

“The current clash of biblical and secular cultures over gender issues requires that we diligently and earnestly seek biblical answers to the questions asked by men and women seeking a God-honoring foundation and application of ministry principles. This book combines the fruit of Susan Hunt’s spadework in searching the Scriptures for God’s design for women who want to serve Christ’s church with the scholarly and pastoral gifts of Dr. Ligon Duncan whose own journey with women in Christ’s church honors the distinctions between men and women, yet recognizes and blesses the most excellent contributions women make to the church.”

—D. JAMES KENNEDY, PH.D., Senior Minister,
Coral Ridge Presbyterian Church, Ft. Lauderdale, Florida

“Pastors desperately need books that ground methodology upon theology—this is indeed such a book. Ligon Duncan and Susan Hunt faithfully uphold the truth of Scripture and winsomely affirm the critical importance of women in the church’s life and ministry. What sets this book apart is not only the authors’ careful thought but their compelling personal examples. The result is a deeply biblical yet intensely practical guide that will greatly benefit not only women, but pastors as well.”

—C. J. MAHANEY, Sovereign Grace Ministries

“When I say that this book is intensely practical, I am not implying it is skimpy in terms of its biblical and theological foundations. It is powerful on both fronts. It spells out the connection between the Bible’s clear complementarian teaching about gender issues on the one hand and, on the other hand, a vigorous, affirming, and fulfilling role for women’s ministry in the church. You’ll know from the very first pages that this is about good theory, for sure, but also about good practice.”

JOEL BELZ, founder and chairman, *World* magazine

“Susan and Ligon open their hearts and minds, giving godly instruction from the Scriptures and from their own extensive ministry experiences. They model an appropriate covenantal relationship in the Church between men and women as they help us all to be more faithful in our service to Christ and His Church. This book is intended for women in a women’s ministry in the church, but it can help women in every area of their lives. It also can help men appreciate and encourage the ministry of women to each other and help men accept and encourage the appropriate and needed ministry of women to men as well.”

—ROBERT C. (RIC) CANNADA, JR., chancellor and CEO,
Reformed Theological Seminary

“This book is a must-read for men and women in the church. Leaders should benefit greatly from this clear biblical/theological approach to the concept of church ministry. It is principally sound and practical throughout. It highlights a wholistic approach to ministry in the church that will give good guidance and advice to local leaders in developing their churches’ overall strategy and ministry. Ligon Duncan and Susan Hunt have combined their gifts to encourage and instruct today’s Christian woman.”

—CHARLES DUNAHOO, CE & P Coordinator, PCA

“It is with sincere gratitude and deep pleasure that I commend this latest work by Ligon Duncan and Susan Hunt to a public that so desperately needs the clear-thinking ideas, as well as the passionate heart for true ministry, contained in this work. Their perspective is as refreshing as it is timeless. Undaunted by the feeble critics of biblical gender roles, we have in this practical volume some of the best wisdom from two of our best counselors on these subjects. Ligon Duncan’s credentials, insight, scholarship, and faithfulness are well attested. I am glad to count him as a dear friend, counselor, and fellow pastor. He is a man of integrity and consistency, and his writing is always welcome. What may not be as widely known, however, is how well Susan Hunt practices what she preaches; this pastor wants to vouch for that. Beginning with her own mother and extending to her godly daughters and down to her granddaughters, she is a model of apostolic spiritual mothering. Her mentoring of countless women here and throughout the broader church is a consistent encouragement to this pastor, especially when so many other models and ministries in this area miss the mark. I commend this book to every church for its distilled wisdom that shines the way for all who love the Scriptures. I heartily welcome it as a leader of an improved trend on women’s ministry, improved in its movement away from worldliness and in its return to the wisdom of our Creator.”

—DAVID W. HALL, Senior Minister, Midway Presbyterian Church,
Powder Springs, Georgia; author of *The Genevan Reformation and
the American Founding* and *The Arrogance of the Modern*

“This book is for women and men who love the church of Jesus Christ and long to see God more fully glorified in the lives of its women. In it Susan Hunt and Ligon Duncan offer a fully biblical approach to ministry that inspires and enables women to flourish in reaching the maximum potential of their divine calling and God-given abilities. *Women’s Ministry in the Local Church* is a sensible, practical, encouraging guide to what women can and should be doing in their churches and communities.”

—PHILIP GRAHAM RYKEN, Senior Minister, Tenth Presbyterian Church,
Philadelphia; Bible teacher on “Every Last Word”; author of
Ryken’s Bible Handbook and *Preaching the Word* commentaries:
Jeremiah and Lamentations; Exodus

“Ligon Duncan and Susan Hunt masterfully present a practical theology for a kingdom-oriented women’s ministry. In this day and age, we need more courageous visionaries who seek to release women in ministry while honoring the complementarian framework of God’s Word. This is a helpful resource for all who wish to join in this pursuit.”

—MARY A. KASSIAN, Distinguished Professor of Women’s Studies,
Southern Baptist Seminary, Louisville; author, *The Feminist Mistake*

“This fine book has much wisdom, encouragement, help, challenges, and resources on a vital issue for churches today. It is important for all Christians, men as well as women.”

—DR. W. ROBERT GODFREY, president, Westminster Seminary California;
author of *Reformation Sketches* and *An Unexpected Journey*

“Into the ongoing debate, confusion, and furor that swirls around women’s issues in many of our evangelical churches comes a book that directs our focus upon a biblical understanding of the ministry of the church and presents a practical theology of women’s ministry in the local church. It is the blended and united voice of a pastor and a leadership woman. This faithful biblical exposition is a call for a kingdom investment; for the biblical equipping of women to serve God’s Bride and to mentor rising generations in the joy and call of their design as women in the church.”

—JANE PATETE, Women’s Ministry Coordinator,
Presbyterian Church in America

“Susan Hunt and Ligon Duncan have given our churches a celebration of the Scriptures’ countercultural plan for the roles of women in Christ’s Church. *Women’s Ministry in the Local Church* is neither a lofty academic text nor a mere how-to manual. Instead, it is a biblically rich reflection of their very thesis—when men and women humbly and joyfully complement each other’s God-given roles and gifts, spiritual grace flows for the nurture of His Church. This is a book you will not only read once but will consult again and again.”

—PETER LILLBACK, Senior Pastor, Proclamation Presbyterian Church;
president, Westminster Theological Seminary; author,
*The Binding of God; Calvin’s Role in the Development of
Covenant Theology; The Practical Calvinist, An Introduction to
the Presbyterian and Reformed Heritage*

“Finally, Ligon Duncan and Susan Hunt have given the church a clear theological framework from which to build an effective women’s ministry. With much of today’s women’s ministry rooted in pragmatism, it is refreshing and necessary for us to have a resource that helps the church move behind the question of ‘how’ and to the more important question of ‘why.’ This work will help pastors and women’s ministry leaders think through this important aspect of the church with biblical clarity, theological precision, and complementarian conviction. This is a must-read for anyone concerned about ministry to women.”

—DR. RANDY STINSON, Executive Director, Council on
Biblical Manhood and Womanhood

“Women in ministry . . . in the evangelical church there is an embarrassing silence or perhaps a silence of embarrassment. Thankfully, Ligon and Susan have broken that silence by developing a biblical illustrative model of ministry. A complementarian approach honors tradition without the idolatry of traditionalism, addresses the dynamics of our age without the arrogance of modernity, but most of all surfaces a biblical model with relevant text and illustration. Again, biblical light removes the darkness of ignorance.”

—HARRY REEDER, pastor, Briarwood Presbyterian Church,
Birmingham, Alabama

CROSSWAY BOOKS

BY SUSAN HUNT

By Design: God's Distinctive Calling for Women

Heirs of the Covenant: Leaving a Legacy of Faith for the Next Generation

Spiritual Mothering: The Titus 2 Model for Women Mentoring Women

The True Woman: The Beauty and Strength of a Godly Woman

Your Home a Place of Grace

The Legacy of Biblical Womanhood

(coauthored with Barbara Thompson)

For use with the family:

Big Truths for Little Kids: Teaching Your Children to Live for God

(coauthored with Richie Hunt)

Discovering Jesus in Genesis (coauthored with Richie Hunt)

Discovering Jesus in Exodus (coauthored with Richie Hunt)

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CROSSWAY BOOKS

BY J. LIGON DUNCAN

Misunderstanding Paul?: Responding to the New Perspectives

(forthcoming)

WOMEN'S
MINISTRY
— *in the* —
LOCAL CHURCH



J. LIGON DUNCAN
& SUSAN HUNT

CROSSWAY BOOKS

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Part 1

INTRODUCTION



The purpose of this book is to strengthen Christ's Church by presenting a practical theology of women's ministry in the local church.

The book will answer five fundamental questions:

- Why should a church have a women's ministry—what is the biblical apologetic?
- Who is responsible for the women's ministry in a church?
- How does a women's ministry relate to the other ministries in a church?
- What are the tasks of a women's ministry?
- How does a church implement a biblical approach to women's ministry?

The Story



The source and origin of the Church is the free love of God. . . . In the whole world there is nothing enduring but the Church. . . . Her happiness must be considered in consisting principally in this, that she has reserved for her an everlasting state in heaven. . . .

JOHN CALVIN¹

*T*he subject of this book is not women; it is the Church of the Lord Jesus. Though the focus of the book is one specific area of the church's ministry, a biblical understanding of the church acknowledges that no part stands alone. A women's ministry is one component of the total life and work of a local church.

The authors of this book have had separate journeys to a shared commitment to women's ministry in the local church, but for both of us this commitment is one part of a larger commitment to and love for the household of God. As Dr. Edmund Clowney wrote, "If we lack interest in the church we lack what for Jesus was a consuming passion. Jesus loved the Church and gave himself for it (Eph. 5:25)."²

LIGON'S STORY

I was born and reared during a time of tremendous cultural and ecclesiastical transition in the United States relating to the whole complex of issues surrounding manhood and womanhood and male-female role relationships in the home and church. But I was also reared in a Christian

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family with a godly father and mother who lived out, in the home, church, and community, with no fanfare whatsoever, a beautiful biblical pattern of manhood and womanhood. I have also had and continue to enjoy the privilege of Christian fellowship and mutual ministry with numerous godly, gifted, consecrated, complementarian Christian women. These women have shown me what biblical women's ministry in the local church looks like in action. Thus my own appreciation of the importance of women's ministry in the local church flows out of biblical conviction, is reinforced by church experience, and is heightened by the fact that gender issues are the wedge of a worldview megashift in our own times.

The 1960s brought a cultural revolt against the traditional roles of men and women in our society that spilled over into many mainline churches. One consequence was that these churches abandoned fidelity to the clear biblical teaching requiring godly qualified men to serve as the shepherds-teachers-leaders of the local church. My father was not a pastor, but he was an elder (an eighth-generation elder, to be exact!) in our local church—a part of one of those wavering mainline denominations. He loved his church but wanted to be a part of a denomination with a high view of Scripture and an unwavering commitment to the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ. One of the obvious ways our denomination had demonstrated its low view of Scripture was the issue of women's ordination to the teaching and ruling office of the church. As a teenage boy in the 1970s, I watched my father, at great personal cost and with many tears, leave the denomination of his youth and young manhood and become a founding father of a family of churches committed to standing with the Bible and against cultural capitulation on gender issues, among many others.

In those days, one of the things that was frequently alleged against the many Christians and churches that comprised this new denomination (the Presbyterian Church in America) was that we were “anti-women,” that we oppressed women and did not value them or allow them to use their gifts. This accusation never got the slightest traction with me because I had personally experienced just the opposite. I was reared in the company of godly, smart, educated, theologically sound women who had devoted their lives to the work of the church, who were

unreservedly and gladly committed to the Bible's teaching on male-female role relationships, and who were deeply appreciated and respected by the male spiritual leadership of the local church. And I have been surrounded by and delighted in such esteemed sisters in the Lord all my life.

My grandmother was the only one of her many siblings to graduate from college. She put herself through on a basketball scholarship in the midst of a war and depression. She was intelligent and hard-working and devoted herself to the Southern Baptist churches of East Tennessee where she lived. Whether it was choir, Sunday school, Training Union, or VBS, Audrey Mae Ledford was ably serving the Lord and his people. She had not the slightest desire to preach or hold the office of pastor and would have told any woman who did that she was "plumb crazy." She lived out Titus 2:3-5 and spiritually mentored generations of women in Tennessee and Florida.

My mother was a university professor, as well as a lifelong church music director. She started school at the age of three, finished college while still a teenager, did graduate study at the Southern Baptist Theological Seminary in Louisville, Kentucky, and postgraduate work at Northwestern in Chicago, and directed church choirs in Tennessee, North Carolina, Georgia, and South Carolina. After joining the faculty at Furman University, she threw the Athletic Department into a tizzy by flunking half of the baseball team in what they thought was a "crip course" in Music Appreciation. Only my dad's secret intervention in grade curving on their behalf saved the day. Mom was a tough and respected prof—demanding academically and outstanding professionally.

Mother thinks theologically and deeply, writes beautifully, is a gifted public speaker, works harder than anyone I know, and has poured her whole life into the service of Christ and His people. I have had the enormous privilege of fellowship with some of the brightest theological minds in the English-speaking world over the last thirty years (often in my family's home around the dinner table), and Mother is every bit their intellectual peer. Yet she has never aspired to the eldership, nor resented male spiritual leadership. Indeed, she has gloried in it and delighted to support the ministry of a godly succession of pastors and elders in our home church, all the while joyfully embracing the biblical teaching on

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male-female role relationships. None of the women whom I have known over the years who have aspired to the teaching office of the church, and who are often offended by what they perceive as the church's lack of recognition of their gifts and sense of calling, are her superior—academically, intellectually, or otherwise. But Mother has always disdained recognition. She has always been about service, not status. And she has been a spiritual mother to generations of women within and without her local church.

My wife, Anne, holds two advanced degrees, and before we married she spent more than a decade on the church staffs of two large and vital, capital-city, downtown, evangelical churches. She grew up in a mainline egalitarian church and professed faith in college. She learned her theology on her own at first. Nobody spoon-fed it to her. She embraced complementarianism on purpose. Nobody forced it on her, and she didn't just assume it. Having taught elementary school, and having worked in Christian education in her home church, Anne went on to study with David Wells and a host of his stellar colleagues at Gordon-Conwell Seminary in Massachusetts. Then after years of faithful service in the field of Christian education, and having pursued doctoral course work at Trinity in Chicago, she completed a second Master's degree (in Marriage and Family Therapy) at Reformed Theological Seminary.

Anne worked in Christian Education, youth, singles, missions, and women's ministry. Everything she did, she did well. Once she was given the option of writing her own title and job description, and she chose the title Adult Christian Education Coordinator instead of a more encompassing title, out of the conviction that the role of facilitating the Christian Education of the whole church, men and women, was the role for a pastor or elder, and she wanted it clearly understood that she would be working in support of the leadership and work of a pastor and the elders. The men didn't force this on her. She expected it of them! Anne's life and ministry has had a profound impact on men and women in four local congregations over the course of more than two decades. And she has poured herself into the discipleship of women in the church.

Then there is my friend and colleague Donna Dobbs, Director of Christian Education in the congregation I serve. I have the joy of working with Donna (and our faithful Director of Women's Ministry, Liz

Griffin) in facilitating the discipleship of our women in the church. Donna is as solid as the day is long theologically and firmly complementarian, delights in the leadership of our elders, and is enthusiastic about the educational ministry of the church and committed to cultivating a women's ministry in the local church that complements and supports the work of the pastors, elders, and deacons, that nurtures and equips our women for growth and service, and that promotes a comprehensive biblical view of manhood and womanhood.

What have I learned from these gifted and godly women (and I wish I could tell you more about them, and others)? Well, first, I have seen the impact of their ministry to women multiplied in the women they have discipled as those women take up the torch of service and women's ministry in the local church and of Christian marriage and motherhood in the home. Second, I have seen in them the glorious results of pastors who invested in them, so that they were better equipped to invest in the women they discipled. For instance, I think of the way Gordon K. Reed and Paul Settle, two pastors of my home church (both of them widely respected evangelical leaders), invested in my mother, equipping her to better disciple other women in our church and in the wider Christian community. I reflect on how Glen Knecht and Mark Ross, truly extraordinary ministers, under and with whom my wife worked in Columbia, South Carolina, poured their wisdom, experience, and love for God and his people into Anne as she served with them. She was already wise, and they were God's instruments to make her even wiser, and how that investment has paid off in the lives of countless women and families! Third, I have seen in them a real, tangible, and practical love for the whole church. Their commitment is to a women's ministry that serves the interests of the whole body and results in blessing for the whole congregation. In other words, their approach to women's ministry is not consumer-oriented ("we deserve a ministry that focuses on us"), but kingdom-oriented ("how can we invest in women in a way that equips them as disciples, for their own spiritual maturation, for the good of the marriages and families of the church, for the betterment of the total ministry of the church, and for their life in the world?").

So, in a sense the reason I am coauthoring this book is because of godly women like Audrey Mae Ledford, Shirley Ledford Duncan, Anne

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Harley Duncan, Donna Dobbs, Liz Griffin, Susan Hunt, and more. I am the beneficiary of their spiritual maturity and service in the church, but as a shepherd I am also responsible for preparing women in the church like them for service in the church. I want to help encourage and equip women in the local church, and to help those women invest themselves in mentoring a new generation of women to serve in the church. But what this encouragement aims for our Christian women to do, and to what ends, is a vitally important (and disputed) matter today because of widespread confusion, even in evangelical churches.

On the one hand, some church leaders are so afraid of women assuming unbiblical roles in the church that they fail to equip them for the roles to which they have been indisputably called in the home and church. On the other hand, in the name of not squandering women's gifts and abilities, Christian women are often encouraged to take up unbiblical roles in the life of the church, even in Bible-believing congregations. For women's ministry in the local church to do the job of discipleship biblically will require the avoidance of both these errors.

For these reasons and more, I treasure the opportunity to address this subject, especially with a colleague who is a respected author and veteran leader in women's ministry, as well as a faithful wife, mother, and grandmother. It is vital that we get this right, for the sake of the health and witness of the local church.

SUSAN'S STORY

It has taken thirty years for the Lord to prepare me to write this book. My husband and I were in our early thirties when we became part of a new denomination, the Presbyterian Church in America, which was committed to the inerrancy of God's Word. (For information on the doctrinal standards and ecclesiology of the Presbyterian Church in America, visit www.pcanet.org.) We left a church that ordained women to the eldership and became part of a church that held to male headship. It was the 1970s. We were swimming against the theological and cultural current, but we knew it was right.

My involvement with women's ministry initially grew out of my husband's concerns and not my own zeal. He was the pastor of a new church,

and the people attending were from a variety of theological backgrounds. Gene quickly realized the need for the church to provide discipleship and ministry opportunities for women that were consistent with our theological standards, integrated with the total life of the church, and under the oversight of the elders. He decided that we needed a weekly women's Bible study, and he wanted me to teach it. I had little passion for this because my ministry zeal was for children, but I agreed with his concern. As I experienced the wisdom of his decision, my passion for women's ministry slowly grew.

When our denomination was formed, the women's ministry was placed as a department of the Christian Education and Publications Committee. Strong foundations and purposes for this ministry were put in place. Fourteen years later, in 1987, the Christian Education Committee made the decision to hire a staff person to give increased direction to women's ministry. It was a timely and strategic decision. I am extremely grateful for the priority the male leadership gave to women's ministry and for the privilege they gave me to serve as director of this ministry. I approached this task with questions:

- What does the Bible say about womanhood?
- I know what women are *not* to do in the church, but what *are* we to do?
- How can the whole range of women's gifts be utilized without compromising male headship?

I was surrounded by a committee of godly women who were also committed to discovering the answers to these questions. We served under the guidance and oversight of the Christian Education Committee, and this ecclesiastical context gave us the safety and security to explore these questions with integrity. From the beginning of our pilgrimage to understand biblical womanhood, there were some non-negotiables:

- The authority of God's Word.
- The theological standards of our denomination.
- The ecclesiastical structure of our denomination.

I find great joy in the fact that we did not have a grand vision and strategy—but then again maybe we had the grandest of visions and strategies because we resolutely believed that our chief end is to glorify God, and that includes our pursuit to understand what Scripture says

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about womanhood and woman's place in the church. The vision and strategy grew as we studied God's Word.

As we surveyed the church, culture, and available resources, several things emerged:

- There were books that discussed a woman's relationship with Christ, but we could not find a clearly defined and articulated apologetic for biblical womanhood. At the same time, the culture was front and center with an apologetic that was antithetical to biblical truth.

- There were books that explained the theology of male headship, but we could not find books that helped women understand their relationships and responsibilities in God's family.

- The majority of models and resources for women's ministry were parachurch (a separate organization from the church), auxiliary (ministries focused on special projects), or counseling (ministries focused on the needs of individual women). We could not find women's ministry models and resources that were church-integrated and corporate-focused.

We were shocked to realize the silence of the evangelical church on this topic. It was clear that culture, not the church, was setting the agenda for women. We studied, talked, prayed, and wrote. The result is a biblical apologetic for womanhood that is set forth in a series of books and Bible studies for women called *Biblical Foundations for Womanhood* (see Resources below).

But a persistent question keeps popping up in my own mind and is frequently asked by others: Why should a church have a women's ministry?

The question needs a clear and concise answer, and I am delighted to partner with Dr. Ligon Duncan on this project. His credentials are obvious, but there are less obvious factors that are equally important to me. First is his marriage to Anne. My observation is that a pastor's attitude about women in the church is inextricably linked to his marriage. Second, I have been encouraged by conversations with women from the church he pastors as they have spoken of the support and leadership he gives to women's ministry. Third, Ligon represents the current generation of church leaders. His willingness to participate in this project gives me great hope that the work and witness of God's church will not be diminished by accepting the cultural abandonment of gender distinctiveness or by ignoring the worth of suitable helpers.

When I started this journey my husband and I had two young daughters and a son. Now we have seven granddaughters, one of whom has preceded us to heaven, and six grandsons. For theological and personal reasons I am more passionate about God's Church and His design and calling for women in His Church than I was thirty years ago. As I begin this book I am full of gratitude to my Sovereign. He has never left me, and He continually guides me. I know what Dr. Jack Miller meant when he wrote about "the presence of the Father carrying you where your own feet never could."³

Once again I embark on a journey where my own feet could never take me.

RESOURCES

This book builds on two bodies of work: *The Danvers Statement on Biblical Manhood and Womanhood* and the *Biblical Foundations for Womanhood* materials.

The Danvers Statement on Biblical Manhood and Womanhood

The "Danvers Statement" has become widely recognized as the best unifying, summary expression of what conservative, Bible-believing evangelical Christians accept as the teaching of Scripture regarding manhood and womanhood. It was drafted by several key evangelical leaders at a meeting in Danvers, Massachusetts, in December 1987 and was first published in final form by the Council on Biblical Manhood and Womanhood (CBMW) in Wheaton, Illinois, in November 1988. It provides a brief rationale for why the church cannot afford to remain undecided or uncommitted on the issue of male-female role relationships in home and church, it sets out the core purposes of the Council on Biblical Manhood and Womanhood—perhaps the major evangelical organization working to promote a robust biblical view of manhood and womanhood in evangelical churches today—and then presents ten affirmations based on the Bible's teaching on manhood and womanhood. The ten affirmations are listed below. See Appendix 1 for the Rationale and Purposes of the "Danvers Statement."

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Ten Affirmations

Based on our understanding of Biblical teachings, we affirm the following:

1. Both Adam and Eve were created in God's image, equal before God as persons and distinct in their manhood and womanhood (Gen 1:26-27, 2:18).

2. Distinctions in masculine and feminine roles are ordained by God as part of the created order, and should find an echo in every human heart (Gen 2:18, 21-24; 1 Cor 11:7-9; 1 Tim 2:12-14).

3. Adam's headship in marriage was established by God before the Fall, and was not a result of sin (Gen 2:16-18, 21-24, 3:1-13; 1 Cor 11:7-9).

4. The Fall introduced distortions into the relationships between men and women (Gen 3:1-7, 12, 16).

In the home, the husband's loving, humble headship tends to be replaced by domination or passivity; the wife's intelligent, willing submission tends to be replaced by usurpation or servility.

In the church, sin inclines men toward a worldly love of power or an abdication of spiritual responsibility, and inclines women to resist limitations on their roles or to neglect the use of their gifts in appropriate ministries.

5. The Old Testament, as well as the New Testament, manifests the equally high value and dignity which God attached to the roles of both men and women (Gen 1:26-27, 2:18; Gal 3:28). Both Old and New Testaments also affirm the principle of male headship in the family and in the covenant community (Gen 2:18; Eph 5:21-33; Col 3:18-19; 1 Tim 2:11-15).

6. Redemption in Christ aims at removing the distortions introduced by the curse.

In the family, husbands should forsake harsh or selfish leadership and grow in love and care for their wives; wives should forsake resistance to their husbands' authority and grow in willing, joyful submission to their husbands' leadership (Eph 5:21-33; Col 3:18-19; Tit 2:3-5; 1 Pet 3:1-7).

In the church, redemption in Christ gives men and women an equal share in the blessings of salvation; nevertheless, some governing and teaching roles within the church are restricted to men (Gal 3:28; 1 Cor 11:2-16; 1 Tim 2:11-15).

7. In all of life Christ is the supreme authority and guide for men and women, so that no earthly submission—domestic, religious, or civil—ever implies a mandate to follow a human authority into sin (Dan 3:10-18; Acts 4:19-20, 5:27-29; 1 Pet 3:1-2).

8. In both men and women a heartfelt sense of call to ministry should never be used to set aside biblical criteria for particular ministries (1 Tim 2:11-15, 3:1-13; Tit 1:5-9). Rather, Biblical teaching should remain the authority for testing our subjective discernment of God's will.

9. With half the world's population outside the reach of indigenous evangelism; with countless other lost people in those societies that have heard the gospel; with the stresses and miseries of sickness, malnutrition, homelessness, illiteracy, ignorance, aging, addiction, crime, incarceration, neuroses, and loneliness, no man or woman who feels a passion from God to make His grace known, in word and deed, need ever live without a fulfilling ministry for the glory of Christ and the good of this fallen world (1 Cor 12:7-21).

10. We are convinced that a denial or neglect of these principles will lead to increasingly destructive consequences in our families, our churches and the culture at large.

CBMW has many other resources that will prove helpful to any church leader desirous of inculcating biblical principles on male-female role relationships in the home and church or cultivating an approach to the ministry to and of women in the church that joyfully embraces biblical teaching. Visit www.cbmw.org for more resources.

Biblical Foundations for Womanhood

This series of discipleship materials for women is comprised of two complementary and intersecting tracks. The overarching objective of this curriculum is to equip women to think biblically and live covenantally.

- Track #1: Topical studies that teach biblical principles of womanhood. These include: *Leadership for Women in the Church*, *Spiritual Mothering*, *By Design*, *The True Woman*, *Treasures of Encouragement*, and *The Legacy of Biblical Womanhood*. There is a Leader's Guide for each book.

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- **Track #2:** Bible studies written specifically for women that use the biblical principles of womanhood to apply Scripture to life. These studies include: *Paul's Letters to Maturing Churches* (Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians, 1 and 2 Thessalonians), *The Formation of God's People Israel* (Exodus), *The Gospel of Matthew Part 1 and 2*, *The Pastoral Letters* (1 and 2 Timothy and Titus). There is a commentary, Leader's Guide, and student book for each study.

For more information visit www.pcanet.org/cep/wic.

To order, go to www/cepbookstore.com or call 1-800-283-1357.

HOW TO USE THIS BOOK

This book has multiple uses. An individual man or woman may read it to think through issues relating to women's ministry in the church. However, the Leader's Guide for this book provides lesson plans and processes to help church leadership assess the need for a women's ministry, determine a structure for that ministry, and train women for leadership in the women's ministry. The Leader's Guide includes a resource section with articles, practical ideas for events and ministries, and a wealth of other helpful information (available from www.cepbookstore.com or call 1-800-283-1357). The greatest benefit of the book is for church leadership—male and female—to use the book and Leader's Guide to:

- *Study:* the first step in a biblical approach to women's ministry is for church leadership to have a biblical apologetic for women's ministry. The book could be read and discussed by elders, the Christian education committee, or a task force appointed to study women's ministry.

- *Evaluate:* determine strengths and weaknesses of the existing ministry.

- *Reorganize:* determine a focus and direction and ways to implement needed changes.

- *Organize:* plan for a new ministry.

- *Train:* yearly training of leaders will help maintain theological grounding and prevent the ministry from becoming task-driven.

- *Recruit:* give potential leaders a biblical vision for women's ministry by asking them to read the book and then to pray about assuming a position of leadership.

- *Educate*: If a church is beginning a women's ministry, teach it to the women at large, perhaps in a women's Sunday school class, so that women understand a biblical approach to women's ministry. It could also be used in conjunction with the *Biblical Foundations for Womanhood* Bible study on the Pastoral Letters.

Our prayer is that God will be pleased to use this book to help the church “grow up in every way into him who is the head, into Christ, from whom the whole body, joined and held together by every joint with which it is equipped, when each part is working properly, makes the body grow so that it builds itself up in love” (Ephesians 4:15-16).

Dr. Charles H. Dunahoo, Coordinator of Christian Education and Publications for the Presbyterian Church in America, author of MAKING KINGDOM DISCIPLES

When the Presbyterian Church in America was formed, we attempted to develop a denomination that included all phases of the church's life. There were strategic reasons for making an active and viable women's ministry a priority.

First, throughout biblical history and the ongoing life of the Church, women have played a vital role in both Church- and kingdom-related ministries. Godly women have served in important roles in local churches, in denominations, and in world missions, as well as in many types of mercy ministries. Godly women have served faithfully in the Church, along with its officers, to demonstrate the wholeness of God's covenant people. There are numerous biblical examples of such labors.

Second, because the Church “grows and builds itself up in love, as each part does its work” (Ephesians 4:16, NIV), the apostle Paul indicates that each part, or person, in the church should be trained and equipped for ministry, and this includes the women in the church.

Third, our desire was to speak clearly to men and women regarding their roles among God's covenant people and to develop a structure that would allow them the cooperative freedom to fulfill those roles in the Church.

Fourth, the choice was made by the organizing committee of the denomination to position the women's ministry with the Christian Education and Publications Committee because of its assignment to equip people for ministry. Discipleship and ministry have characterized the women's ministry from the beginning.

This kind of emphasis on women's ministry has helped create a spirit of

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oneness and unity that has forged a unique identity throughout the denomination. Women are involved in the life of the church in significant ways. Women have been and are:

- faithful in prayer.
- helpers in teaching the biblical and theological truths upon which the denomination was founded.
- key people in mercy ministries.
- supporters of the whole work of the church.

Our church standards encourage officers to select godly women to work with them in ministry. While respecting the role of ordained male leaders in their oversight of the church's ministries, including women's ministries, the PCA has an effective and strategic women's ministry at each level of the church. PCA women have a definite freedom of ministry within the church's understanding of male and female roles. This is evidenced by the unity of spirit and purpose among all the parts.

NOTES:

1. John Calvin, *Calvin's Wisdom, An Anthology Arranged Alphabetically*, ed. Graham Miller (Carlisle, PA: The Banner of Truth Trust, 1992), 50-51.
2. Edmund P. Clowney, *Living in Christ's Church* (Philadelphia: Great Commission Publications, 1986), 7.
3. Jack Miller, *The Heart of a Servant Leader*, ed. Barbara Miller Juliani (Phillipsburg, NJ: P & R Publishing, 2004), 77.