-willed, not soon angry, not given to wine, no striker, not given to filthy lucre; but a lover of hospitality, a lover of good men, sober, just, holy, temperate; holding fast the faithful word as he

hath been taught, that he may be able by sound doctrine both to exhort and to convince the gainsayers.” Titus 1:7-9.

The order that was maintained in the early Christian church made it possible for them to move forward solidly as a well-disciplined army clad with the armor of God. The companies of believers, though scattered over a large territory, were all members of one body; all moved in concert and in harmony with one another. When dissension arose in a local church, as later it did arise in Antioch and elsewhere, and the believers were unable to come to an agreement among themselves, such matters were not permitted to create a division in the church, but were referred to a general council of the entire body of believers, made up of appointed delegates from the various local churches, with the apostles and elders in positions of leading responsibility. Thus the efforts of Satan to attack the church in isolated places were met by concerted action on the part of all, and the plans of the enemy to disrupt and destroy were thwarted.

“God is not the author of confusion, but of peace, as in all churches of the saints.” 1 Cor 14:33. He requires that order and system be observed in the conduct of church affairs today no less than in the days of old. He desires His work to be carried forward with thoroughness and exactness so that He may place upon it the seal of His approval. Christian is to be united with Christian, church with church, the human instrumentality co-operating with the divine, every agency subordinate to the Holy Spirit, and all combined in giving to the world the good tidings of the grace of God (AA 92-96).

“Now all these things happened to them as examples, and they were written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the ages have come” (1Cor 10:11 NKJV).

The Purpose of Ordination

“Before their heathen mission, the “apostles were solemnly dedicated to God by fasting and prayer and the laying on of hands. Thus they were authorized by the church, not only to teach the truth, but to perform the rite of baptism and to organize churches, being invested with full ecclesiastical authority” (DA 245; circumstances warrant exceptions, as, for example, in the case of missionary Tay).

It is interesting to note that baptism in Scripture is always accompanied by a distinct leader/minister:

Reference	Minister(s)	Baptized	Miracle
1 Cor 10:1-3	Moses	Israel	Red Sea Parts
2 Kings 5:1-4	Elisha	Naaman	Leprosy healed
Mt 3:13-17	John the Baptist	Jesus	Theophany
Mt 28:17-20	Apostles	All Nations	Risen Lord
Acts 2:1-41	Peter	Diaspora Jews	Speaking in Tongues
Acts 8:26-40	Philip	Eunuch	Spirit-Placement
Acts 9:1-19	Ananias	Paul	Blindness Healed

adapted from JAAS, "Baptism, Ordination, and the New Life", n.a.

"God foresaw the difficulties that His servants would be called to meet, and, in order that their work should be above challenge, He instructed the church by revelation to set them apart publicly to the work of the ministry. Their ordination was a public recognition of their divine appointment to bear to the Gentiles the glad tidings of the gospel" (AA 160).

"The work of proclaiming the gospel message among the Gentiles was now to be prosecuted with vigor; and as a result the church was to be strengthened by a great ingathering of souls. The apostles who had been appointed to lead out in this work would be exposed to suspicion, prejudice, and jealousy. Their teachings concerning the breaking down of "the middle wall of partition" (Ephesians 2:14) that had so long separated the Jewish and the Gentile world, would naturally subject them to the charge of heresy, and their authority as ministers of the gospel would be questioned by many zealous, believing Jews. God foresaw the difficulties that His servants would be called to meet, and, in order that their work should be above challenge, He instructed the church by revelation to set them apart publicly to the work of the ministry. **Their ordination was a public recognition of their divine appointment to bear to the Gentiles the glad tidings of the gospel. Both Paul and Barnabas had already received their commission from God Himself, and the ceremony of the laying on of hands added no new grace or virtual qualification. It was an acknowledged form of designation to an appointed office and a recognition of one's authority in that office. By it the seal of the church was set upon the work of God**" (AA 161).

"God has made His church on the earth a channel of light, and through it He communicates His purposes and His will. He does not give to one of His servants an experience independent of and contrary to the experience of the church itself. Neither does He give one man a knowledge of His will for the entire church while the church--Christ's body--is left in darkness" (ibid.) . . . "constantly inclined toward individual independence. They seem unable to realize that independence of spirit is liable to lead the human agent to have too much confidence in himself and to trust in his own judgment rather than to respect the counsel and highly esteem the judgment of his brethren, **especially of those in the offices that God has appointed for the leadership of His people. God has invested His church with special authority and power which no one can be justified in disregarding and despising, for he who does this despises the voice of God**" (pp. 163-64).

Acts 13:3-4 Paul and Barnabas on their first missionary journey. . . Ellen White comments, "Sent forth by the Holy Ghost," Paul and Barnabas, **after their ordination by the brethren in Antioch**, "departed unto Seleucia; and from thence they sailed to Cyprus." Thus the apostles began their first missionary journey" (AA 166; RH May 18, 1911).

Incidentally, Ellen White assumed that apostles and elders were men:

"The entire body of Christians was not called to vote upon the question. **The 'apostles and elders,' men of influence and judgment, framed and issued the decree, which was thereupon generally accepted by the Christian churches.** Not all, however, were pleased with the decision; there was a faction of ambitious and self-confident brethren who disagreed with it. These men assumed to engage in the work on their own responsibility. They indulged in much murmuring and faultfinding, proposing new

plans and seeking to pull down the work of the men whom God had ordained to teach the gospel message. **From the first the church has had such obstacles to meet and ever will have till the close of time**" (AA 196).

Gender-inclusive adaptations

Interestingly, this gender-specific language is lost in our updated version of Ellen White books: *Unlikely Leaders*, p. 73: "The entire body of Christians was not called to vote on the question. The 'apostles and elders' framed and issued the decree, which the churches then generally accepted. . . .

Here is another example: "**Those placed in positions of responsibility should be men and women who fear God**, who realize that they are humans only, not God." (CTr 146.4 Christ Triumphant)

The original manuscript, however, is quite gender-specific: "**Those placed in positions of responsibility should be men who fear God, who realize that they are men only, not God. They should be men who rule under God and for Him.**" (MS 163, 1902).

Romans 16:1-2 Wasn't Phoebe a deaconess?

Yes, Paul uses the term deacon for Phoebe, a woman. But the term deacon (*diakonos*) in Greek can simply mean servant. Specifically, the following entities were called "servant": master/servant (Mt 20:26; 22:13; 23:11; Mk 9:35; 10:43; Jn 2:5, 9; 12:26); government (Rom 13:4); Jesus (Rom 15:8; cf. Gal 2:17); Covenantal (2 Cor 3:6); God (2 Cor 6:4); Satan's servants (2 Cor 11:15); Pseudo-apostles (2 Cor 11:23); Paul (Eph 3:7; Col 1:34, 25); individuals (Tychicus: Eph 6:21; Col 4:7); Timothy (Phil 1:1; 1 Tim 4:6); Epaphras (Col 1:7).

In any case, Greek did not have a word for deaconess, so Paul would have used the term deacon for Phoebe even if she was a deaconess.

Romans 16:7 Wasn't Junia an apostle?

No. We don't even know for sure if Junia was a man or a woman. The text says that she was "well-known among the apostles". This doesn't make her an apostle. Several constructions like this one show that subject A is separate from subject B:

- For we are to God a sweet savor of Christ, in them that are saved, and in them that perish (2 Cor 2:15)
- To reveal his Son in me, that I might preach him among the heathen (Gal 1:16)
- communicated unto them that gospel which I preach among the Gentiles (Gal 2:2; cf. Col 1:27)
- When he shall come to be glorified in his saints (2Thess 1:10)

Incidentally, Andronicus wasn't an apostle either as far as we know. If they were so well known, how come they are not mentioned in the book of Acts? Only the Twelve are listed in the New Testament before Paul and Barnabas went on their first mission trip (Acts 13:1-2). And apostleship is never linked to females. Interestingly, Paul could have spoken of "well-known apostles" (a similar construction is found in Mt 27:16), but he distinguishes two separate groups.

1 Corinthians 11:3 “But I want you to know that the head of every man is Christ, the head of woman is man, and the head of Christ is God.”

Does “head” mean “source”? No. At least not as its primary meaning. Most Greek lexicons reject *kephale* meaning source. Head means, well, head. The idea is that of ruler, master, authority, a person of first status - not of superior value, but of different function. But don’t take my word for it - study this for yourself. Take a concordance, look up every occurrence of “head” in the New Testament, and see what you find.

The parallel of Eph 5:23 makes it clear that the husband is not the source of the wife: “For the husband is head of the wife, as also Christ is head of the church; and He is the Savior of the body” (Eph 5:23). In Col 1:18 Christ as the head has “preeminence”: “And He is the head of the body, the church, who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead, that in all things He may have the preeminence” (Col 1:18).

A medical doctor challenged me on this text. How can I be so sure that Paul is not strictly speaking of husband/wife relationships?

When you read 1 Cor 11, you will find that Paul speaks generically in v7: “he is the image and glory of God”. Are only husbands the image and glory of God? Hardly. I think it is the fact that male and female quickly became husband and wife that this notion is circulated. We really only know Adam and Eve as husband and wife, not just as male and female. The tone and thrust of the chapter appears generic to me. After all, Adam was created in the image of God before he became Eve's husband.

The Role of Ministers

Now there are statements that appear to deny any human any headship: “Christ, not the minister, is the head of the church” (ST Jan 27, 1890).

The context of this statement reveals that Ellen White speaks against an unhealthy dependence between ministers and members. This is not a restriction or definition of leadership but a reprimand against lethargic church members. Here is the statement in context, which clearly criticizes church members for rendering headship an excuse for ministry paralysis. It’s against the all-too-common reality of ministry where the head = the pastor works without the ligaments of laity!

“The success of a church does not depend on the efforts and labor of the living preacher, but it depends upon the piety of the individual members. When the members depend upon the minister as their source of power and efficiency, they will be utterly powerless. They will imbibe his impulses, and be stimulated by his ideas, but when he leaves them, they will find themselves in a more hopeless condition than before they had his labors. I hope that none of the churches in our land will depend upon a minister for support in spiritual things; for this is dangerous. When God gives you light, you should praise him for it. If you extol the messenger, you will be left to barrenness of soul. Just as soon as the members of a church call for the labors of a certain minister, and feel that he must remain with them, it is time that he was removed to another field, that they may learn to exercise the ability which God has given them. **Let the people go to work.** Let them thank God for the encouragement they have

received, and then make it manifest that it has wrought in them a good work. Let each member of the church be a living, active agent for God, both in the church and out of it. **We must all be educated to be independent, not helpless and useless. Let it be seen that Christ, not the minister, is the head of the church. The members of the body of Christ have a part to act, and they will not be accounted faithful unless they do act their part. Let a divine work be wrought in every soul, until Christ shall behold his image reflected in his followers**" (ST January 27, 1890, par. 9).

"I would warn the churches everywhere to respect your ministers, but do not make idols of them; for you not only imperil your own souls, but the souls of God's messengers. Do not flatter and extol your minister, telling him what a fine discourse he has preached. Let him stand in his position as Christ's ambassador. Listen to his words as to one sent from God; heed his instructions, and show by your life that you have heard to some purpose. And as a humble Christian, without any parade, let the minister fulfill his duties, and give to others what he has received of God. We are nearing the judgment, and the Lord has set watchmen upon the walls of Zion, who are never to hold their peace day or night. They are to watch for souls as they who must give an account" (ST January 27, 1890, par. 10).

- "Christ is the only Head of the church" (MR 21:274; DA 817; GC 51).

Again, context clarifies her meaning: "He [Jesus] only has the right to demand of man unlimited obedience to His requirements" (21MR 274). This is not the headship Group 1 (anti-WO) speaks of.

"Jesus was given to stand at the head of humanity, by His example to teach what it means to minister. . . . The great Head of the church superintends His work through the instrumentality of men ordained by God to act as His representatives.... Christ's ministers are the spiritual guardians of the people entrusted to their care. Their work has been likened to that of watchmen" (AA pp. 359-360).

"And Moses chose able men out of all Israel, and made them heads over the people, rulers of thousands, rulers of hundreds, rulers of fifties, and rulers of tens" (Ex 18:25 - Hebrew *rosh*).

"God has provided light and truth for the world by having placed it in the keeping of faithful men, who in succession have committed it to others through all generations up to the present time. **These men have derived their authority in an unbroken line from the first teachers of the faith.** Christ remains the true minister of his church, but he delegates his power to his under-shepherds, to his chosen ministers, who have the treasure of his grace in earthen vessels. God superintends the affairs of his servants, and they are placed in his work by divine appointment" (White, ST April 7, 1890, par. 6).

"God gave to Moses special direction for the management of his work. He directed Moses to associate men with him as counselors, that his burdens might be lightened. Through Jethro the message was given: "Hearken now unto my voice, I will give thee counsel, and God shall be with thee: Be thou for the people to Godward, that thou mayest bring the causes unto God: and thou shalt teach them ordinances and laws, and shalt show them the way wherein they must walk, and the work that they must do. Moreover thou shalt provide out of all the people able men, such as fear God, men of truth, hating covetousness; and place such over them, to be rulers of thousands, and rulers of hundreds, rulers of fifties, and rulers of tens: and let them judge the people at all seasons: and it shall be, that every great matter they shall bring unto thee,

but every small matter they shall judge: so shall it be easier for thyself, and they shall bear the burden with thee. If thou shalt do this thing, and God command thee so, then thou shalt be able to endure, and all this people shall also go to their place in peace (TM 340). This counsel is for us. It should be heeded by our responsible men" (TM 341).

In the book *Confrontation*, Ellen White equates headship with leadership:

"God appointed Moses to lead out His people from their bondage in the land of Egypt, that they might consecrate themselves to serve Him with perfect hearts and be to Him a peculiar treasure. Moses was their visible leader, while Christ stood at the head of the armies of Israel, their invisible Leader" (Con 25).

I received an e-mail recently (8-4-14) that provides a profound perspective. A lady asks why God created us with gender (and not like the angels), what gender really is, and since we are created in the image of God and God is portrayed mostly with male language, what femininity really meant? In her own words,

"So far my study has lead me to think that femininity is 'covered' by masculinity based on 1 Cor 11:7-9 which states that "man is the image and glory of God, and woman is the glory of the man", "woman (is) of the man" and "woman (was created) for the man". This language is really an unequivocal acknowledgment that femininity has a very different role than I have understood. It derives its dignity and origin from masculinity.

Paul does not say that the woman is the image of God. That distinction belongs to the man. So I've come to the conclusion that when this verse is coupled with Eph 5 femininity is an expression of the love, trust, submission and reverence that the church would render to the Godhead after sin and the incarnation. Gender was a sort of anticipatory symbol of the revelation of God's love that would be expressed in Christ."

I think the writer is on to something: could it be that gender, in its most fundamental theological intention, has a two-fold component? 1) only two parties can experience relational love, 2) true love is depends on submission?

After all, throughout the New Testament Jesus operates in humble submission to the Father, without losing any of his model masculinity and authority. This submission continues past this chapter called earth: 1 Cor 15:28 "Now when all things are made subject to Him, then the Son Himself will also be subject to Him who put all things under Him, that God may be all in all."

By the way - this lady did what we need to do: take our Bibles, and read! Those who read succeed: "Where is the wise? where is the scribe? where is the disputer of this world? hath not God made foolish the wisdom of this world?" (1Cor 1:20). "For ye see your calling, brethren, how that not many wise men after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble, *are called*:²⁷ But God hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise; and God hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty" (1Cor 1:26-27).

Some have argued that "this headship-thing" is a new theology . . .

The 1957 book *Questions on Doctrine* confirms Adam's headship: "the sinful nature that we all inherited from Adam. . . (was) because of Adam's sin (Rom. 5:12 quoted)." (64) The book *Seventh-Day Adventists Believe* (1980), suggests that the sinfulness of human nature is linked to Adam's fall. (65) The 2001 Annotated Edition of *Questions on Doctrine* states: "The first death is a death resulting from Adam's transgression . . . for all mankind." (66) Morris Venden noted: "Because of Adam's sin, his posterity were born with inherent propensities of disobedience." (67) The *Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary* affirmed: "sin has been in the world ever since the original transgression of Adam. . . the one act of Adam's transgression caused sin as a principle to enter this world. . . all the evils of Adam's fall." (68) The commentary goes on to say "sin and death, as a principle and power, proceeded from Adam to the whole human race . . . Adam's sin is universal." (69) The *Handbook of Seventh-day Adventist Theology* states that "the source of sin and subsequent death is (from) Adam's fall . . . Adam sinned and therefore the whole world lies in sin . . . sin originated with Adam, because of Adam's sin, we have inherited separation from God- and have a propensity to sin, wrongful tendencies, perverted appetites, debased morals, as well as physical degeneracy." (70) These and many statements by Ellen White negate the belief that the "modern (71) headship doctrine" was unknown in the Adventist church "before the 1970s, and never appeared in any published book or article written by an Adventist before 1987." (72) adapted from and sources available from <http://advindicate.com/articles/2014/9/3/federal-headship#sthash.yFp27NPY.dpuf>

1 Corinthians 14:33-34

Without going into too many details, Paul yet again gives gender-specific counsel, and it's not limited to a local situation: "as in all the churches" (v33). Can women speak in church? Of course - the context here is a worship setting, and previously women are encouraged to pray and prophesy (1 Cor 11).

Galatians 3:28 "There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is neither male nor female; for you are all one in Christ Jesus."

This has to be one of the most misquoted Bible texts on this topic ever. The recent Seminary statement on headship uses this text to prove that God wants us to return to an Eden ideal. (<http://www.adventistreview.org/church-news/andrews-theologians-approve-statement-on-church-leadership>). I wonder if all the seminary professors have become vegan . . . :) Ironically, Eden established gender, whereas Gal 3:28 cancels it - for a very particular context as we shall see.

Here some observations:

- the same apostle who wrote Gal 3:28 wrote gender-specific instructions in 1 Cor 11, 14, 1 Tim 2-3, Titus 1-2.
- Context: salvation, not social status - gender-differentiations remain in-tact. Every verse, from v26-29, addresses a vertical relationship between the new believer and Jesus/God.
- distinctions *in the sense of theological or spiritual privileges* are erased at the cross, but functionally humans still embody different responsibilities:

"No distinction on account of nationality, race, or caste, is recognized by God. He is the Maker of all mankind. All men are of one family by creation, and all are one through redemption. Christ came to demolish every wall of partition, to throw open every compartment of the temple, [here it comes!] that

every soul may have free access to God. His love is so broad, so deep, so full, that it penetrates everywhere. It lifts out of Satan's circle the poor souls who have been deluded by his deceptions. It places them within reach of the throne of God, the throne encircled by the rainbow of promise. In Christ there is neither Jew nor Greek, bond nor free. **All are brought nigh by His precious blood**" (COL 386 - interestingly, Ellen White leaves out gender to avoid misunderstanding!).

Ephesians 5:22-25 (also compare Col 3:18-19 = not just local advice but universal appeal)

"For the husband is head of the wife, as also Christ is head of the church; and He is the Savior of the body."

In the July 10, 2014 issue of the *Adventist Review* Harvard professor David Williams warns that "Theological beliefs about the headship of men and the submission of women have been used to justify domestic violence" (AR July 10, 2014 p. 40). That's right; false theological belief (emphasis on *false*) will always cause pain and harm. Correct beliefs, translated into loving action, never will. False theological beliefs about headship have also led to the abandonment of the biblical concept of family, turned men into washrags, and men and women into absentee parents. How many children grow up in single-parent homes? (And God bless you single-parents!).

Human error also leads to car accidents, but we still drive cars. Human error has led to the Chernobyl nuclear incident in 1986. We still use electricity. Fire burns houses; it also warms houses. Water drowns people; we consist 70% of water.

But notice correct headship here in Ephesians: marriage is the mirror of God's love for humanity, and the man is to prepare the wife for the second coming of Jesus! That's headship! The husband models Jesus Christ to his family - that ought to drive every man to his knees a couple times a day! Is the woman responsible for her salvation? Absolutely. But marriage is not just about love - atheists can love each other and get married. Christian marriage goes beyond human love - it reflects God's love to the world!

1 Timothy 2-3

When I read 1 Tim 2-3 (a million times!) I just cannot get around the fact that men have different roles and responsibilities than women. And I don't say this lightly - before I stand up here and tell a women she can't do something in the year 2014 just because she is a woman takes some consideration (and a bullet-proof vest!). But do keep in mind, I can't have babies. No fair. If we are physically different, don't you think it reasonable that God gave us different spiritual functions as well?

Of course, we could just dismiss the text altogether, as some scholars have done (one scholar even dismisses 1 Tim 2-3 as coming not from Paul; I won't even quote her here!):

"Just as the first half of this chapter showed us the author at his best, so the second half seems to show him at his worst. Christians are under no obligation to accept his teaching on women."

A. T. Hanson, *The Pastoral Letters*, The Cambridge Bible Commentary on the NEB (Cambridge UP, 1966), 38.

Voila - 1 Tim 2:3 erased with the stroke of the scholar's pen!

However, "For those who hold a high view of biblical authority, the text must reign over and correct what we think is just." Stern, *Jewish New Testament Commentary*, 640

Therefore we must beware that "some contemporary discussions of women in antiquity are so influenced by modern biases that they cannot appreciate and accurately describe the character and dynamics of the situation then." S.M. Baugh, "A Foreign World", 37

"Our task . . . is to interpret texts according to the intention of the author, and thus we must be careful that an interpretation is not rejected merely because it offends our sense of justice." Schreiner, "Interpretation of 1 Timothy 2:9-15," 114.

Context

First observation: the entire context is universal:

2:1-3: prayer for those in authority

2:4-7: God wants all humans saved

2:8-15: worship regulations for all churches

3:1-17: the character of elders

3:8-13: the character of deacons

Culture

Famous evangelical scholar John Stott warned: "the danger of declaring any passage of Scripture to have only local (not universal), and only transient (not perpetual) validity is that it opens the door to a wholesale rejection of apostolic teaching, since virtually the whole of the New Testament was addressed to specific situations" (John Stott, *The Message of 1 Timothy & Titus*, 77).

Paul himself states: "These things I write to you, though I hope to come to you shortly;¹⁵ but if I am delayed, I write so that you may know how you ought to conduct yourself in the house of God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth" (1Tim 3:14-15).

Paul's counsel to Timothy not limited to Timothy's local situation: Paul says "I do not permit", not "I wouldn't permit" or "I don't permit you to permit". Present tense instructions are often universal in nature: Rom 12:1; 1 Cor 10; Eph 4:1; Phil 4:2; 2 Tim 1:6. Universal church counsel can also be found in 1 Cor 14:33, 16:1, and in Jesus' letters to the seven church (Rev 2-3).

Speculative reconstructions of a possible local situation create a cultural guesswork that abandons the solid grounding of Scripture. And: scholars don't agree whether this is "proto-gnostic", or about false female teachers, or another situation that warrants such counsel. And we don't need to know - Paul will tell us the precise reason for his gender-specific admonition.

Concept

Since the Greek for "to have authority over a man" is used only once in the Bible it cannot be defined with occurrences elsewhere. But the immediate context of 1 Tim 2:12 clarifies the term:

"Let a woman learn in silence with all submission.

And I do not permit a woman to **teach** or to **have authority over** a man,
but to be in silence

Sandwiching the prohibition to teach and having authority over a man between two admonitions of silence clearly puts these phrases in relation to each other. Learning and teaching are parallel counterparts, as are “submission” and “having authority”. The logical complement of women learning is men teaching, and consequently the complement of submission (of a woman to a man) is for a woman not to have authority over a man. The Old Testamental Pseudepigrapha 3 Macc 2:29 uses the noun *authentia* in the sense of “right”, “status”. The related noun *authentēs* in Wis 12:6 is usually translated “by their own hands”, echoing the idea of authority.

We must also note that there is no gap between chapter 2 and chapter 3! With this in mind, a further structure may be discerned that contrasts men and women:

women: to be in silence (1 Tim 2:12)

men: to be blameless [as an elder] (1 Tim 3:2)

In short, church settings in particular require women to be in submission to men, especially elders – it is precisely this submission that avoids usurping authority over a man. The subsequent characteristics of an elder that Paul lists prevent any notion of male chauvinism, abuse, or inappropriate behavior towards women.

Paul then expands his mandate: “I do not permit a woman to teach, nor to have authority over a man, but to be in silence” (1 Tim 2:12). This prohibition against women teaching does not target false teaching (as in 1 Tim 6:3, where the specific term *heterodidaskaleō* “teaching something else” is used). Throughout Paul’s letters teaching means positive instruction:

- 1) **1 Tim 4:11** “These things command and **teach**.”
- 2) **1 Tim 6:2** “These things **teach** and exhort.”
- 3) **2 Tim 2:2** “Commit these things to faithful men who will be able to **teach** others also.”

In Acts 22:2 and 2 Thess 3:12 “silence” emphasizes respect and the humble pursuit of relational peace and harmony, not an absolute verbal silence.

One more pattern is interesting to observe. The phrase “This is a faithful saying” comes in no trivial contexts:

1 Tim 1:15	salvation
1 Tim 3:1	eldership
1 Tim 4:9	salvation
2 Tim 2:11	salvation
Titus 3:8	works

Now Paul provides his reasoning for male headship:

Creation

Reason 1 - Creation: Adam's pre-fall creation priority: "For Adam was formed first, then Eve" (1 Tim 2:13). Reaching back to Gen 1-2 (esp. Gen 2:7-8, 15, 19), Paul bases his argument on creation, not culture. Adam was first in regard to creation (Gen 2:7, 18ff.), task assignments (Gen 2:15), naming the animals (Gen 2:19), and receiving prohibitions (Gen 2:16-17). It is the woman who is brought to the man (Gen 2:22), and subsequently the male is the one who initiates a new family entity (Gen 2:24). Adam is the one given a helper, not Eve (Gen 2:18). The creation dynamics designed by God underline distinctions between genders, and with that differentiation of roles. In Ellen White's estimation, "Adam was to stand at the **head** of the earthly family, to maintain the principles of the heavenly family" (PP 48). Here again equality of *value* is never in question, nor is man given license to abuse of his authority.

Male ignorance and arrogance over the centuries, with its denigration of women's ontological value, its materialistic love affair with sports ("schools of brutality" - Ed 210) and self-centered recreation at the expense of family time, its inappropriate chauvinism, its unfair division of labor in the home, and its inexcusable abuse in all its forms, can only blame itself for fueling the engine of egalitarian hermeneutics. Indeed, "Man's abuse of the supremacy thus given him has too often rendered the lot of woman very bitter, and made her life a burden" (AH 115).

"But Jesus called them *to him*, and said, You know that the princes of the Gentiles exercise dominion over them, and they that are great exercise authority upon them.²⁶ But it shall not be so among you: but whosoever will be great among you, let him be your servant [*diakonos*]" (Mat 20:25-26). Jesus speaks of inappropriate exercise of authority, not the elimination of all authority.

Curse

Reason 2 – Curse: Eve's transgression priority: "And Adam was not deceived, but the woman being deceived, fell into transgression (1 Tim 2:14). Paul reminds that the origin of sin on earth can be pinpointed in Eve's transgression. Eventually, with Adam's consent (Gen 3:17; PP 56), this resulted in the world's condition of "unutterable woe" (1BC 1082). Significantly, it was a questioning of the word of God ("Has God really said?" Gen 3:1) that brought this crisis to the cosmos. Eve was *subjected to false teaching*. Correspondingly, Paul's prohibition in 1 Tim 2:14 aims directly at the woman being deceived *in connection with her relation to Adam*. Otherwise woman would be prohibited from all teaching, including teaching other women or children, which is clearly not the case (2 Tim 1:5; 3:15; Tit 2:3-4). In short, it was not deception itself but transgression *in her role as female companion to Adam* that prompts Paul to restrict women from teaching men and having authority over them (in confirmation of Gen 3:16).

But there is one other point that is absolutely vital to consider. Proponents of women's ordination like to point to the fact that only after the fall was Adam and Eve's relationship defined by leadership and submission. They claim full equality in all matters of existence prior to the fall. But we must realize that all 3 curse realities - child-bearing in pain, gender submission, and the hardness of labor - all existed in their positive form before the fall! Was there child-bearing before sin? Yes, at least potentially. Was there work for Adam and Eve to perform before sin? Yes. It is therefore reasonable to propose that male leadership and female submission was a positive reality prior to the fall.

Male Elders

- since Paul's counsel is gender-specific, "a husband of one wife" refers to a male with certain moral standards. In 1 Tim 5:9 Paul shows that there is a gender-specific term for women. Therefore "husband of one wife" cannot mean "wife of one husband". Elders are men. And so are pastors. In this regard we never call Ellen White Pastor White or Elder White. In all instances where Paul uses the term for husband (*aner*), the word refers to a male.

This is not a new concept. In Num 7:2 Moses employs the term *Tny amad* - to stand over: "That the princes of Israel, heads of the house of their fathers, who *were* the princes of the tribes, and **were over them** that were numbered."

A former editor of *Ministry* magazine argues that technically, elders = pastors, and since we ordain women as elders (which was never voted at a General Conference in session), the entire discussion is a mute point (David Newman, AR Online, Aug 22 - Comments). Indeed, elders are pastors, really:

Acts 20:17, 28: elders are overseers that "pastor" the flock; 1 Pet 2:25: Shepherd and Overseer = Pastor and elder (cf. 5:1-2). But if elders are to be males, so are pastors!

Now there is the *office* of elder/pastor (unpaid/paid), which is restricted to men, and there is the *gift* of pastoring, which is available to all genders. But interestingly, Ellen White quotes 1 Tim 3:1-7 and then writes, "My brother, I have an intense desire that you shall be a man after God's heart" (MR 21:99).

Criteria

According to Paul, the most important aspect is precisely this criteria for men who want to be elders: "the husband of one wife", or a "one-woman-man". A husband of one wife is a one-woman husband, in thought, mind, heart, soul, and action. Elders, there is no room for other women in your life, whether (Heaven forbid!) physically, on the internet, or in your frontal lobe. With Job (31:1) we say, "I have made a covenant with my eyes; Why then should I look upon a young woman?" With 1 Cor 10:13 we claim that "No temptation has overtaken you except such as is common to man; but God is faithful, who will not allow you to be tempted beyond what you are able, but with the temptation will also make the way of escape, that you may be able to bear it." With Ps 119:9-11 we ask, "How can a young man cleanse his way? By taking heed according to Your word. ¹⁰ With my whole heart I have sought You; Oh, let me not wander from Your commandments! ¹¹ Your word I have hidden in my heart, That I might not sin against You!"

We must acknowledge a detail in 1 Tim 3:1: Paul speaks of eldership as an office, not simply a person: "episkope - oversight". In the Old Testament Septuagint, this term is used in relation to God: judgment or salvation (Gen 50:24; Ex 3:16; Job 10:12; Isa 29:6); armies (2 Kgs 11:15); and stewardship of the temple (Num 4:16; Neh 11:14-22).

"To Aaron and Hur, assisted by the elders who had been granted a revelation of God's glory, was given the charge of the people in the absence of Moses. Aaron had long stood side by side with Moses, and Hur was a man who had been entrusted with weighty responsibilities. How carefully these men should have guarded the church in the wilderness while Moses was in the mount with God. . . . **Today as then men of determination are needed—men who will stand stiffly for the truth at all times and under all circumstances, men who, when they see that others are becoming untrue to principle, will lift their voice in warning against the danger of apostasy. Those who occupy the position of**

under shepherds, as elders of the church, are to exercise a watchful diligence over the Lord's flock. This is not to be a lording, dictatorial vigilance. They are to encourage and strengthen" (White, MS 43, 1907, from Letter 69, 1904, written to J. E. White, Feb. 9, 1904 "Exhortation to Faithfulness to Church Members and Elders," March 12, 1907; cf. 5MR 451.4).

It should also be pointed out that Paul does not say, "An elder must be married." He outlines the criteria of what kind of man an elder needs to be.

Does he have to have children? Ideally so, since appropriate family management, in 1 Tim 3:5, is the measure of a man's character and the test of eligibility for eldership. Paul assumes a local elder has obedient children. But the Sabbath commandment also includes rest for the cattle or stranger, but I don't have to have cattle or a stranger within my gates to keep the Sabbath holy! Common sense tells us that the Bible was written for practical purpose but will not define every scenario.

Am I saying that you have to be an elder and/or ordained to do any kind of ministry? No, of course not! We need more members doing ministry, not less!

"Some matters have been presented to me in regard to the laborers who are seeking to do all in their power to win souls to Jesus Christ. . . . The ministers are paid for their work, and this is well. And if the Lord gives the wife, as well as the husband, the burden of labor, and if she devotes her time and her strength to visiting from family to family, opening the Scriptures to them, **although the hands of ordination have not been laid upon her**, she is accomplishing a work that is in the line of ministry. Should her labors be counted as nought, and her husband's salary be no more than that of the servant of God whose wife does not give herself to the work, but remains at home to care for her family" (5 MR 323)?

The recent (8/14) Seminary Statement on Headship denies any linkage between home leadership and church leadership.

I must disagree; both Paul and Ellen White could not be more direct:

Shepherds who fail at home will fail at church. "He who is engaged in the work of the gospel ministry must be faithful in his family life. It is as essential that as a father he should improve the talents God has given him for the purpose of making the home a symbol of the heavenly family, as that in the work of the ministry, he should make use of his God-given powers to win souls for the church. [Now notice the airtight correlation]: **As the priest in the home, and as the ambassador of Christ in the church**, he should exemplify in his life the character of Christ. He must be faithful in watching for souls as one that must give an account. In his service there must be seen no carelessness and inattentive work. God will not serve with the sins of men who have not a clear sense of the sacred responsibility involved in accepting a position as pastor of a church. **He who fails to be a faithful, discerning shepherd in the home, will surely fail of being a faithful shepherd of the flock of God in the church.**—MR 6:49 (also in *Pastoral Ministry*, 88).

"He who fails to direct wisely his own household, is not qualified to guide the church of God" (ST Nov. 10, 1881).

Additional Quotes on Male Leadership

These men He purposed to train and educate as the leaders of His church. They in turn were to educate others and send them out with the gospel message. That they might have success in their work they were to be given the power of the Holy Spirit. Not by human might or human wisdom was the gospel to be proclaimed, but by the power of God. (AA 17). There should not be so great haste in electing leaders as to ordain men who are in no way fitted for the responsible work—men who need to be converted, elevated, ennobled, and refined before they can serve the cause of God in any capacity. 446 (CCh 247.4) 3. The Lord has instructed me to say to his people that he demands a deeper consecration on their part, in every conference, in every church, in every household. Said the messenger: Speak to the **leading men**, saying, You should give to the people an example of what may be done by the human agent in holy living by coming into close relation to God. (RH July 23, 1908 par 3) They had a wonderful message. God had left the church and the **leading men** one side, and these men were God's messengers, to give the last message of mercy, and proclaim the end of time which Mr. Garmire's daughter had professed to see in vision. (PH030 10.5) 4. I wish to say to you and to the **leading men** in the church, and to the trustees of the Tabernacle, that light has been given to me very distinctly that Elder A. T. Jones has taken a position that divorces him from the privileges of the use of the Tabernacle. (10MR 62.1) 5. "Lay hands," said the inspired apostle, "suddenly on no man" [1 Tim 5:22]. **Do not be in such haste to manufacture leaders, ordaining men that have never been tested or proved.** Let the church be conducted in this manner: alternating with several, one leading one week and choosing another for the next week or two, thus keeping individuals at work in the church; and after a suitable trial select by the voice of the church someone to be the acknowledged leader, for never more than a year at a time; then elect again a new one, or the same one if he has been a blessing to the church. (12MR 284.3) 6. I saw that Brother Cornell was premature in organization, and he placed men to lead in the church who were in no way calculated to fill the office. Such moves should be made with the greatest caution, but Brother Cornell trusted too much to his own judgment. It is always best to wait a little until character is developed before putting [persons into office] in the church, unless all are thoroughly acquainted with the persons elected and know them to be fit to act in the capacity in which they are chosen to act. (21MR 262.2) 7. Men who repudiate the teachings of the Spirit of God are not the proper persons to be placed in offices as leaders in the church. There is danger that the teachings of men who are not soundly converted may lead others into by and forbidden paths. In our efforts to secure consecrated leadership, we may expect to encounter opposition, for the enemy is seeking through unconverted men in positions of trust to mold the work, and he has too much at stake lightly to lose their influence. (LLM 465.2)

The apostle says: "Lay hands suddenly on no man." In the days of the apostles the ministers of God did not dare to rely upon their own judgment in selecting or accepting men to take the solemn and sacred position of mouthpiece for God. They selected the men whom their judgment would accept, and then they placed them before the Lord to see if He would accept them to go forth as His representatives. No less than this should be done now. (4T 406.2) In many places we meet men who have been hurried into responsible positions as elders of the church when they are not qualified for such a position. They have not proper government over themselves. Their influence is not good. The church is in trouble continually in consequence of the defective character of the leader. Hands have been laid too suddenly upon these men" (4T 406).

"In some of our churches the work of organizing and of ordaining elders has been premature; the Bible rule has been disregarded, and consequently grievous trouble has been brought upon the church. There should not be so great haste in electing leaders as to ordain men who are in no way fitted for the responsible work - men who need to be converted, elevated, ennobled, and refined before they can serve the cause of God in any capacity" (5T 617, 618).

Titus 1:5-7; 2:1-5

"For this cause left I thee in Crete, that thou shouldest set in order the things that are wanting, **and ordain elders in every city**, as I had appointed thee:¹⁶ If any be blameless, the husband of one wife, having faithful children not accused of riot or unruly. ⁷ For a bishop must be blameless, as the steward of God; not selfwilled, not soon angry, not given to wine, no striker, not given to filthy lucre" (Titus 1:5).

It is here that the word Latin word "ordo" appears in English as "setting in order". This is what ordination is all about, following biblical counsel, not Roman Catholic popery.

You will also notice that role confusion could result in "blaspheming the word of God" (2:5)!

"The same principles of piety and justice that were to guide the rulers among God's people in the time of Moses and of David, were also to be followed by those given the oversight of the newly organized church of God in the gospel dispensation. In the work of setting things in order in all the churches, and ordaining suitable men to act as officers, the apostles held to the high standards of leadership outlined in the Old Testament Scriptures. They maintained that he who is called to stand in a position of leading responsibility in the church 'must be blameless, as the steward of God; not self-willed, not soon angry, not given to wine, no striker, not given to filthy lucre; but a lover of hospitality, a lover of good men, sober, just, holy, temperate; holding fast the faithful word as he hath been taught, that he may be able by sound doctrine both to exhort and to convince the gainsayers.'

Titus 1:7-9" (AA 95).

Embedded in Titus is a ministry suggestion (2:1-5) that we have to a large degree neglected: the ministry of older women to younger women. I can count on both hands how many pastors got too close to female church members within a counseling situation. Ladies, you need to seek other ladies for help with your problems. The wall of attraction is just too thin to engage in any long-term male-female counseling relationships.

The problem with ordaining men

Ellen White goes a step further: in the absence of qualified male leadership, "It is not always men who are best adapted to the successful management of a church. If faithful women have more deep piety and true devotion than men, they could indeed by their prayers and their labors do more than men who are unconsecrated in heart and in life" (19MR 56). **The problem with the ordination of women is the lack of ordination among some men!** I do not think she erases all gender distinctions for church leadership, however.

The Priesthood of All Believers (1 Pet 2:9)

This is actually not a biblical phrase; it originated most likely with Martin Luther's *To the Christian Nobility of the German Nation* (1520). Peter quotes from Ex 19:5-6 here: Israel was a kingdom of priests, but significantly, not every Israelite was a priest! And Peter speaks of "undershepherds" in 1 Pet 5:2-4, as does Ellen White:

"The elders which are among you I exhort, who am also an elder, and a witness of the sufferings of Christ, and also a partaker of the glory that shall be revealed: Feed the flock of God which is among you, taking the oversight *thereof*, not by constraint, but willingly; not for filthy lucre, but of a ready mind; Neither as being lords over God's heritage, but being ensamples to the flock." (1Pet 5:1) (AA 525).

"Those who occupy the position of undershepherds are to exercise a watchful diligence over the Lord's flock. This is not to be a dictatorial vigilance, but one that tends to encourage and strengthen and uplift. Ministry means more than sermonizing; it means earnest, personal labor. The church on earth is composed of erring men and women, who need patient, painstaking effort that they may be trained and disciplined to work with acceptance in this life, and in the future life to be crowned with glory and immortality. **Pastors are needed—faithful shepherds—who will not flatter God's people, nor treat them harshly, but who will feed them with the bread of life—men who in their lives feel daily the converting power of the Holy Spirit and who cherish a strong, unselfish love toward those for whom they labor.**" (AA 526)

Authority

We have such a hard time with the language of authority because it has been misused so much, in church and culture, and because we are defined by an anti-authoritarian culture which is fueled by emotion rather than Scripture. But these texts uphold a spiritual leadership model that catalyses the mission of the church:

"I urge you, brethren-- you know the household of Stephanas, that it is the firstfruits of Achaia, and that they have devoted themselves to the ministry of the saints--that you also submit to such, and to everyone who works and labors with us" (1 Cor 16:15-16).

"Let the elders who rule well be counted worthy of double honor, especially those who labor in the word and doctrine" (1 Tim 5:17).

"Speak these things, exhort, and rebuke with all authority" (Tit 2:15).

"Obey those who rule over you, and be submissive, for they watch out for your souls, as those who must give account. Let them do so with joy and not with grief, for that would be unprofitable for you" (Heb 13:17).

"And we urge you, brethren, to recognize those who labor among you, and are over you in the Lord and admonish you,¹³ and to esteem them very highly in love for their work's sake" (1Thess 5:12-13).

Now What?

"The greatest want of the world is the want of men—men who will not be bought or sold, men who in their inmost souls are true and honest, men who do not fear to call sin by its right name, men whose conscience is as true to duty as the needle to the pole, men who will stand for the right though the heavens fall" (Ed 57).

And we need women. Not to do all the dirty work. No, we need women who will minister on the ground level. We cannot have visitors in this church go unnoticed for weeks. We cannot have people considering a membership transfer to xyz church leave because nobody talks to them. We need a personal ministry initiative by men and women like this church has never seen before. We need deacons and deaconesses who visit, not just pick up the offering and help with communion.

A we need to return to Scripture. We have to recover the Bible in our midst, in our personal lives, and in our communal-institutional church life. Back to the Bible. The Bible. The Bible. The Bible.

The truth is rather plain and simple: "Numberless words need not be put upon paper to justify what speaks for itself and shines in its clearness. Truth is straight, plain, clear, and stand out boldly in its own defense; but it is not so with error. It is so winding and twisting that it needs a multitude of words to explain it in its crooked form" (EW 96).

You will notice after studying this for a while that two assaults are leveled at the church: the loss of creation gender, and the loss of the Word of God (nothing new under the sun, is there?!).

Ellen White warned of the danger of a new hermeneutic:

"The enemy of souls has sought to bring in the supposition that a great reformation was to take place among Seventh-day Adventists, and that this reformation would consist in giving up the doctrines which stand as the pillars of our faith, and engaging in a process of reorganization. Were this reformation to take place, what would result? The principles of truth that God in His wisdom has given to the remnant church, would be discarded. Our religion would be changed. The fundamental principles that have sustained the work for the last fifty years would be accounted as error. A new organization would be established. Books of a new order would be written. A system of intellectual philosophy would be introduced. The founders of this system would go into the cities, and do a wonderful work. The Sabbath of course, would be lightly regarded, as also the God who created it. Nothing would be allowed to stand in the way of the new movement. The leaders would teach that virtue is better than vice, but God being removed, they would place their dependence on human power, which, without God, is worthless. Their foundation would be built on the sand, and storm and tempest would sweep away the structure" (1SM 204).

"History is repeating. With the open Bible before them, and professing to reverence its teachings, many of the religious leaders of our time are destroying faith in it as the word of God. They busy themselves with dissecting the word, and set their own opinions above its plainest statements. In their hands God's word loses its regenerating power. This is why infidelity runs riot, and iniquity is rife" (DA 258).

I know these are counter-intuitive texts and verses. They don't fit our mindset. They seem outdated, unfair, discriminatory. But it is time that the watchman answer Isaiah's question, "Watchman, what of the night" (Isa 21:11)?

The Third Way

Just recently, this summer, a 3rd way has been proposed: uphold male leadership (they shy away from the term 'headship'), but let every conference do what they want in regards to ordination, for the sake of unity.

Kingship

The primary biblical example they use is that of kingship: God did not want Israel to have a king, but, because of the surrounding cultures, Israel wanted a king anyway. So God granted them a king. In the same way with women pastors and elders.

Let me tell you something about kingship: if that is our model for women's ordination, we should run from it as far as the east is from the west! Hosea 13:11 says, "I gave you a king in My anger, And took *him* away in My wrath".

"The Lord had, through His prophets, foretold that Israel would be governed by a king; **but it does not follow that this form of government was best for them or according to His will**. He permitted the people to follow their own choice, because they refused to be guided by His counsel. Hosea declares that God gave them a king in His anger. Hosea 13:11. When men choose to have their own way, without seeking counsel from God, **or in opposition to His revealed will**, He often grants their desires, in order that, through the bitter experience that follows, they may be led to realize their folly and to repent of their sin. Human pride and wisdom will prove a dangerous guide. That which the heart desires **contrary to the will of God** will in the end be found a curse rather than a blessing" (PP 605; emphasis supplied).

"There are thousands at the present day who are pursuing a similar course. They would have no difficulty in understanding their duty if it were in harmony with their inclinations. It is plainly set before them in the Bible or is clearly indicated by circumstances and reason. But because these evidences are contrary to their desires and inclinations they frequently set them aside and presume to go to God to learn their duty. With great apparent conscientiousness they pray long and earnestly for light. But God will not be trifled with. He often permits such persons to follow their own desires and to suffer the result" (PP 440).

Ellen White echoes this sentiment: "Those who disregard the requirements of God in this life would not respect His authority were they in heaven" (4T 311).

"God can accept no partial obedience, no lax way of treating His commandments" (CC 176).

"His words are not permits, not suggestions, but the decisions of an infallible Judge. They are divine maxims, the very specified laws which will judge us in the last days. No man is excusable for acting as though he were at liberty to cancel the decisions of God, to disregard His directions and injunctions, to

review them, criticize them, reverse them as he sees fit. The words of God are righteousness and truth, but they are strangely unheeded. If men cannot shape His sayings to their liking, they depart from His directions, and break His commandments. But thank God we have the living oracles, the lamp of life, and he only is wise who walks in the light. God cannot change the word that has gone out of His lips. Man cannot depart from God's plans, except at the peril of his soul. He cannot sit safely in judgment upon the word of God; for that word is to judge him when he shall stand before the great white throne. Let all bear in mind that the judgment shall sit, and the books shall be opened, and every one shall be judged according to his works. (4MR 450.1)

The religion of every man must be in harmony with the Bible. No man can disregard one word of God, or walk contrary to his expressed will, receiving or rejecting it as he pleases, and be guiltless in the judgment. He will be brought face to face with the record, and will have to answer to the charge against him.--Letter 24, 1890, pp. 7, 8. (To "Dear Brother Saxby," Aug 13, 1890.) (4MR 450.2).

The soul must fully own the power and authority of the word of God. Then, though we may make mistakes, we always have a touchstone by which to test our ways and a standard by which we may, by true service, recall the heart and conscience.--Letter 48, 1903, p. 5. (To Dr. and Mrs. D. H. Kress, April 1, 1903.)

This is being challenged - not women in ministry, but the Word of God in the midst of the church.

Jan Barna, an SDA teacher at Newbold, for example, states that the Bible is loaded with "human baggage" and thus a "plain reading of Scripture could be misleading" (ASRS Nov 21 2013, "Ordination of Women and the Two Ways to Unity: Ecclesiastical and Biblical"). I grew up with this dangerous reasoning in Germany, where neo-orthodox theology proposed that the Bible contains the word of God but it is NOT the word of God! Of course we must use the entire testimony of Scripture to understand a word, the guidance of the Holy Spirit, and common sense. But the Bible containing "human baggage"?

David and the Showbread (Mt 12:1-4)

When David took the showbread, Jesus did NOT condone his actions; Jesus calls David's action "not lawful" twice (v2, v4). Jesus pointed out that He was a higher king, priest, and prophet than David. The Jewish leaders were using a mistake as a model rather than the Messiah! After lying, David ended up with illegal showbread and a pagan sword in his hand - instead of the word of God. This better not be our model of a presumptuous Plan B! The showbread was not allowed to be eaten by commoners (Lev 24:7-9). This is not an example of God allowing for Plan B, based on the whim of the people. Ultimately, David's deceit in regards to the showbread led to the death of 85 priests! Not a model to follow!

Other examples the Third Way uses fare no better: no exceptions to biblical law were introduced with Deborah or the daughters of Zelophehad. No change in church organization was established. I pray the church will stay as close to Scripture as it can, rather than institutionalizing compromise.

SDA History

What I have shared with you is not anything new, radical, extremist, fundamentalist, or any other -ist. It's been the position of the church for the last 150 years. It's the viewpoint of our pioneers. And it has been voted during GCs in session - twice (1990, 1995).

"We must free ourselves from the customs and bondage of society, that when the principles of our faith are at stake, we shall not hesitate to show our colors, even though we are called singular for so doing" (RH May 9, 1899).

"We do not learn from the Scriptures that women were ever ordained apostles, evangelists, or elders; neither do we believe that they should teach as such. Yet they may act an important part in speaking the truth to others" (D. T. Bourdeau, RH, Dec 2 1862, vol. XXI, p. 6).

"If by this is meant the office of elder, we should say at once, No. But there are offices in the church which women can fill acceptably, and oftentimes there are found sisters in the church who are better qualified for this than brethren, such offices, for instance as church clerk, treasurer, librarian of the tract society, etc., as well as the office of deaconess, assisting the deacons in looking after the poor . . . The qualifications for church elder are set forth in 1 Tim. 3:1-7 and in Titus 1:7-9. We do not believe that it is in God's plan to give to women the ordained offices of the church. By this we do not mean to depreciate their labors, service, or devotion. The sphere of woman is equal to that of man. She was made a help meet, or fit, for man, but that does not mean that her sphere is identical to that of man's. The interests of the church and the world generally would be better served if the distinctions given in God's word were regarded." Milton Wilcox, "Who should be church officers?" (ST Jan 24, 1895 par. 176)

Ellen White left her credentials blank in regards to ordination:

19. If ordained, state when, where, and by whom... X

Looking over David Trimm's analysis of SDA history and ordination, we can conclude the following:

Accordingly, Ellen White "was never ordained by human hands, nor did she ever perform a wedding, organize a church, or conduct a baptism" (DG 248).

Early Adventists did not argue about who should baptize, preside over the ordinances, organize local churches, or be ordained: "All of the work of Benton, Haloviak, Watts, Been, Hanks-Harwood, and others - all the many superb quotations they have mined from Adventist periodicals - all go to show no more than that early Adventists affirmed the right of women to preach and evangelize. In all this historiography, there is nothing to show early Adventists arguing for women's right to baptize, to preside over the ordinances, to organize local churches - no evidence of any commitment to ordination." p. 7 (lines 14-18)

There had never been an official action by the General Conference that would have allowed ordination of women to the gospel ministry: "That a women has been ordained to gospel ministry with the sanction of the organized Seventh-day Adventist church is highly unlikely... it is possible that ad hoc measures were taken that departed from denominational praxis... but I am unaware of (any) documentary evidence...." p. 1 (line 40-43) p. 2 (line 1-4)

"It is widely claimed as fact in Adventist circles that a decision to ordain women was taken at the 1881 General Conference Session - that the celebrated resolution proposed at the Session was "passed" or "voted". This is in fact not so." p. 9 (7-9) What happened then? The resolution was referred to the GC Committee - which means it was tactfully but decidedly rejected: "Referring resolutions from the Resolutions Committee to the GC Committee was a tactful way of rejecting them." p. 12 (line 20,21) "The resolution was not adopted." p. 12 (line 41, 42)

Women, though not ordained, served in many vital ways which led to church growth: "The function of these women (was) "to visit the sick, look after the young, minister to the necessities of the poor." Similarly, theirs is not a full-time role; just the opposite in fact, for they are "to consecrate [only] some of their time to the service of the Lord". Finally, **they are to counsel with the church officers or the minister**", which shows that Ellen White distinguished them from "church officers or the minister". All in all, one can only identify the functional role described here as neither that of ministers [whether ordained or licensed], nor elders ["church officers'"]. p. 6 (line 24-30).

I recently calmly voiced this concern to a division president. All he could offer me was, "When you have a bunch of people in one room you will always have some disagreement." I am afraid that we as a church have slid past the point of disagreement. We are out of line with Bible teaching, and according to 1 Sam 15:23, "rebellion is as the sin of witchcraft"! May God have mercy on us!

This issue of gender in church and society is no longer a matter of church members disagreeing over a minor matter. I see elements of open rebellion and defiance exhibited in our church on high administrative levels. When you have the world church vote twice in session not to ordain women, and the world church is engaged in an intense global study of the issue, and the president of the GC asks church leaders not to proceed with ordinations, when certain entities then proceed anyway it can only remind me of Satan's initial rebellion against God's order in heaven. The Great Controversy started over a conflict of authority and respect for God's word.

Unity

Claims are being made by proponents of women's ordination that this is threatening the unity of the church. I agree. It is indeed threatening the unity of the church. In fact, claims are made that not ordaining women is like walking in the wilderness for the last 40 years, and that the outpouring of the Spirit is being hindered, thus delaying the 2nd Coming of Jesus! We know what has delayed the coming of Christ! Ellen White uses the term "insubordination" (Ev 696)!

An ordination movement was well underway during Ellen White's days. No vision however, no encouragement from our female prophet in favor of women's ordination!

"Through the Holy Spirit, Christ will open more clearly to those who will believe on him that which he has inspired holy men to write concerning the truth. And it is thus that the unity for which Christ prayed is to be effected. We are to receive sanctification through obedience to the word and the Spirit of truth. **We cannot surrender the truth in order to accomplish this union; for the very means by which it is to be gained is sanctification through the truth. Human wisdom would change all this, thinking**

this basis of union too narrow. Men would effect a union through conformity to popular opinions, through a compromise with the world. But truth is God's basis for the unity of his people" (GW 92 1892).

"That in me ye might have peace"—peace in Christ, peace through belief of the truth. The Comforter is called the Spirit of truth because there is comfort and hope and peace in the truth. Falsehood cannot give genuine peace; this can be received only through the truth.... **Jesus prayed that His followers might be one; but we are not to sacrifice the truth in order to secure this union, for we are to be sanctified through the truth.** Here is the foundation of all true peace. Human wisdom would change all this, pronouncing this basis too narrow. Men would try to effect unity through concession to popular opinion, through compromise with the world, a sacrifice of vital godliness. **But truth is God's basis for the unity of His people" (OHC 329; GW 92).**

"We have a testing message to give, and I am instructed to say to our people, "Unify, unify." **But we are not to unify with those who are departing from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits and doctrines of devils.** With our hearts sweet and kind and true, we are to go forth to proclaim the message, giving no heed to those who lead away from the truth" (MS 31, 1906; 3SM 412).

"We cannot purchase peace and unity at the cost of truth. The conflict may be long and painful, but at any cost we must hold fast to the Word of God" (HS 197).

Divisions

"Divisions will come in the church. Two parties will be developed. The wheat and tares grow up together for the harvest.—2SM 2:114 (1896). There will be a shaking of the sieve. The chaff must in time be separated from the wheat. Because iniquity abounds, the love of many waxes cold. It is the very time when the genuine will be the strongest.—Letter 46, 1887. The history of the rebellion of Dathan and Abiram is being repeated, and will be repeated till the close of time. Who will be on the Lord's side? Who will be deceived, and in their turn become deceivers?—Letter 15, 1892. The Lord is soon to come. There must be a refining, winnowing process in every church, for there are among us wicked men who do not love the truth or honor God.—The RH, March 19, 1895. We are in the shaking time, the time when everything that can be shaken will be shaken. The Lord will not excuse those who know the truth if they do not in word and deed obey His commands.—6T332 (1900).

This is good reason to stay in the church, even in times of apostasy. God will shake the elements that don't belong out of the church. Hold fast (Heb 12:27)!

Persecution Cleanses the Church

Prosperity multiplies a mass of professors. Adversity purges them out of the church.—4T 89 (1876). The time is not far distant when the test will come to every soul. The mark of the beast will be urged upon us. Those who have step by step yielded to worldly demands and conformed to worldly customs will not find it a hard matter to yield to the powers that be, rather than subject themselves to derision, insult, threatened imprisonment, and death. The contest is between the commandments of God and the commandments of men. In this time the gold will be separated from the dross in the church.—5T81 (1882). (LDE 173.6) In the absence of the persecution there have drifted into our ranks men who appear sound and their Christianity unquestionable, but who, if persecution should arise, would go out from us.—Ev, 360 (1890).

When the law of God is made void the church will be sifted by fiery trials, and a larger proportion than we now anticipate will give heed to seducing spirits and doctrines of devils." LDE 172-174

"The ideology or dogma which underlies both the movements of emancipation and the demand for the ordination of women is a secularized philosophy of equality with roots in the Enlightenment of in Hellas or in the cult of Baal--in any case alien to the Bible." Stendahl, *The Bible and the Role of Women*, 41.

Conclusion

"Those who feel called out to join the movement in favor of woman's rights . . . might as well sever all connection with the third angel's message. The spirit which attends the one cannot be in harmony with the other. **The Scriptures are plain upon the relations and rights of men and women**" (1T 421).

By the way, I suggest we pay female Bible workers a little more than ordained men and make up for the inequality over the years.

When the woman at the well, after 6 disappointing men who must not have been Eph 5-type men, met a true man, the man Jesus Christ, an entire village was converted!

About a year ago I taught a New Testament class to about 50 nurses, most of them not Adventist. I normally present what I think Paul says about women, but that semester I decided to copy all the key Bible texts (Gen 1-3, 1 Cor 11, Gal 3:28, Eph 5, 1 Tim 2-3, Titus 1-2) and hand them out to all the students. I then gave them about 20 minutes to read through those texts, without really giving any introduction or explanation. Then I asked them to describe male and female based on those texts. No Ellen White comments. Just Bible texts. Slowly a picture of male headship evolved - from those nursing students, not from me. I expected vigorous protest. I was prepared for a feminist uprising. I assumed there would be an anti-Pauline backlash. None of it. It was strangely quiet after the ideal man was described, based on Scripture. Finally in the back a lady raised her hand. I even remember her name. Fully sincere she asked, "Where can we find such men?!"

Indeed, church, Where can we find such men?

Appendix

Occurrences of "man" (aner) in the New Testament

Rom. 4:8 Blessed is the **man** to whom the LORD shall not impute sin."

Rom. 7:2 For the woman who has a **husband** is bound by the law to her **husband** as long as he lives. But if the **husband** dies, she is released from the law of her **husband**.

Rom. 7:3 So then if, while her **husband** lives, she marries another **man**, she will be called an adulteress; but if her **husband** dies, she is free from that law, so that she is no adulteress, though she has married another **man**.

Rom. 11:4 But what does the divine response say to him? "I have reserved for Myself seven thousand **men** who have not bowed the knee to Baal."

1Cor. 7:2 Nevertheless, because of sexual immorality, let each **man** have his own wife, and let each woman have her own **husband**.

1Cor. 7:3 Let the **husband** render to his wife the affection due her, and likewise also the wife to her **husband**.

1Cor. 7:4 The wife does not have authority over her own body, but the **husband** does. And likewise the **husband** does not have authority over his own body, but the wife does.

1Cor. 7:10 ¶ Now to the married I command, yet not I but the Lord: A wife is not to depart from her **husband**.

1Cor. 7:11 But even if she does depart, let her remain unmarried or be reconciled to her **husband**. And a **husband** is not to divorce his wife.

1Cor. 7:13 And a woman who has a **husband** who does not believe, if he is willing to live with her, let her not divorce him.

1Cor. 7:14 For the unbelieving **husband** is sanctified by the wife, and the unbelieving wife is sanctified by the **husband**; otherwise your children would be unclean, but now they are holy.

1Cor. 7:16 For how do you know, O wife, whether you will save your **husband**? Or how do you know, O **husband**, whether you will save your wife?

1Cor. 7:34 There is a difference between a wife and a virgin. The unmarried woman cares about the things of the Lord, that she may be holy both in body and in spirit. But she who is married cares about the things of the world—how she may please her **husband**.

1Cor. 7:39 ¶ A wife is bound by law as long as her **husband** lives; but if her **husband** dies, she is at liberty to be married to whom she wishes, only in the Lord.

1Cor. 11:3 But I want you to know that the head of every **man** is Christ, the head of woman is **man**, and the head of Christ is God.

1Cor. 11:4 Every **man** praying or prophesying, having his head covered, dishonors his head.

1Cor. 11:7 For a **man** indeed ought not to cover his head, since he is the image and glory of God; but woman is the glory of man.

1Cor. 11:8 For **man** is not from woman, but woman from **man**.

1Cor. 11:9 Nor was **man** created for the woman, but woman for the **man**.

1Cor. 11:11 Nevertheless, neither is **man** independent of woman, nor woman independent of **man**, in the Lord.

1Cor. 11:12 For as woman came from **man**, even so **man** also comes through woman; but all things are from God.

1Cor. 11:14 Does not even nature itself teach you that if a **man** has long hair, it is a dishonor to him?

1Cor. 13:11 ¶ When I was a child, I spoke as a child, I understood as a child, I thought as a child; but when I became a **man**, I put away childish things.

1Cor. 14:35 And if they want to learn something, let them ask their own **husbands** at home; for it is shameful for women to speak in church.

2Cor. 11:2 For I am jealous for you with godly jealousy. For I have betrothed you to one **husband**, that I may present you as a chaste virgin to Christ.

Gal. 4:27 For the desolate has many more children than she who has a **husband**.

Eph. 4:13 till we all come to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to a perfect man, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ;

Eph. 5:22 ¶ Wives, submit to your own **husbands**, as to the Lord.

Eph. 5:23 For the **husband** is head of the wife, as also Christ is head of the church; and He is the Savior of the body.

Eph. 5:24 Therefore, just as the church is subject to Christ, so let the wives be to their own **husbands** in everything.

Eph. 5:25 ¶ **Husbands**, love your wives, just as Christ also loved the church and gave Himself for her,

Eph. 5:28 So **husbands** ought to love their own wives as their own bodies; he who loves his wife loves himself.

Eph. 5:33 Nevertheless let each one of you in particular so love his own wife as himself, and let the wife see that she respects her **husband**.

Col. 3:18 ¶ Wives, submit to your own **husbands**, as is fitting in the Lord.

Col. 3:19 ¶ **Husbands**, love your wives and do not be bitter toward them.

1Tim. 2:8 ¶ I desire therefore that the **men** pray everywhere, lifting up holy hands, without wrath and doubting;

1Tim. 2:12 And I do not permit a woman to teach or to have authority over a **man**, but to be in silence.

1Tim. 3:2 A bishop then must be blameless, the **husband** of one wife, temperate, sober-minded, of good behavior, hospitable, able to teach;

1Tim. 3:12 Let deacons be the **husbands** of one wife, ruling their children and their own houses well.

1Tim. 5:9 ¶ Do not let a widow under sixty years old be taken into the number, and not unless she has been the wife of one **man**,

Titus 1:6 if a **man** is blameless, the **husband** of one wife, having faithful children not accused of dissipation or insubordination.

Titus 2:5 to be discreet, chaste, homemakers, good, obedient to their own **husbands**, that the word of God may not be blasphemed.