

Father is Head at the Table
Male Eucharistic Headship and Primary Spiritual Leadership
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Introductory Comments

The purpose of this summary paper is to present several Biblical, historical and mission-al arguments for a male only presbyterate/priesthood. The thesis is that only the male is appointed by God to be the spiritual head conveying at the altar the Fatherhood of God in Christ. This Biblical order and way of presenting the Eucharistic presence of God among His people appeared in a Greco-Roman culture, which had women priests; in other words it was not a culture unwilling to have women priests. Such views went essentially unchallenged until the cultural upheaval of 20th century, northern hemispheric cultures.

The recentness of views challenging a male only presbyterate, episcopate and even in some sense the diaconate, call for extreme, careful, loving theological discussion, caution and patience. In decades since WWII, new exegesis, advocating women in the presbyterate, has re-translated and re-interpreted classic texts that have essentially been understood one way by the entire Catholic Church in the past and even among most at present. The result has been that there is indeed a growing movement among some evangelicals and a few Catholics who support women pastors. Nevertheless, among the present, overwhelming consensus of Catholic Christianity (Roman, Orthodox and much of Anglican) and the majority of the culture of conservative, Protestant Christians who take the Bible seriously, there still continues a strong commitment to exegesis and historical interpretation supporting male only pastors (presbyters/priests). For example in the *conservative* Protestant world, most generic evangelicals, Southern Baptists, Bible Churches, the Presbyterian Church in America, Missouri Synod Lutherans, Messianic Jews, and even Charismatics, where there may be a woman pastor but who serves more as a deacon to her husband pastor, do not accept women as head pastors or even pastors/presbyters. Given these deep differences there is potential for unfortunate division in the Kingdom of God on yet another issue. It has sadly already taken place within the Kingdom of God. Let us pray that this issue will not further divide us as we enter into discussion about altering such ancient views with differing contemporary convictions.

By way of introduction we recognize that given the present discussion within ACNA, the women-in-the-presbyterate-view is not presently a salvation issue. Those faithful Christian men and women supporting women in the priesthood uphold Biblical and creedal Christology and soteriology. It should be noted, however, that the female presbyter view in other, liberal circles has been often associated with, and possibly led to, deviant theology, Christology, and soteriology. There is a need to be constantly vigilant of potential for theological drift as occurred in The Episcopal Church. It's part of our ordination vows based on St. Paul's admonitions to the leaders of the Church in Ephesus (Acts 20:28-31).

At the outset it should further be clarified that by saying women should not be priests in no way negates the important role prescribed by Scripture for women in ministry. Their role in ministry is essential. In this author's humble opinion, it was eclipsed a thousand years ago in the Western Church when celibacy and not the family became the preferred model for ministry. There have been many other damaging effects of altering the family-as-the-Biblical-model for leadership. To the contrary, the role of the woman in ministry is vitally significant for a godly, growing Church. The role is diaconal and tied to the foundation that the diaconate provides for the Kingdom. The office of deacon is not only just as important as any of the other offices; in some sense it is more essential, given that Jesus Christ primarily defined His role as serving, diaconal. Since the diaconate is the model for service, the female servant in the Church participates in the highest honor of presenting who Christ is as Servant of all.

Furthermore by way of introductory comment, the position of this paper that males only should be presbyters, is in no way intended to impugn the godly female priests already present in ACNA. They are holy, gifted women who serve the Church well. Their service in the ministry of the Church is a credit to the Kingdom of the Lord. They exhibit excellent pastoral care, administration and instruction among the people of God. In this respect, none of the comments are aimed directly at any of them.

Lastly by way of introduction, the present paper does not address impossible-ist/possible-but-not-Biblically-compliant distinctions, regarding women in the presbyterate. Many who do not agree with the ordination of women would argue that it is not possible for a woman to be a valid priest. Under no circumstances could her consecrations of the Eucharist be effectual. Their position would be that all the five qualifications for a valid sacrament are not present. These standards for validity have been historically understood as matter, form, minister, recipient and intention. In the case of the impossible-ist position, the absence of a proper ministerial candidate would render the sacramental actions of the person invalid. Gender is presumed to be part of the requirement for the ordination of a valid presbyter. Grace could not be conveyed through this improper minister to the elements of bread and wine, making them mystically into the Body and Blood of Christ. Therefore, the impossible-ist could not in good conscience receive sacrament consecrated by a female presbyter.

Others, while objecting to women being in the presbyterate on Biblical grounds, would not rule out the possibility that a woman priest could still consecrate elements into sacrament. She would be viewed as a valid presbyter but irregular according to the order prescribed by Holy Scriptures. The latter group would perceive a woman priest the way many Anglicans have understood Protestant orders without Apostolic Succession. Historically, the Reformation and the post Reformation Anglican Church allowed for the possibility that Protestant consecrations of the sacrament could still be valid, although the protestant

presbyters performing the setting apart of the bread and the wine may not have been ordained by a bishop. In a similar way, much of Anglicanism has not denied the real presence of Christ when grape juice instead of wine has been used in the Eucharist. These are issues where in some sense intention overcomes defect of substance and even lack of ministerial apostolic order. A violation of order is not a sin nor necessarily invalid. A kind of presumptive charity is extended to those with defective practices and considered in some sense valid, though out of accord with the complete Biblical, apostolic order. These in the possible-ist category would therefore receive Holy Communion at a Eucharist where a woman presbyter consecrated the sacrament.

Needless to say, there are those who are for a male only presbyterate/episcopate in the impossible and possible camps. Regardless, both groups not in favor of a presbyter-al WO believe that charity should be extended should any kind of moratorium on the practice be declared. Although not being able in good conscience to receive sacrament consecrated by a female presbyter, even the most devout Anglo Catholics have agreed that women priests should be grandfathered (allowed to serve out their ministries doing priestly work). At present, the aforementioned distinctions are important to note but the full possible/impossible debate is for another paper. The following work simply seeks in summary form to offer a Biblical, theological, historical and mission-al case for a male only presbyterate.

Hermeneutical Issues

The Biblical hermeneutics of the Jerusalem Council is the definitive model for settling disputes in the Church. In general the hermeneutic we observe is the whole church seeking to understand the Scriptures. Clearly, under the authority of Jesus Christ, Head of the Church, the Scriptures are the final standard judging by the way James and others quote Scripture as the ultimate support for their position. At the same time, the whole Church is meeting precisely because the Church Catholic must come to a consensus regarding the last word in all matters, the Word of God written. It is not a matter of Scripture without the Church or the Church without the Scripture. Both stand in organic relation to each other. As St. Paul states to Timothy, "The Church is the pillar of the Truth" (1 Timothy 3:15). The whole Church must come to final agreement about the unchangeable, final guide to faith and life, the Holy Scripture. Thus, the Jerusalem Council's concern was, "What do the Scriptures say as understood by all the Church."

Concerning the presenting issue it should be noted that the problem in question affects *all* the Church, namely, the application of rites not approved by all, but that would have effects on all (Acts 15). Some in the New Testament Church required the rite of circumcision in addition to baptism. A council was convened at which all the apostles were present. Even apostles initially disagreed (Galatians 2:11). Together they sought and reached the consensus of Scriptural teaching on a rite that inescapably affected everyone. The New Testament confirms that from the

Jerusalem Council forward the rite of circumcision ceased to be considered a sacrament in any sense (Galatians 5:2). Eventually the rite completely dropped out of spiritual use in the Church. The new Church in Acts was not divided.

Similar to the implications of the misuse of the rite of circumcision, the ordination of women to the priesthood is the misapplication of another rite that impacts all the Anglican Communion. It has left some not being able to receive communion if a woman consecrates. It has caused some women to feel slighted if they are not allowed to become a priest or bishop. We have parishes, dioceses, and even provinces that do ordain women and those who don't. This situation has developed by some anticipating that God is doing a "new thing," calling for a period of reception, discernment. Instead, the Jerusalem principle of hermeneutics has not been applied. In reality, we have been divided because a practice was introduced when we were not all agreed. Allowing new practices that affect all, clearly dividing all, is contrary to the pattern Scripture has laid down at Jerusalem for resolving differences. According to the Jerusalem hermeneutic, a "new thing" should not be allowed until all are agreed, or else all will be divided over the matter.

Some Anglicans have justified moving ahead when all are not agreed by appealing to the English Reformation as a rationale for allowing "new things." Yet, it should be clarified that this was not the principle of the English Reformation. The defense of the English Reformation by the Bishop of Salisbury, John Jewel in his classic, *Apologia pro ecclesia Anglicana* (circa A.D. 1562), was precisely the opposite. The English Reformation was not about creating something new. It was for the purpose of returning to the Scriptures and the Ancient Church. The seminal teachings are all found in the Word of God Written and the Church Fathers, even justification by faith only. The return to a non-papal Catholicism was a return back to the structure of Christianity before the Synod of Whitby (A.D. 662). The position of the English Reformers was not that they were advocating new things. The latter would have required the whole Church, which is the point of Jerusalem hermeneutics.

The practice of WO has not only touched our own internal life as Anglicans but our ecumenical relationships as well. Ecumenical discussions with Rome and Orthodoxy were redefined after the practice of WO was allowed in the Anglican Communion. According to the other Catholic branches of Christendom (and many protestant groups) the goal of our talks can no longer be Eucharistic intercommunion. We have permitted a sacramental rite to be applied in a way that affects all the Church, yet all the Church is not at this time agreed, nor was the church-beyond-the-Anglican jurisdiction, honored in the process of deciding to ordain women. Furthermore, the Church, catholic and protestant, cannot even be convened to conclude on the resolution of such significant differences now caused by the Anglican view of women in the ministry at pastoral leadership levels. It could even be argued that these branches of Christendom have in some sense tacitly voted against the practice

by continuing to resist what much of Anglicanism has adopted.¹ The Jerusalem consensus principle thus precludes the application of rites in a divisive fashion without being approved by all. At the least, a moratorium on the ordination of women to the presbyterate should be immediately declared until all the church formally addresses the matter in a way that achieves unity.

Conspicuously, if conservatives who advocate WO applied the same hermeneutical standards to the sexuality debate, in which they want to keep the traditional Biblical view of marriage, they could not maintain their position on the latter. It is often argued, "But there is new Scriptural exegesis that overturns the traditional interpretation of an all male priesthood." In a similar way the advocates for allowing practicing homosexuals into ministry would also appeal to new hermeneutics that interpret the Greek words for homosexual to be references only to temple prostitutes and so forth. They would even observe that there is a growing consensus among part of the Anglican world. The issue rather is not simply novel interpretations, nor what the Anglican branch is proposing in the 21st century on any matter, whether one concerns sexuality or gender. Instead the point is that the new hermeneutics in reference to sexuality or gender deviates from how the whole, One, Holy, Catholic and Apostolic Church of all ages has understood the Bible for nearly two thousand years. There has not been another Jerusalem Council to change the hermeneutics. Until then the application of rites that impact the whole church should be avoided. If not resisted, they will only divide and disrupt, as did the attempted practice of circumcision in the ancient Church, and the history of the ordination of women to the presbyterate demonstrates.

Hermeneutics and the Nature of Ordination

Having stated the general principles of the Jerusalem hermeneutic, we should next apply them to the heart of the matter on women's ordination, the meaning of ordination. All too often the present debate moves forward without a definition of ordination. Yet, how we define it will determine everything on the gender question. As has been mentioned, the same Scriptural hermeneutic of Biblical consensus employed at the Jerusalem Council should be applied to the rite of ordination, especially how ordination is defined. Significantly, the Church did not go outside of the Church for philosophical, social, political, or novel interpretations of Scripture to resolve the dispute. They did not import secular models into the discussions of the Jerusalem council. The concerns were, "What do the Scriptures say?" And, "What does the Church Catholic agree the Scriptures teach?" Given the Jerusalem Council

¹ As for the diaconate there would probably be almost universal allowance of (if not support for) women deacons (and certainly deaconesses) as long as the office were not automatically a transitional one. To say the least, our ecumenical partners would not be in opposition to pursuing fuller relationship with ecclesial bodies with women deaconesses or females in the diaconate.

hermeneutics, we need to clear away some debris that clutters the Biblical definition of ordination.

We have to establish at the outset that ordination is not to be defined as a profession. Here is where mistakes often start with proponents of WO. If the assumption is that ordination is a profession in a culture where professional equality between genders is the standard, then one would have to conclude that women should be admitted into every office of Holy Orders. The same professional standards should carry over from society to the Church. For this reason, primarily sociology has crept into the hermeneutics of the Western Church, driving change of millennia-old, Biblical theological views of the ordination of women to the priesthood and the episcopate. Ordination has been reduced to a profession. The so-called Scriptural support has involved weak, novel exegesis not substantiated by the Jerusalem principle.

Simply stated, the Bible nowhere speaks of Holy Orders as a profession. Scripture instead describes Holy Orders as a vocation. The word vocation comes from the Greek and Latin meaning “to call.” In the New Testament Scripture, service as a minister is not determined by birth to a particular tribe, as it was in the Old Testament. There must be a specific call by the Church. Based on this premise, we see a significant difference between a vocation and a profession.

One: A vocation is a calling that must be confirmed by the Church. A profession may have a calling from God; for a Christian it should. The latter point was one of the wonderful impacts of the 16th century Reformation: all Christians are called. Regarding secular profession, however, no confirmation from the Church is necessary for the call. For example, a Christian may be called to be a doctor or a teacher, very noble tasks. But the hierarchy of the Church does not confirm by ordination to these occupations. Ordination is the key difference between living out a vocation in the Church and practicing a profession in the world. Thus, here again is the consensus principle of the Jerusalem Council hermeneutics at work.

Two: Holy Orders does what no profession does. It is peculiarly involved as God’s means of conveying the Grace of the Lord and forgiveness from His altar. At God’s altar/table of the Blessed Sacrament of Holy Communion, Scripture speaks of a specific, iconic connection between Christ and those who do particularly what He did at the institution of the Eucharist in the Last Supper. He touched common matter and it mysteriously became in an heavenly manner His once for all sacrifice, what the Church has called a means of grace. Any ministerial service that requires standing in Christ’s place, in this regard, requires the clergyman to be a male. If not, the iconic role is distorted. It becomes a female at the head of the Eucharistic table re-enacting the Last Supper. The imagery breaks down. Why?

The application of the sacrifice involves an organic connection between the sacrifice and the one transferring the sacrifice. In the Old Testament, the priest laid his hands on the head of the animal being sacrificed on behalf of the ones who brought the

sacrifice. The priest was so essentially tied to the sacrifice, that he had to be a male. In a similar manner, on the night of the Passover, Christ conveyed His own sacrifice to the Bread and the Wine. Mysteriously the latter became the once for all sacrifice of Christ Himself. The Bread and the Wine were not a re-sacrifice. Christ laid his hands on the elements mystically to make them what He forever would be, and at that time, what He would become; now, what He became: the once for all sacrifice. Again we see an organic connection between Christ serving as priest and the one who continues to do what He did in this special regard. Even if one were to argue that New Covenant ordination is not priestly, still the one who lays on hands (or simply prays without the laying on of hands) as Christ did at the one special moment to bring about sacramental transformation from common to sacred, is imaging Christ such that the imagery should be completely consistent. At least, this is how the Church has understood the need for iconic consistency for nearly two thousand years.

Professional, secular standards of equality have nothing to do with the function of consecrating Bread and Wine no more than they do with the fact that God became a male human to be a sin sacrifice for the world. The function required of the gender has everything to do with what inherently only a male is called to do: be a sacrifice for the sins of the world and uniquely re-enact the conveyance of the sacrifice through the sacred meal. I should also hasten to say that the requirement of the male to be a sacrifice and conduit of the extension of the sacrifice to common elements has nothing to do with essential ability. A woman could be a sacrifice but this is not what God established as the redemptive order. The male is to be the sacrifice for the female, the Heavenly Groom for the earthly Bride. God established that the male is to be the sacrifice and the conduit of the sacrifice. It cannot be changed by the unilateral fiat of a contemporary culture rejecting time-proven hermeneutics of God and His Word.

Outside the altar/sacrifice context (i.e. the Church), however, equality issues regarding function move beyond father/mother distinctions. Christianity has always emerged at the forefront of removing inequities. There was a time when the Church had to address the matter of slavery, a horrible affront to God. Regarding this issue, the New Testament allowed a certain kind of indentured servitude, such as was the case of Onesimus in the Book of Philemon. Even so the Church in the 19th century saw the need to oppose any and all kinds of slavery due to its abuse, and rightfully so.

Nevertheless, serving at the altar/table of God is not an equality issue. It has nothing to do with personal equity, the laws of professionalism or any secular issue. This is a matter of the Church and the holy things of God not governed by secular standards. The latter can't be the final determination. Ultimately, secular justice runs against the fact that a female human could not have died for the sins of the world. The defenders of WO must hopefully see that their application of equality standards to the altar of God ultimately challenge whether God was just in becoming a male human, instead of a female human in His Incarnation. In this sense and in this act the

function is endemic to gender. For example, a woman is created with the capacity to have a baby. Yet, a male and female are not morally unequal because one can do what the other cannot. Regarding some activity, function is endemic to the gender. So it is at the altar of God where the function requires a male human to be an extension of the sacrificial hands of Christ to the Bread and Wine that become the very Sacrifice to us.

Altering endemic aspects peculiar to gender cannot help but reach all the way into the human family as well as the family of God. Perhaps one can see why changing roles related to gender would eventually migrate over into debates about human sexuality, which indeed has happened in the last several decades. As much as godly defenders of women in the presbyterate have valiantly attempted to reject a cause/effect connection between the ordination of women and homosexuality, the straight-line trajectory between the two cannot ultimately be resisted. To remove the distinction between the father/mother roles in the Church will impact the family and ultimately, human sexuality.

The permanent diaconate has been considered a Biblical exception. It assists in the dispensing of Grace. Technically speaking, the office does not consecrate. In the Anglican Ordinal, Cranmer considered it an inferior office though important. The diaconate in the ordinal is ipso facto transitional. When in Scripture the diaconate requirements are listed in the midst of presbyter and Episcopal standards, the presumption is that the diaconate in its transitional sense is in view. This is why the diaconate in these contexts has similar family requirements to the offices of presbyter and bishop. When the office is applied as permanent, it is part of Holy Orders but only in an assisting role. For this reason, some branches of Christendom have allowed women to serve as permanent deacons, not as transitional ones.

Three: A last point should be made distinguishing profession from vocation, in that the call of God to (certain) Holy Orders is not based on who may enter the Church. In the secular world, all by definition may enter any profession. In the Church, however, entrance is not the basis for who may serve in certain Holy Orders. Put another way, not all who are baptized may be a presbyter or bishop. The reason is the family, not the professional, nature of the Church. Fatherly roles of service such as presbyter and bishop are restricted by gender. Again, if we understand service in the Church as a profession, or occupation, this sounds horribly unfair. It may even seem to oppose Pauline statements such as “no male nor female in Christ” (Galatians 3:28). Yet, the verse also states there is no-longer-Jew-nor-Greek. Clearly the passage does not mean one gives up ethnicity, i.e. cease being a Jew. Then neither is the male/female distinction collapsed by Galatians 3:28. Rather St. Paul was only stating that all are redeemed by the same means, Christ. All are united in Christ. Further, no one race or gender is inherently better than the other.

At the same time, the St. Paul, who wrote Galatians 3:28, also argued that the Jew should be evangelized first (Romans 1:16). He was able to speak of a redemptive equality while still maintaining an order. This is one glaring example of how in the

New Testament preference of one before the other does not violate equality. Further, ultimately the reason professional standards of equality (when it comes to function) do not completely apply is the familial nature of the Kingdom of God.

If as we'll see further on in this paper, the Church is a "family," built on a family model, then the Church has all of the inherent strengths, and yes, limitations of a family. For example, anyone could become a member of a natural family by adoption if not by birth. Yet, every child in a family, even if adopted, is constrained by gender when it grows up to be a father or mother; one gender cannot be either/or but one or the other. In certain respects, a mother may do some fatherly functions. Technically in certain natural ways, endemic to the male gender, she can never be a father (neither can a father be a mother), and this is the point. So in the greatest of all families, the Church, our spiritual family, has certain fatherly roles limited to male gender.

Defenders of WO will often acknowledge the parallel between the natural family and the spiritual family, but argue that since God is the Father, and Christ is the Groom, in the ecclesiastical family there are no spiritual fathers. Some Evangelical Anglicans even recognize the father parallel only regarding the office of bishop, which though not complete is good. The Groom-ship of Christ does not remove the sacramental, representative and practical need for a visible father in the Church. When we examine carefully the New Testament, St. Paul uses the natural family order of the father to guide in determining who may be a presbyter and bishop. He requires the presbyter (locally for the bishop) and the bishop (beyond the parish) to be good managers of their households. Using fatherly language, he writes of presbyters "having children . . . not insubordinate" (Titus 1:6), and bishops "keeping . . . children submissive" (1 Timothy 3:4). He uses only masculine pronouns in reference to examples of being able to rule well, indicating these family requirements translate into a father role in the Church with reference to both offices. The Fatherhood of God through Christ does not negate clear Scriptural indication of visible fathers in the kingdom of God. A good father in the home is the standard for being a spiritual father in the Church, and vice versa. We will return to this issue in greater detail in a following section, when we address why there should be father symmetry at the local and beyond the local, the diocesan levels.

The present point is that Holy Orders are not based on secular laws of equality. Ordination is a vocation and the Church is a family. Anyone, regardless of gender, may be in the Church by Holy Baptism but not everyone can be a father. The nature of a family has nothing to do with equality when it comes to who can be father. So it is in the spiritual family.

Thus, the hermeneutics of the Jerusalem Council applies to another rite being practiced in the Church, ordination. In the Early Church, it was the sacrament of circumcision. Today it is the sacrament (lesser sacrament, according to the Thirty-Nine Articles) of Holy Order. Just as a Biblical consensus was required of the whole Church in that day, so it should be today. Other hermeneutics, however, has recently

emerged. It has suggested contrary to the Jerusalem model that two thousand years of exegesis and consensus have been not simply slightly askew (not allowing women deacons), but totally in error regarding who may or may not be a presbyter (or bishop). I call these interpretations the “new” hermeneutics, a final hermeneutical issue to be addressed before moving to the body of this paper.

Hermeneutical Flaws in the New Hermeneutics

Related also to the hermeneutics question, specific interpretative flaws consistently appear in the recent exegetical writings of pro ordination of women to the presbyterate/episcopate. For example, while Canon Kenneth Bailey has written articles full of many wonderful and useful insights, his work also commits a number of representative, interpretative fallacies.² The first is to interpret the epistles of St. Paul in isolation from the context of apostolic practice revealed in the history of the early Church, such as is found in the Book of Acts and those immediately living in the subsequent centuries. For example, when St. Paul meets with the presbyters of Ephesus on his way to Jerusalem, the masculine gender is used in the Greek word for “elder” (Acts 20:17-38).³ If indeed St. Paul believed women should be admitted to the presbyterate, why of all Gentile places where women priests were common among other religions would there be no female presbyters? Apparently the early Church did not interpret St. Paul to allow for women in the presbyterate. Indeed, the ancient history of the Eastern churches in Greece and Macedonia contain no historic record of women ever serving in the presbyterate.

A second hermeneutical flaw found in the new exegesis is preference for the word “source” to translate the Greek word *kephale*, historically translated “head” as in authority. Aside from the fact that in Canon Bailey’s articles, for example, no references are cited where *kephale* is used as source, and that to move from it-is-possible to it-is-true is a logical fallacy, the suggestion of substituting source for head is a *distinction without a difference*. To be specific, St. Paul writes, “the husband is the head of the wife as Christ is the head of the church” (Ephesians 5:23). To translate the Greek word for head as source results in making a distinction that is in fact no difference. The body derives nourishment from the head no doubt, since the mouth is in the head. At the same time the body also receives guidance from the head since the eyes are also in the head. The ears of the head also provide alertness and protection for the body. John Piper and Wayne Grudem conclude, “If the

² “The Women Prophets in Corinth: A Study of Aspects of 1 Corinthians 11:2-16,” *Theology Matters*, Vol. 6, No. 1, Jan/Feb 2000, pp. 11-14. Also, “Women in the New Testament: A Middle Eastern Cultural View, *Anvil*, v. 11, N. 1, 1994, pp. 7-24.

³ The masculine gender of the Greek word for *presbuteros* is used in Acts 20:17 to refer to the “elders” of Ephesus. Canon Bailey does agree that the Greek for elders is often in the masculine (plural) but it includes women. Grammatically this is true in a general sense but not with regard to “elders.” For example, the world of Second Temple Judaism had elders but they were not female.

husband . . . is therefore a source of guidance, food, and alertness, then the natural conclusion is that the head, the husband, has a primary responsibility for leadership, provision, and protection . . . even if you give head the meaning 'source,' the most natural interpretation of these verses is that husbands are called by God to take primary responsibility for Christ-like servant leadership, protection and provision in the home."⁴ The preference for source does not actually take away the authoritative place of the husband in the home and the presbyter in the congregation; it is a distinction without a difference. To be the source is to be the head as the Church has understood the meaning of *kephale* (head) for nearly two thousand years.

A third flaw committed by the new exegesis is *over* interpretation of questionable details. Such is the case with the spurious allegation that the Junia referred to in Romans 16:7 is a female, and no less than equivalent to the original apostles. To aver that Junia is a she amounts to the difference in an accent mark in the original Greek: if circumflex it is masculine and if acute feminine. Since the original Greek manuscripts were not accented, the basis of the masculine accent is the context, which is the most interpretative guide any way. In the context of Romans 16, it is clear that in v. 3 a husband and wife team is mentioned, then Mary in v. 6. At v. 7 the reference to Andronicus and Junia is made, following greetings to a group of men. Starting again at verse 12, the individuals are women. If Andronicus and Junia are a husband/wife team there would be a kind of literary parallel. At the same time, earlier when a husband/wife were mentioned, the woman's name was first (v.3). Why would Paul reverse the pattern if Junia really were a woman? Also, since the name before Junia is masculine and the ones after are masculine, historical interpretation has seen this parallel of woman-men-women greetings as supporting the view that Junia was a male. As for the word apostle, there is the varied meaning: sometimes a reference to the primary apostles, sometimes to the secondary apostles but who were not considered part of the original, founding apostolic succession such as when Paul mentions those with him as apostles (1 Thessalonians 2:6-7, Barnabas etc.), and sometimes simply a messenger (Philippians 2:25; 2 Corinthians 8:23). Then there is the question as to what "of note among the apostles" means. Does it mean simply a noteworthy person recognized by the apostles, or does it refer to her as an apostle in whatever sense Paul meant? Given these details that can be over-interpreted, we should not abandon the hermeneutics of the Jerusalem Council: for two thousand years the main consensus of the Church has rejected the suggestion that Junia is a female apostle. Besides, sound Biblical hermeneutics always dictates avoidance of allowing one, obscure passage to drive one's interpretations. The clear is always to override the unclear. To say the least, interpreting Junia as a female is obscure, and so unclear that extreme caution should be exercised in allowing this passage to overturn two thousand years of exegesis.

⁴ John Piper and Wayne Grudem, eds., *Recovering Biblical Manhood & Womanhood* (Wheaton: Crossway Books, 1991), pp. 63-64.

The evidence is simply too weak to alter such a major practice as ordination to the priesthood and the episcopacy.⁵

A fourth flaw of the new exegesis is *under* interpretation. The most glaring statement of St. Paul requires male only presbyters (Titus 1:6) and bishops (1 Timothy 3:2) by his statement, “husband of one wife” (literally, a “one-woman man”), is conspicuously and consistently neglected by the new exegesis. When it rarely is considered, the alternatives betray the obvious. To the point, St. Paul placed a gender, limiting statement as, “husband of one wife,” among the list of qualifications for leading church officers. If he had wanted to imply otherwise, he would not have been cryptic while being so blatant (i.e. listing qualifications). If he had intended a not-so-limiting gender-statement, he would have qualified with something like, “or, wife of one husband.” He didn’t. Instead, the new interpreters spend enormous effort straining the Biblical text to prove that there were female presbyters and bishops in the New Testament. Yet the obvious has stared the Church of all ages in the face: St. Paul’s only gender related requirement in the lists of qualifications limits the offices of presbyter and bishop to males only. The new exegesis again lacks substantial enough interpretation to over turn two thousand years of Jerusalem Council hermeneutics.

A fifth flaw in the new exegesis supporting women’s ordination to the presbyterate is *mistaken or erroneous* interpretation. For example, Canon Bailey asserts in one of his articles that, “male and female are created together.” Actually, one was created before the other. Also, Canon Bailey makes the common mistake of the new exegesis by confusing essence and authority. The Doctrine of the Trinity teaches the distinction between the ontological (Essence) and the economical (Persons) Trinity. Jesus was and is equal to the Father yet He submitted to the Father. Submission does not diminish essence. To say the least, male/female distinctions in roles in no way makes one gender essentially less than the other. Further, Canon Bailey equates prophesying with being a priest in his interpretation of 1 Corinthians 11. In fact, one could be a prophet without being a priest, and vice-versa. The Bible distinguishes the two. Indeed, there were female prophetesses and male prophets. Yet when it comes to apostolic office and its successors, the New Testament is clear that Jesus chose twelve male apostles. In the remainder of the New Testament there is not one clear example, verified by the consensus of historic interpretation of Scripture, that there were women priests or bishops in the early Church.

A final flaw to be noted in the new exegesis regards pejorative and false characterization of the traditional view. The tendency is to take the perversion of traditional roles as the historic position. For example, Canon Bailey in his papers refers to the traditional view of roles with statements such as, “The only reason God created women is for them to serve men”; women are “lowly assistants to the boss”;

⁵ Special thanks is due to the Very Rev. Dr. Curtis Crenshaw, Dean of Cranmer Theological House (REC) in Houston, Texas, for his invaluable notes and suggestions for the third through the fifth flaws sections.

ones who hold traditional views are, “gruff, old, unrepentant, Middle Eastern male chauvinist.” Not all of the new exegesis is as blatant but still often mischaracterizes those who object to the women in the presbyterate on Biblical and traditional grounds. In reviewing much of the literature on the subject, this author has never found the kind of demeaning language in the writings of those objecting to women presbyters as suggested by Canon Bailey. Instead, many of these same scholars who object to WO in Holy Writ would be quick to note that the Bible never uses the words dominate or dominant to explain male spiritual headship. Rather, the spiritual head is called to be a primary leader who loves as Christ loves, is gentle, sacrificial and exerting influence through consensus not by coercion or dominance. He lives into his created role by giving himself to and up for the woman, even sacrificing his life if necessary. At the same time Scripture never speaks of the wife’s or woman’s role as slave-like and doormat. She is to be honored, highly valued, treated with utmost respect and kindness, fully involved in the decision-making, the queen and top advisor, while being reverent and willing to support the final decision of the one given to make it. She lives into her God-given role by completing what the male role lacks. These Biblical descriptions are anything but chauvinistic and demeaning as so often assumed by those mischaracterizing the traditional, Biblical position held by the Church of all ages.

Thus, moving past the flawed tendencies of much of the new exegesis, consistent Biblical and historical hermeneutics advocates the traditional view of a male only priesthood. The proper methods of interpretation also eschew the new hermeneutics on this topic. Beyond the hermeneutical matters, there are three basic Biblical reasons for a male only priesthood.

The Biblical Case for a Male Only Presbyterate

The Symmetry of Eucharistic Headship and Familial Headship

Father is to be the spiritual head of the table in the home, parish, and the diocese (metropolitan/city-church level of organization). Scripture parallels all three. There is symmetry of covenantal headship in each of these spheres. Both the Old and New Testaments consistently present the covenantal order of the people of God as having layers of covenant heads in a kind of bottom-up hierarchy starting with the home. This covenant headship pattern extends to the groupings of families into worship units, and beyond to local and regional structures of organization (Deuteronomy 1:9-18). At each level there is to be a covenant head representing the Lord. These covenant heads are called to be “fathers” in some sense. In this sense, there is a consistency of message, requirement and order conveyed.

Beginning with the home, St. Paul compares the headship of Christ and the headship of the husband/father (Ephesians 5:23). He calls the husband to be a loving spiritual head, a leadership not to be oppressive, nor dictatorial. The woman is to respond in

respect to her husband, as the Church should to Christ. Most faithful Christians would agree with St. Paul's paradigm: father as loving spiritual leader with respectful, cooperative-yet-full-participatory involvement of the wife. Any deviation from this model is a kind of dysfunction. Certainly there can be a godly home where the wife has to take more of a spiritual lead due to a non-Christian or immature Christian husband, or even an absent father. Such was the case with St. Timothy. Nevertheless, the ideal is two Christian parents living the roles God has designed. So it is in the Church. When Paul compares the husband/wife relationship to His union with the Church, he creates an overall paradigm of spiritual headship following the pattern of the family that is to appear at every level of church-leadership: local and diocesan. The spiritual head at these levels represents the True, Ultimate Head, Jesus Christ. Each spiritual head whether in the home, the congregation or the diocese, is to manifest the Headship of Christ with a re-enforcing symmetry.

There is symmetry of male leadership in the home and the Church. It is easily demonstrated in the New Testament. Very simply, both presbyters and bishops according to St. Paul are required to lead and manage their homes well. When the apostle presents the qualifications of a presbyter and bishop in 1 Timothy and Titus, the lists are virtually identical. For this reason, Greek lexicons even note that the words *episcopos* and *presbuteros* are used interchangeably. In the 1 Timothy passage the *episcopos* is to "manage his own household well, keeping his children submissive" (3:4). In the Titus passage, the *presbuteros* is to have children who are not "insubordinate" (Titus 1:6), which is simply another way of pointing to the parallel requirements of running effectively a family. Since the Greek words for the two highest offices have the requirement of leading well in the family, and elsewhere St. Paul gives spiritual leadership in the home to the father, it is not hard to see why the Church has for two thousand years mandated that only males are to be presbyters and bishops. Both are spiritual fathers in their respective spheres of the local and diocesan. Spiritual headship in the home is one of the requirements of eligibility for headship in the congregation and beyond.

Anglican ordinals even imply close proximity between the offices of presbyter and bishop. In the Book of Common Prayer ordinal it is noted that the ordination of a bishop is a *consecration*. To be precise a bishop is a presbyter with special laying on of Apostolic hands consecrating him to higher, Episcopal office. Clearly it is an office distinct from that of priest. At the same time a bishop historically sits collegially with his presbyters around him as his nearest associates in ministry. The offices are close enough in requirement that both should be for male-only positions.

Additionally, the symbiotic connection between the offices of presbyter and bishop, as well as the argument from St. Paul's Church officer qualifications for leadership in the home, would not support the view of some Anglicans that headship should be

limited to the episcopate.⁶ The latter view does not grasp the full scope of the Biblical reality of the headship principle as applied to both offices: the bishop as head representing Christ at the diocesan level and the presbyter as representing Christ for the bishop at the parish level. It is ultimately all about Christ properly being presented as the Head. As the most effective way of conveying the Headship of Christ Scripture requires the presbyter (as well as the bishop) to be a man who is the spiritual head in his home, thereby meaning this office is limited to males only. The modified headship view presents a major inconsistency in contrast to the continuity of St. Paul's total argument, which explains the practical problems of not having a father at the head of the altar/table in the local, parish Eucharist. Consequently, the complete application of St. Paul is weakened by allowing women into the priesthood while not doing so into the episcopate.

It should be noted before moving to the second Biblical argument for a male only presbyterate, that some have pointed to the practice of allowing celibates, and not simply the married, creates a pattern of exception that would also allow women in the presbyterate. In other words, if the Pauline requirements of managing children well, presuming a marriage requirement, were in some sense waived to allow a celibate, would this not also permit a woman to be ordained into the presbyterate? The suggestion has been that one exception could lead to others, namely the exception of allowing a female presbyter. This objection, if valid, would only prove an exception, not the exception of allowing women priests. One exception does not necessarily mean any and all exceptions could be permitted. Even if one recognizes certain Biblical exceptions, the point is that these departures must indeed have a historically understood Scriptural basis for recognizing an exception as a valid exception. There are two important Biblical and historical points about the allowance of celibates into Holy Orders. They indicate only a male celibate could be advanced into the presbyterate.

First, no doubt the Church came to understand that the New Testament would allow celibate males into Holy Orders. Importantly, the rationale has been that a male celibate in Holy Orders is understood to be married to the Bride of Christ, the Church, and thus satisfies the familial requirements to be a priest/bishop. Only a male celibate could still live into the father-as-head-of-the-table imagery. A male in this context can convey the image of father, imaging Christ re-enacting the Last Supper for His people. The point seems to be that yes there can be exceptions, but they should fit the Biblical parameters, in this case, covenantal requirements of headship in the household of God.

⁶ For example, John Stott et al among conservative evangelicals in British evangelicalism have maintained a male-only episcopate view based on headship beyond the local parish.

Second, in further support of the aforementioned view, celibates, particularly the ones who had never been married,⁷ were considered the exception not the norm for a long time in the Church. Monks were celibate but they were not ordained. Not until as late as the fifth and sixth centuries was the pattern of married-clergy-as-the-norm reversed. In the Middle Ages, celibacy as the preferred status for clergy was encouraged by the difficult challenges surrounding the inheritance of property by the clergy and their children. There was no distinction between ownership of church property by the church and by the clergy. Church property passed onto the heirs of the clergy. To address this situation, the Medieval Western Church began canonically to prefer celibacy to alleviate inheritance problems. Even so, the canons of the Western Church never did more than only state a preference, not a requirement. For this reason, the Roman Church can permit married clergy while preferring celibacy. The canon could even allow for a return to the Early Church pattern of marriage as the preferred status for admission into Holy Orders, and celibacy as the exception. Nevertheless, both Scripture and historical interpretation indicate that the exception of allowing celibates into Holy Orders does not overturn requirements clearly indicating the presbyter and bishop should be male.

Therefore, in Biblical Christianity symmetry of leadership exists among the home, the congregation and the diocese, the latter being what the New Testament calls the metropolitan/city-church concept. Not to require male only presbyters potentially creates a vacuum of spiritual headship at the local level. When parishioners take weekly Eucharist and do not see their spiritual father at the sacramental altar/table, the pattern of headship is broken. Could this partially be why female presbyters for the most part have not been well received? Or, that where female presbyters have seemingly been effective there is a strong male presbyter or bishop also present at the altar? No doubt just as the home can still function without the presence of father, a faithful mother filling in for both parents, it is clearly not God's best. The preferred at every covenantal level, based on Scripture, is father as the spiritual head of the table.

In the Person of Christ

A second line of argumentation concerns how Scripture prescribes that in the context of worship, the male uniquely conveys the "image and glory of God" (1 Corinthians 11:7). Clearly male and female together were created in the image of God (Genesis 1:26-27). In their persons both genders image God; there is an ontological equality. Even so, St. Paul writes while dealing with the ramifications of certain head-covering practices in worship, "For a man ought not to cover his head,

⁷ St. Paul argues for celibacy in 1 Corinthians 7. At the same time it should be recognized that he was probably married at one point. As a Rabbi, he would have been required to be married. Furthermore, his argument for celibacy refers to his role as a missionary apostle/bishop not Holy Orders in general, or else he contradicts what he requires of Timothy and Titus in his letters to them.

since he is the image and glory of God; but the woman is to glorify man" (1 Corinthians 11:7). How are these passages reconciled?

The key to answering the aforementioned question is the context of worship. St. Paul speaks to the roles of male and female during the Divine Liturgy. In society, females can function in any kind of leadership capacity. Yet at the altar in the midst of worship another reality occurs. Christ is really present in ways He is not in the secular world. Only a male spiritual leader at the altar properly communicates and conveys the real presence of Christ. The male specially represents Christ in the liturgy in ways that the woman cannot. He must not cover his head, for example, precisely because he images the head.⁸ The male presbyter stands in the Person of Christ in a manner that the female cannot.

The fact is that when God incarnated Himself, He became a Human male not a female. The reason seems to be in the peculiar sacrificial role for which the male is made. The sacrifices of the Old Testament were to be male. When Christ speaks of leadership, He describes it in terms of sacrifice (John 15:12-16). St. Paul even pulls the Lord's language into his description of the different ways in which a husband and wife mutually submit to each other. No doubt the apostle explains there is to be mutual submission (Ephesians 5:21). The way this is lived out is different for each role. For example, they are not mutually submitted, "if submission means Christ yields to the authority of the Church. . . they are if submission means that Christ submitted Himself to suffering and death for the good of the Church." Yet having observed the different way in which Christ submitted to the Church through His passion, that is not how the Church submits. "The church submits to Christ by affirming His authority and following His lead. So mutual submission does not mean submitting to each other *in the same ways*."⁹ They mutually submit but their roles require them to live into this submission differently.

In a similar manner, the male and female in the Church mutually submit. But this doesn't mean they have exactly the same role, especially when it comes to service at the altar. The male leader in worship uniquely stands in the place of Christ. He is the spiritual father at the head of Christ's Eucharistic table uniquely representing Jesus. Since Christ is really present, the consecrator of the Host will best convey who Christ is at this moment in this special context of re-enacting the Last Supper by being a male presbyter.

Another level of support for the *in persona Christi* view concerns the priestly principle in the New Covenant. Though not totally dependent on this concept, continuity of the minister with the priesthood of Christ perpetuates in the New

⁸ It is telling that Bailey's interpretation of 1 Corinthians 11 has removed any capacity for understanding why the man's head in worship should not be covered. He states, "The problem of why men should remain hatless escapes me": "The Women Prophets in Corinth," p. 3.

⁹ *Piper and Grudem*, p. 63.

Testament an Old Testament concept of a male only priesthood. Although the priest does not transubstantiate in his person, the minister represents and conveys Christ somehow being organically-related-yet-distinct. At the re-enactment of the presentation of the Last Supper sacrifice of Christ in the Eucharist, the priest must be a male to preserve the imagery of Christ mystically present before us. In the Eucharist, the same image of the Last Supper appears. Christ declared Bread and Wine His Body and Blood. In a similar manner, the priest stands before the people of God and consecrates Bread and Wine, also declaring the latter to be the Body and Blood of Jesus. The parallel is unmistakable unless the imagery is altered.

Not surprisingly, the *in persona Christi* concept has been denied in some quarters by rejecting the notion of the minister as priest. If there is no New Testament priesthood, then the requirement of a male only priesthood, no doubt found in the Old Testament, disappears in the New Covenant. So it is argued.

Actually, the *in persona Christi* argument may still stand without a sacerdotal view of the minister. Clearly, however, the New Testament refers to the Gospel ministry and minister as priestly, which only strengthen the *in persona Christi* argument. Nowhere in the Bible is a priest a female. If the New Covenant minister is a priest, Biblical consistency would require the priest to be a male. Nothing inherent in the principles of priesthood suggests that the gender should be changed.

St. Paul, for example, describes his own office and ministry with priestly language tied to sacrifice when he writes, “That I should be a minister [Greek: *leitourgia*] of Jesus Christ to the Gentiles, sacrificially offering [from the Greek word, *heirourgeo*] the Gospel of God, that the offering of the nations might be acceptable having been sanctified by the Holy Spirit” (Romans 15:16). Priestly, sacerdotal/sacrificial language inundates this verse. The Greek word *heirourgeo* is typically a sacerdotal function. The classic Greek lexicon by Abbott-Smith cites the word when used as a noun as normally meaning, “sacrificing priest” in the Septuagint (Greek translation of the Old Testament). He translates the Romans 15:16 use of the word therefore, “to minister in priestly service the Gospel.”¹⁰ For this reason, I have given the literal translation of the Greek participle. The reference to his “sacrificing the Gospel of God” encompasses a priestly role. No doubt the sacrifice is an offering, explaining why many translations prefer this word. Even so the original meaning should not be missed. Specifically, in the original text the Apostle offers the Gospel of God as an “offering,” that the “offering of the Gentiles might be acceptable.” In other words, what St. Paul offers sacrificially makes another offering acceptable. Yes, the latter is set apart, “sanctified,” by the Holy Spirit. Nevertheless, the previous offering makes the other offering acceptable. St. Paul’s offering is the Gospel.

Importantly, the offering of the Gospel in this sacrificial manner has to include what happens in the Eucharist. St. Paul uses the same Good News offering language in a

¹⁰ G. Abbott-Smith, *A Manual Greek Lexicon of the New Testament* (Edinburgh: T&T Clark [1937] 1973), p. 214.

Eucharistic context to refer to the Gospel presented in Holy Communion. After restating the very words of Christ instituted at the Last Supper to consecrate Bread and Wine into the Blessed Sacrament, the Apostle writes, "For as often as you eat this bread and drink this cup, you *proclaim* the Lord's death till he comes" (1 Corinthians 11:26). The Eucharist declares the Gospel when offered. The proclamation is verbal, but the visual presentation should not be missed. Combining the 1 Corinthians 11:26 reference with Romans 15:16 enables us to arrive at the meaning of the latter. St. Paul's priestly work of offering the Gospel of God in the Eucharist allows the Gentiles to have a valid offering of themselves to God. Apart from the Eucharistic proclamation, however, their offering is not acceptable.

The historic liturgies of the Church, especially the Anglican Book of Common Prayer, bring this Biblical language and process into the consecration prayers, what has some times been called the Canon of the Consecration (Mass). In the Anglican prayer book, the sacrifice being offered is clarified as the once for all sacrifice once offered by Christ on the Cross. The consecration is not a re-sacrifice. Rather, it is a re-presentation of the once for all sacrifice. And it is this offering of the sacrifice of Christ that makes the offering of our selves, our souls, and our bodies acceptable to the Lord. Even this very language is found in the post consecration/communion prayers of the Anglican liturgy. It is based on other sacrificial references in St. Paul, namely, "Present yourselves a living sacrifice" (Romans 12:1-2). To be precise, the latter is whole-burnt offering language from the Old Testament brought over into the New Testament. In the Old Testament, the whole burnt offering was only to be offered after the purification, propitiatory offerings. Christ is our propitiation sacrifice. When the minister consecrates Bread and Wine, Christ becomes present and is presented in the Eucharist to the Father as a reminder of the only access we have to God, through Christ. Beautifully following the Old Testament patterns of sacrifice, as captured in the Anglican liturgy, the offering of the once for all sacrifice of Christ makes the offering of the people acceptable.

Critical to our discussion, the Apostle's offering of the Gospel, surely not excluding what happens in the Eucharist, implies that the minister at the Holy Communion is in some priestly sense offering sacrifice on behalf of others that their own offerings might be acceptable if the Gospel offering is received by faith. No doubt the priestly and sacrificial language refers to the once for all sacrifice of Christ, not the sacrifice of the blood of bulls and goats. Within the Anglican way distinctions have been made between the propitiatory sacrifice of Christ and the oblation offering of the sacrament, sometimes called an un-bloody sacrifice. Nevertheless, through the sacerdotal way in which St. Paul talks of his own Gospel work, the Church has historically understood the role of the presbyter to be a priest. Gospel work is sacerdotal in some sense. The continuity of language and principle between the work of the priest in the Old Testament, and the Pauline ministerial description in the New Testament, support the premise that a priest should be male. The sacrifice always stipulated by Scripture was male (in the case of animal sacrifice). The one setting apart and offering the sacrifice had to be male. Accordingly, Christ as the Human sacrifice for the sins of the world was male because of the sacrificial

requirements. The New Testament leaves us to think these principles remain. Nothing in the New Testament indicates a change of these vital connections between the Person of the Sacrifice, Christ, and the person of the minister setting apart the sacrifice.

Thus, at the altar the priest's role is bound up so inextricably in re-enacting the Last Supper that only a male presbyter properly conveys the image of Christ in ways that the female gender role cannot in this context. It has nothing to do with essential value. It has everything to do with how only the male presbyter can best represent, indeed convey, Christ at the altar head of the Table. There must be a Eucharistic father at the head of the Holy Altar/Table.

The Mission of the Fatherhood of God

The mission of the Church, spreading the Gospel and making disciples, is enhanced by a clear and consistent message about God and the roles assigned by Him to humans in the home and at the Lord's altar. In its most basic presentation, the message of the Gospel converts believers into adopted spiritual children who learn to call God, "Father" through belief in His Son, Jesus Christ. Clearly pagan cultures have had a tendency to feminize deity. Even in ancient Greco-Roman culture where Zeus was among the pantheon, local religion had temples to Diana all over the empire where many of St. Paul's churches were founded. In a sense the real, practical and personal deity was Diana. If God is Father, fallen humans will naturally distort who the One, True God is. Gospel conversion properly disciples followers of Jesus into the correct view of God. For this reason, the most basic teaching of Holy Scripture is to call God "our Father" (Matthew 6:9). Through Jesus Christ's redemption humans become the "children of God" calling Him, "Abba Father" (Galatians 4:1-7; Romans 8). "These two Biblical affirmations are among many in which the Bible employs an analogy between a human family and the church."¹¹

Second, making disciples involves the full transformation of the life of a family from conformity to the world (Romans 12:1-2). The Biblical model is to make not just individual disciples but the entire family a follower of Christ. As the family fell with our first parents' sin, so Jesus redeems the whole family. The mission of the Church becomes the conversion of households in to the Household of Faith, the kingdom of God. The Biblical reason is strait forward: Christ called His followers to "disciple the nations" (Literal Greek of Matthew 28:18-20). In the Book of Acts, the Church carried out Christ's mission family by family. Wherever a household is mentioned, the entire family was baptized and not just individuals (i.e. Acts 16). In this sense, the call of the Gospel is the conversion of the family, which explains why St. Paul spent so much time addressing the family. In particular, he had to instruct his converts at Ephesus on the role of husband and wife in the home. The reason, calling

¹¹ *Pieler and Grudem*, p. 233.

God Father and Church mother, was bound up in the roles of husband and wife in the home.

Third, being converted to call God Father and the Church mother not only required transformation of roles in the home, it is to be modeled in the culture of the Kingdom of God. Once again we see another aspect of the rationale for symmetry between the family and the Church. As Professor Vern Sheridan Poythress writes, “male leadership in the family requires male leadership in the Church.”¹² This is the best way to bring the world to call God, “our Father.” The mission of the kingdom is carried out to the fullest when male and female in the Church provide the best model for the home. In part, this could be the reason it has been observed by some involved with church growth that male priests and bishops (and even deacons) have proven to be better at church planting.¹³

Taking the culture of the Kingdom of God to a lost world, where God is viewed as Father and the Church is Mother, is vital to the spread of the Gospel. The proper model of the Christian home is a critical part of extending the culture of the Kingdom of God. One re-enforces the other. The culture of the Kingdom is neither eastern nor western; it is heavenly. In the words of St. Paul, it is neither male nor female, Jew or Gentile, bond or free. Not as the new exegesis suggesting somehow that there will no longer be male or female with headship/helpmeet roles, or that a converted Jew would cease to be a Jew. Rather it is the removal of fallen, false divisions as a result of sin. It is the restoration of the human race as one family in which God-appointed roles can now be fulfilled. It returns through the redemption of Christ the original function of male and female to image through their roles Christ and the Church. It is the resurrection of the proper Edenic model of the family where in Eden all humanity was intended to live into the ordained service of each of its members. Therefore, the culture of the Kingdom of God forms symmetry between home and God’s realm that is essential to converting disciples to the correct view of God and His Church.

For example, in taking the Gospel into the lost world the Church has had to confront polygamy. Why is polygamy unbiblical? It wrongly conveys and re-enforces polytheism. Yes, Scripture teaches that marriage is one man, one woman in a lifelong commitment before God. But there is a much deeper theological rationale for one man, one woman. God made marriage to pattern His relationship to the world. There is One God and One Bride. God loves and gives Himself for one. Since marriage is a picture of humanity’s relationship with One God, multiple brides imply more than one god. If the One, True God declared at the creation of the world a man should leave his father and mother and cleave to his wife, not wives, and the two, not three or more (Genesis 2:24), the rebellion to this marital mandate resulted in multiple wives and worshipping other gods, especially when the false religions

¹² “The Church as Family” in *Recovering Biblical Manhood & Womanhood*, p. 233.

¹³ It is no small observation that very few good examples exist of female church planters.

allowed more than one wife. It is no surprise therefore that when Solomon in Scripture began practicing polygamy, his heart was turned to polytheism, the worship of many gods (1 Kings 11). Teaching Biblical marriage and the proper roles of men and women in the Family and Church are tied to making true disciples and raising strong congregations. Biblical culture matters to the spread of the Gospel. What is modeled in the family should match the life and worship of the Church. The Biblical and logical connection between these cultures is definite; the Church has always understood the essential connection between the two.

Ironically, the new exegesis on roles in the Church often uses culture as an argument against the traditional view. Liberals will of course simply reject the teachings of St. Paul. They say he was culturally biased and wrong. St. Paul is not viewed as Scriptural due to his cultural prejudice in his instruction to Corinthian women, namely, that they were told to be “silent in the church.” Although Biblical and conservative Christianity has never understood the Greek word for silence to mean no speaking, liberals use statements such as the aforementioned to reduce St. Paul to cultural irrelevance.

On the other hand, conservative Christians who support women in the presbyterate take another approach. They uphold the Biblical place of St. Paul. According to their new exegesis, however, they say the apostle actually allowed for women in the presbyterate. In his ancient time women in the priesthood would have been unacceptable. For the sake of the spread of the Gospel, men only were admitted into the presbyterate. But today is different. Now for the reason of promoting Christ in modern and post-modern culture where women are accepted in leadership, the Church can fully apply Scripture. Females not only can, but should be admitted into the priesthood.

The flaw in the cultural arguments of the new exegesis is precisely in the area of accurately understanding the culture of the ancient Greco Roman world. The fact is that the world of St. Paul was one of females in the priesthood in virtually every city and on every corner. It was a culture completely comfortable with women at the altars and shrines of their pagan gods. For this reason, it would probably have been even easier for St. Paul to admit women into the priesthood in the ancient world. Instead, it was Christianity that converted the City of Ephesus from worshipping the goddess Diana and concomitantly having female priests. If ever there were an opportunity for St. Paul to set up women presbyters, it would have been in the Church raised up at ancient Ephesus. He didn't. The Biblical text of Acts 20 where he gathers the presbuteros, masculine gender in the Greek text, is clear.

We must not forget that the same St. Paul who wrote to Timothy and Titus about qualifications for the presbyterate and the episcopate, is the same apostle who penned, “Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing your mind” (Romans 12:2). In abandoning Christianity, western culture has actually begun to revert to pagan beliefs and practices. Post World War II western culture has given up any commitment to the last vestiges of Christian culture. Is it any

wonder that it is precisely during this time that the Church begins to alter its views based not on Scriptural commitment but societal pressure. This is not the way of St. Paul who did not allow women in the priesthood in the City of Ephesus where culture was totally accepting of female priests. That this was not the culture of the Church is the point. No doubt the culture of the Kingdom of God can adapt; it should. At the same time it should not conform to culture. Certainly the Church walks a fine line in speaking the language of culture without giving up Kingdom culture. Yet when the Church conforms to culture there are dire spiritual consequences. The Church is the last spiritual firewall left in western culture beckoning it back to its converted roots. It will do this most effectively when there is symmetry within its Gospel call to worship God as Father.

The Biblical family is the primary image of the spiritual family. Doesn't it stand to reason that the roles of male and female in both spheres would fit a similar pattern? Indeed they do as the Church has maintained for nearly two thousand years. The reason has had everything to do with its very mission to bring the world to worship God as Father through His Son Jesus Christ by the power of the Holy Spirit.

Conclusions

The leadership in ACNA has begun an important conversation. We are not alone. Our conversation will extend into the entire Anglican Communion and particularly to our Archbishops in GAFCON and the Global South. It should be recognized that we are only just now trying to learn how to talk to each other about a very sensitive matter. Much that has not been our own doing has prevented us until now. In some sense we are like a married couple discovering how to disagree while at the same time being able civilly to discuss the disagreement. The difference of course is that some day there will be closure to the discussion. When that day is none of us knows. In the mean time, it is this author's view that it would be critical to comply fully with the Jerusalem Council model, by which disputes are settled. Until then we must live in peace with our two practices as we speak the truth in love to each other. Even after it is decided, one-way or the other it is this author's conviction that we must face the resolution without division. If a moratorium is declared on ordaining women to the presbyterate, those women already ordained should be allowed to serve out their vocations. If it is decided that the two differing ordination practices will continue, we will be challenged with the task of determining a satisfactory way of going forward into the future, unlike what many of us have seen happen elsewhere. Furthermore, there are numerous other, related issues that need continued study, discussion and development (i.e. the overall role of women in ministry, the diaconate and ordination in general).

Finally, the desire of this author is that the present paper would help bring us all to a greater unity. I implore the forgiveness of either of the integrities, as we have called them, if my comments have misrepresented or offended. This was not my intention. Please consider that we are only beginning to attempt a conversation filled with

deep conviction on both sides. My prayer is that the Holy Spirit would bring us to the most Biblically faithful resolution for His greatest Glory in One, Holy, Catholic and Apostolic Church. It may take time but we do have Christ's promise and prayer that we will all indeed be more at one some day. Let us not forget nor lose the oneness we already have, as we seek what we do not yet possess. May the Lord grant us wisdom, patience, gentleness and true godliness as we learn to become what we truly already are: One in Christ with one Lord, One Faith, One Baptism and One God and Father of us all. Amen.