

Restoration of the Image of God: Headship and Submission

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Table of Contents

		Page
Section I	Introduction	3
Section II	Creation Headship in Genesis 1-3	5
A.	Twenty-Six Points of Identification	7
B.	Mystery of Godliness Embraces Headship and Submission	26
Section III	Headship and Submission in 1 Corinthians 11 and 14	28
A.	Headship Principle in 1 Corinthians 11	29
B.	1 Corinthians 14 and the Law	35
C.	Implications of 1 Corinthians 11 and 14	36
Section IV	Headship and Submission in 1 Timothy 2-3	37
A.	Authority and Priority of Creation	37
B.	Context: Culture or Scriptural Evidence	38
C.	Elder Qualifications—a Male Headship	42
D.	The Mystery of Godliness	45
Section V	Authority and Order in the Universe	47
A.	Authority and Submission among Angels	48
B.	Authority and Submission at Creation	49
Section VI	Eternal Headship/Submission in the Trinity	49
A.	God is the Head of Christ—Incarnation	50
B.	God is the Head of Christ—Eternity Past	51
C.	God is the Head of Christ—Eternity Future	56
D.	Eternal Submission of the Holy Spirit	58
Section VII	Restoration of the Image of God	59
Section VIII	Fallacious Objections to the Biblical Principle of Headship/Submission	59
A	Mutual Submission	59
B	Neither Male and Female—Galatians 3:28	62
C	Priesthood of All Believers—1 Peter 2:9, 10	66
D	The Case of Deborah	69
E	The Case of Huldah	71
F	The Case of Miriam and Others	71
G	Phoebe	73
H	Junia(s)	74
I	Priscilla	76
Section IX	Summary	77
Section X	Conclusion	80
Appendix	Functional Differentiation in the Trinity	84

Restoration of the Image of God: Headship and Submission

I. Introduction

1 The impetus for the ordination of women as elders/ministers in the Seventh-day
2 Adventist church has its origin deep within the feminist movement which in America picked up
3 steam with the leadership of Betty Friedan (*The Feminine Mystique*) and Gloria Steinem in the
4 1960s-1970s. The push for women’s ordination entered into Evangelical Christianity with full
5 force in 1973 with the formation of the Evangelical Women's Caucus (EWC). Key books were
6 published. Primary examples include Letha Scanzoni and Nancy Hardesty, *All We're Meant to Be*
7 (1974); Paul Jewitt, *Man as Male and Female* (1975); Virginia R. Mollenkott, *Women, Men, and*
8 *the Bible* (1977); Virginia R. Mollenkott and Letha Scanzoni, *Is the Homosexual My Neighbor?*
9 (1978).

10 Galatians 3:28 became “a canon within a canon” and became a rallying point for
11 evangelical Feminists. In contrast to evangelical feminists, mainstream feminist theologians
12 clearly identified the principle of headship and submission as being built into the Genesis 2
13 record, not Genesis 3.¹ But mainstream feminist theology firmly rejected the high view of
14 Scripture which evangelicals claim to hold. On the other hand, evangelicals are still trying to
15 reconcile feminism with the Bible through the reinterpretation of troublesome texts.

16 Adventist feminists also have adopted a special hermeneutic for troublesome and
17 uncomfortable portions Scripture dealing with women in ministry. They have identified this
18 special hermeneutic as a “principle-based, contextual, linguistic and historical-cultural” reading
19 strategy² which is at the heart of their biblical approach for certain texts.³ Mainstream feminist

¹ Mainstream feminist Rosemary Ruether states “Even in the original, unfallen creation, women would have been subordinate and under the domination of man.” *Sexism and God-Talk: Toward a Feminist Theology*, Beacon Press (1983), 94. See also “. . . [M]ale-female hierarchy was not just a product of sin, it was a part of the natural order created by God” (Ibid., 97).

² Kyoshin Ahn, “NAD Theology of Ordination Study Committee Report” Theology of Ordination Study Committee, January, 2014, 22-31. http://www.adventistchurchconnect.com/site/1/docs/NAD_Ordination_Report_2013.pdf accessed 12-2-2013.

³ Adventist feminists have adopted a flexible hermeneutic called a “principled-based, contextual, linguistic, historical-critical” strategy for certain uncomfortable texts. For Adventist feminist, the text determines which hermeneutic to employ—a plain reading of Scripture or the “principled-based” method. This flexible hermeneutic is a form of literary criticism and variant of a hermeneutic called “deconstruction” fathered by German philosopher, Martin Heidegger, and fully developed by Jacques Derrida in his classic 1967 work, *Of Grammatology*. Deconstruction espouses multiple meanings to a text or passage with no true meaning possible,

1 theologians long ago understood that such reinterpreted approaches would be fruitless.
2 They therefore abandoned the principle of normative authority for all 66 books of Scripture.⁴

3 The present paper employs the historical-grammatical method of interpreting Scripture,
4 which relies on “the plain meaning of Scripture,” accepting the Bible “just as it reads.”⁵ This
5 approach is endorsed by the “Methods of Bible Study” Document (MBSD),⁶ which has been
6 taken as the fundamental exposition of Seventh-day Adventist (SDA) hermeneutical method to
7 be followed in the study of the theology of ordination. The role of the Writings of Ellen G. White
8 in interpreting Scripture has been previously documented.⁷

9 The biblical principle of headship and submission is woven like a golden unifying thread
10 through the pages of Scripture from Genesis to Revelation. This biblical principle is the
11 foundation for male headship in the home and in the church, and is the basis for the
12 appointment (ordination) of men as local elders or the conference-employed elders/ministers⁸
13 with governing and teaching authority in the church. With the exception of the roles of
14 elder/minister and local elder, women may be appointed to other ministry roles in the church.

15 This paper will document the headship/submission principle in Genesis 1-3 with twenty-
16 six points of identification. This will be followed by an examination of the headship/submission

recontextualization of the text, and rejection of all authority and hierarchy. Literary criticism of *Deconstruction* gives the reader the authority over the text. See <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Deconstruction> (11-25-2013), See also http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Martin_Heidegger#Derrida_and_deconstruction (11-25-2013).

⁴ Portions of this brief historical summary are found in Larry Kirkpatrick’s “Foundations of Women’s Ordination Part 6: Evangelical Feminism.” <http://ordinationtruth.com/wp-content/uploads/2013/06/kirl-fwo-pt6.pdf> accessed 12-1-2013.

⁵ Ellen G. White wrote: “Let the Bible explain its own statements. Accept it **just as it reads**, without twisting the words to suit human ideas.” *Loma Linda Messages*, 55. “All who exalt their own opinions above divine revelation, all who would change **the plain meaning of Scripture** to suit their own convenience, or for the sake of conforming to the world, are taking upon themselves a fearful responsibility.” GC 268. “When those who profess to believe present truth come to their senses, when they accept the Word of the living God **just as it reads** and do not try to wrest the Scriptures, then they will build their house upon the eternal Rock, even Christ Jesus.” 21 MR 346.

⁶ “Methods of Bible Study” Document [MBSD], a statement voted by the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists Executive Committee at the Annual Council in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, 12 October 1986, available from <http://www.adventist.org/fileadmin/adventist.org/files/articles/official-statements/Statements-2010-english.pdf> pages 241ff, accessed 12-1-2013. The preamble to the MBSD makes very clear that the use of the historical-critical method of Bible study, which “de-emphasizes the divine element in the Bible as an inspired book (including its resultant unity)” and “minimizes the need for faith in God and obedience to His commandments,” is to be rejected.

⁷ P. Gerard Damsteegt, “Ellen G. White on Biblical Hermeneutics,” Theology of Ordination Study Committee, January 2013.

⁸ Elder/minister are synonymous and interchangeable terms for the conference employed leadership role in the local church, district, or conference entities.

1 principle in 1 Corinthians 11 and 14 and 1 Timothy 2-3, in which the apostle Paul uses the
2 priority of Adam’s creation as a rationale for the principle. We will then examine the concept of
3 authority and order in creation followed by a documentation of the principle of headship and
4 submission within the Trinity. We will conclude with a summary of popular objections to the
5 principle of headship and submission.

II. Creation Headship in Genesis 1-3

6 The fundamental assumption of those advocating the ordination of women in the role
7 of elder/minister is that the principle of headship and submission was not divinely ordained at
8 creation and was non-existent until after the Fall. The chapter entitled, “Headship, Submission,
9 Equality in Scripture” in *Women in Ministry*⁹ clearly states the premise. “Before the Fall there
10 was full equality with no headship-submission in the relationship between Adam and Eve (Gen
11 2:24). But after the Fall, according to Genesis 3:16, the husband was given a servant-headship
12 role to preserve the harmony of the home, while at the same time the model of equal
13 partnership was still set forth as the ideal. This post-Fall prescription of husband headship and
14 wife submission was limited to the husband-wife relationship . . . [and was] *never* broadened to
15 the covenant community in such a way as to prohibit women from taking positions of
16 leadership, including headship positions over men.”¹⁰

17 In other words, before the Fall—so the theory goes—there were no functional role
18 distinctions between the man and the woman except perhaps for the obvious functional role of
19 childbearing. After quoting Genesis 1:27 the author states that “[T]his basic passage gives no
20 hint of a divine creation order. Here man and woman are fully equal, with no subordination of
21 one to another.”¹¹ Irrespective of these assertions, the “hint” of male headship is, in fact,
22 found in Genesis 1:26-27. This “hint” will be amplified as we examine the principle of male
23 headship in Genesis 1-3 in parallel with an exposition of the same principle found in 1
24 Corinthians 11, and also within the entire context of 1 Timothy 2-3. It also will be seen that
25 Genesis 3 is, in fact, a commentary on the reversal of the divine creation order of Genesis 2.

⁹ Richard M. Davidson, “Headship, Submission, and Equality in Scripture,” *Women in Ministry*, ed. Nancy Vyhmeister (Berrien Springs, MI, 1998), 259.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, 284, italics original.

¹¹ Richard Davidson, “The Bible Supports the Ordination/Commissioning of Women as Pastors and Local Church Elders” (*Spectrum*, 10 Apr 2010).

1 A point by point critique of the thesis on headship and submission in *Women in Ministry*
2 has been previously documented.¹² The same article in *Women in Ministry* contends that “no
3 inspired writer—not Moses, Jesus, Paul, or Ellen White—teaches the creation headship of man
4 over woman.” We will enumerate twenty-six identifying points of creation headship that can be
5 found in Genesis 1-3. But first, does Ellen White endorse and harmonize with the principle of
6 creation headship? The answer: Adam was to stand at the **head** of the earthly family;¹³ Adam
7 [was] the **monarch** of the world;¹⁴ Adam was the **vicegerent** of the Creator;¹⁵ The Sabbath was
8 committed to Adam, the **father and representative** of the whole human family;¹⁶ Adam was
9 **crowned king** in Eden; He made Adam the **rightful sovereign** over all the works of His hands;¹⁷
10 He made him **ruler** over the earth;¹⁸ Adam was **lord** in his beautiful domain.¹⁹ A co-monarchy is
11 not specified. Co-equal leadership roles and titles for Adam and Eve are completely missing
12 from the inspired writings. Adam and Eve are not identified as co-sovereigns, co-equal
13 vicegerents, co-rulers, or king and queen with equal roles, nor was Eve identified as the

¹² Samuele Bacchiocchi, “Headship, Submission, and Equality in Scripture,” *Prove All Things*, ed. Mercedes H. Dyer (Berrien Springs, MI, 2000), 65.

¹³ “The relationship existing in the pure family of God in heaven was to exist in the family of God on earth. Under God, Adam was to stand at the head of the earthly family, to maintain the principles of the heavenly family. This would have brought peace and happiness.” RH, January 16, 1913 par. 4; 6T 236.1

¹⁴ “Having conquered Adam, the monarch of the world, he had gained the race as his subjects, and he should now possess Eden, and make that his head-quarters. And he would there establish his throne, and be monarch of the world.” RH, February 24, 1874 par. 19. Adam was appointed by God to be monarch of the world, under the supervision of the Creator. *BEcho* Aug. 28, 1899 (cf. ST Apr. 29, 1875).

¹⁵ “Satan's dominion was that wrested from Adam, but Adam was the vicegerent of the Creator. His was not an independent rule. The earth is God's, and He has committed all things to His Son. Adam was to reign subject to Christ. When Adam betrayed his sovereignty into Satan's hands, Christ still remained the rightful King.” DA 129.

¹⁶ “In Eden, God set up the memorial of His work of creation, in placing His blessing upon the seventh day. The Sabbath was committed to Adam, the father and representative of the whole human family.” PP 48.

¹⁷ “Adam was crowned king in Eden. To him was given dominion over every living thing that God had created. The Lord blessed Adam and Eve with intelligence such as He had not given to any other creature. He made Adam the rightful sovereign over all the works of His hands. Man, made in the divine image, could contemplate and appreciate the glorious works of God in nature.” (*Redemption; or the Temptation of Christ*, p. 7), 1BC 1082.2.

¹⁸ “When God made man He made him ruler over the earth and all living creatures.” PP 59.

¹⁹ “Adam and Eve were rich indeed. They possessed Eden. Adam was lord in his beautiful domain.” FE 38.

1 representative of the whole human family. It is true that Eve was ontologically²⁰ equal (equality
2 of being or nature) with Adam; she was “to stand by his side as an equal, to be loved and
3 protected by him.”²¹ However, Adam’s role of protector further substantiates the principle of
4 creation headship. Thus, the principle of male leadership in the Adamic family of God is
5 unmistakably clear from Ellen G. White’s writings.

6 **A. Twenty-six Points of Identification**

7 Male and female role differentiation is both obvious and implied in Genesis 1-3 in
8 several ways: by their differentiation in terms of gender, by the order and mode of their
9 creation, and by describing the primacy of man’s responsibility.²² Not only is there a “hint” of a
10 creation order given in Genesis 1:27 which will be established in the conclusion of Section II on
11 Genesis, but there is also a repeated amplification of the principle of creation headship in
12 Genesis 1-3 in terms of the man’s responsibility and accountability. The twenty-six identifying
13 points of creation headship in Genesis 2-3 are summarized below.

14 **Point 1: Adam was created first.** “God formed (*plassō*, LXX²³) man of dust of the
15 ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living being” (Gen
16 2:7). If the priority of the creation of Adam was not important in the creation of male and
17 female, why were they not created simultaneously from the dust of the ground to prevent any
18 possible suggestion of role differences?²⁴ The prior creation of the man helps define the
19 relationship between Adam and the woman. The historical account in Genesis 2 is a sustained
20 interaction between God and Adam, prior to the creation of Eve, where God gives Adam
21 guidance and instruction concerning life in the Garden of Eden. The apostle Paul uses the
22 priority of creation, that “Adam was formed (*plassō*)²⁵ first, then Eve” (1 Tim 2:13) as one of the
23 principal justifications for the headship of man in the church and that a woman was not to
24 teach or have authority over a man. Evangelical feminists claim that Paul was refuting radical

²⁰ Ontology/ontological refers to the nature of being. All future references to “ontological” will be designated by “being” (that is, ontological equality will be designated equality of being).

²¹ Ellen G. White, *Patriarchs and Prophets*, 46.

²² Paul S. Ratsara & Daniel K. Bediako, “Man and Woman in Genesis 1-3: Ontological Equality and Role Differentiation,” *Theology of Ordination Study Committee*, July, 2013, 13

²³ LXX, The Septuagint is the Greek translation of the Hebrew Old Testament.

²⁴ Ratsara & Bediako, 17.

²⁵ Paul is careful to use the identical Greek equivalent from the Septuagint for the Hebrew in Genesis 2:7.

1 feminists in first-century Ephesus who were presumably advocating priority of the creation of
2 Eve over Adam.²⁶ In fact there is no historical evidence that a feminist culture existed in first-
3 century Ephesus,²⁷ and this proposition, derived from methodology associated with literary
4 criticism and limited biblical authority, has been rejected by scholars embracing plenary
5 inspiration and the historical-grammatical hermeneutic of Scripture which allows the Bible to
6 interpret itself.²⁸

7 The importance of the priority of creation and role differentiation has been resisted by
8 suggesting that Genesis 2 incorporates a literary device, an *inclusio* derived from rhetorical
9 criticism, in which the creation of man at the beginning and the creation of woman at the end
10 of the historical account correspond to each other in importance.²⁹ The *inclusio* device may well
11 convey the idea of equal value of the man and the woman, but it does not eliminate the
12 element of functional differentiation.³⁰ If equality without role differentiation between man
13 and woman were of paramount importance, God could have created both man and woman
14 simultaneously from the dust of the earth and avoided the need of a subtle literary device to
15 demonstrate equality.

16 It has been argued that although Adam was the “head of the human family” (6T 236)
17 and “the father and representative of the whole human family” (PP 48), this headship was
18 based not on the priority of creation but on the principle of corporate solidarity. It is thus
19 claimed that Eve should be considered an equal partner with Adam where they both are
20 representative heads of the entire human race —Father (and Mother) of the human race.³¹ But

²⁶ Davidson, quoted in *Spectrum*, 10 Apr 2010; see: <http://spectrummagazine.org/node/2305> .

²⁷ See “Three Reviews of *I Suffer Not a Woman* by Richard and Catherine Kroeger,” in Wayne Grudem, *Evangelical Feminism and Biblical Truth*, Appendix 6 (Wheaton, IL, 2012), 646-674 (specifically p. 654).

²⁸ William D. Mounce, *Pastoral Epistles* (Word Biblical Commentary, vol. 46; Nashville: Nelson, 2000), see pp. lxxx-lxxxii; 130-143; 232-243 and citations therein.

²⁹ Davidson, *Women in Ministry*, 261.

³⁰ Ratsara & Bediako, 16-17. Ratsara and Bediako have demonstrated the shortcomings and shallowness of the *inclusio* argument and conclude their analysis with the following summary. “The interval between the creation of man and the creation of woman in Gen 2 is filled with chronologically meaningful events that need not be attributed merely to the inspired author’s interest in arranging a literary *inclusio*. We may as well question the historicity of the narrative if the arrangement of the text is attributed simply to the author’s interest in creating a literary *inclusio*” (cited in note 72).

³¹ Richard M. Davidson, “Should Women Be Ordained as Pastors? Old Testament Considerations,” Paper for the Theology of Ordination Study Committee, Baltimore, MD, July 22-24, 2013, 7. Davidson asserts the possibility

1 the Bible explicitly teaches that Adam is the representative of the human race. Adam's actions
2 (not the actions of Adam and Eve) affected the whole human race. "As in Adam [not in Eve] all
3 die, even so in Christ all shall be made alive" (1 Cor 15:22).³² Sin and death entered the world
4 through one person, not two (Rom 5:12). The fallen race is not redeemed by the last Adam and
5 Eve or the Second Adam and Second Eve; it is redeemed by the Last Adam (the Second Adam).
6 "The first man Adam became a living being'; the last Adam became a life-giving spirit. . . . The
7 first man was from the earth, a man of dust; the second man is from heaven. . . . Just as we
8 have borne the image of the man of dust, we shall also bear the image of the man of heaven" (1
9 Cor 15:45-49). The human race was derived from the representative man, Adam.

10 The idea that Adam and Eve functioned as co-equal heads of the human race is also
11 contradicted by the fact that "Adam was the **monarch** of the world"³³ and God "made Adam
12 the **rightful sovereign** over all the works of His hands."³⁴ The terms, *sovereign* and *monarch*, in
13 this context exclude Eve and demand absolute singularity—Adam was the sole and singular
14 monarch and sovereign of the world under God. Prior to the Fall, the human family consisted
15 of Adam and Eve alone. Thus, Adam's functioning as "monarch of the world" and "head of the
16 human family," in point of fact, makes him head of the woman.

17 Furthermore, "The home of our first parents was to be a pattern for other homes as
18 their children should go forth to occupy the earth" (PP 49). This means that even before the
19 Fall, Adam's headship in his relationship with Eve would serve as model of male headship in
20 subsequent families.³⁵ Finally, when the redeemed are welcomed to the City of God, Christ
21 does not greet Adam and Eve as Father and Mother of the race; He greets Adam as the father
22 of the race. "As the ransomed ones are welcomed to the City of God, there rings out upon the
23 air an exultant cry of adoration. The two Adams are about to meet. The Son of God is standing
24 with outstretched arms to receive the father of our race."³⁶

based on solidarity that "Eve also was given a representative role in solidarity with the entire human race, as the 'Mother of all living.'"

³² All Scripture references are taken from the NKJV version of the Bible unless otherwise noted.

³³ White, *Confrontation*, 16.

³⁴ *Ibid.*, 11.

³⁵ Ratsara & Bediako, 26 (cited in note 96).

³⁶ White, *The Great Controversy*, 647.

1 **Point 2: Adam given authority and responsibility.** “Then the LORD God took the man
2 and put him in the Garden of Eden to tend and keep it” (Gen 2:15). Prior to the creation of the
3 woman, God provided a garden home for Adam; He placed Adam in his garden home; God
4 provided a source of food for Adam (Gen 2:8-9). God then assigned Adam with primary
5 responsibility and leadership to manage and care for (“tend and keep”) the Garden. Adam is in
6 charge of the Garden. With the later creation of Eve, Adam was given a helper with whom to
7 share the responsibility to tend and keep the Garden. But all major scriptural directives
8 concerning care of the Garden and its prohibitions were communicated to Adam directly by
9 God prior to the creation of Eve, thereby conveying creation headship responsibility to Adam.

10 **Point 3: God speaks to Adam first and gives him leadership accountability.** “And the
11 LORD God commanded the man, saying, ‘Of every tree in the Garden you may freely eat; but of
12 the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat of it you
13 shall surely die’” (Gen 2:16-17). Prior to the creation of the woman, God instructs Adam what
14 to eat.³⁷ Then God commands Adam, prior to the creation of Eve, with the warning not to eat of
15 the forbidden tree. Adam was given leadership responsibility to transmit this warning as it
16 became necessary. Eve received this same warning indirectly from God through Adam and
17 angels.³⁸ With cunning intentions, the serpent spoke to Eve first (Gen 3:1), enticing her to take
18 responsibility for leading the family into sin, and inverting the order that was established at
19 creation. Because Adam listened to the voice of his wife rather than the face-to-face
20 communication from God, Adam was held accountable and responsible for the Fall of the
21 human race (Gen 3:17; Rom 5:12).

22 Upon the creation of Adam, God could have immediately created the woman from
23 Adam’s rib, if He had *not* intended to instill within Adam a sense of servant-leadership
24 (headship) prior to her appearance. This appears to be a contributing reason for man’s priority
25 of address, thereby conveying authority and responsibility to Adam. With no supporting
26 evidence, other than *inclusio* arguments, evangelical feminists claim that first-hand instruction

³⁷ Ratsara & Bediako, 15-16.

³⁸ White, *Patriarchs and Prophets*, 53.

1 from God regarding the forbidden tree conveyed no headship status to Adam.³⁹ But denying
2 the scriptural evidence for creation headship, supported by God’s direct command to Adam
3 regarding the forbidden tree, does nothing to support the functional role of equality of men
4 and women in the home and the church, and illustrates the weakness of the evangelical
5 feminist position.

6 **Point 4: Adam is given a helper.** And God said, “It is not good that man should be
7 alone; I will make (lit. “for”) him a helper comparable to him” (Gen 2:18). Since no animal was
8 suitable as Adam’s companion, Eve was created to be man’s *ʕēzer kʕneʕdô* (“helper like
9 opposite him”). Specifically, she was to be his equal (*kʕneʕdô*) with the same human nature of
10 the opposite gender. She was also to be his helper (*ʕēzer*) implying male headship. Thus, *ʕēzer*
11 *kʕneʕdô* itself spells equality and functional differentiation.⁴⁰ It should be noted that man is
12 never said to be an *ʕēzer* of his wife. By defining the woman as *ʕēzer kʕneʕdô* the idea is
13 conveyed that she will play a role within the overall responsibility given to the man.⁴¹ A
14 “helper” is one who assists the person having primary responsibility for the task at hand. The
15 suggestion that “never does the word refer to a subordinate helper”⁴² is refuted by the
16 example where God would scatter all the troops, Zedekiah’s help (*ʕēzer*), from him (Eze 12:14),
17 if he tried escape from the siege of the invading Babylonian forces. As evangelical and Adventist
18 feminists have pointed out, “Elsewhere in Scripture, it is most often God Himself who is called
19 *ʕēzer* (“helper”) (Exod 18:4; Deut 33:7, 26; Ps 33:20; 70:5; 115:9, 10, 11).”⁴³ But the role of
20 helper can be carried out by someone in greater authority—for example, a father helping his
21 son with homework. Although the father takes on a subordinate role, the son still has the
22 primary responsibility for the task. Such was the case when God helped Moses, David, and
23 Jehoshaphat in conquering their enemies.

³⁹ Davidson, *Women in Ministry*, p. 261. Davidson sweeps this evidence aside with no supporting evidence, other than the unconvincing *inclusio* argument, by simply claiming that “the divine impartation of such knowledge to Adam before Eve was created does not thereby reveal the headship of Adam over his partner.” For the “*inclusio*” argument, see Davidson, “Should Women Be Ordained as Pastors? Old Testament Considerations,” 8.

⁴⁰ Ratsara & Bediako, 18.

⁴¹ *Ibid.*, 20.

⁴² Davidson, “Should Women Be Ordained as Pastors? Old Testament Considerations,” 8.

⁴³ Davidson, *Spectrum*, 10 Apr 2010.

1 Likewise, such is the case when God helps needy redeemed sinners. God assumes a
2 subordinate role, but the sinner is held responsible for responding to God’s grace. In the
3 Garden Adam was given a helper equal to and comparable and opposite to himself. The
4 Hebrew text can be translated literally as, “I will make *for him* [Hebrew, *lô*] a helper
5 corresponding to him.” Thus the apostle Paul correctly conveys the “helper” role of Eve in 1
6 Corinthians 11 when he justifies the headship of Adam with the rationale, “nor was man
7 created for the woman, but the woman *for the man*” (v. 9).

8 **Point 5: Adam names the animals.** “Out of the ground the LORD God formed every
9 beast of the field and every bird of the air, and brought them to Adam to see what he would
10 call them. And whatever Adam called each living creature, that was its name” (Gen 2:19). The
11 animals are “brought” to the one in authority. Only the man is given the responsibility to name
12 the animals (vv. 18-20), thereby echoing his role to have dominion over the world and to be
13 prime ruler over the animal creation (1:28).⁴⁴ It is universally recognized that the person doing
14 the “naming” of created things is always the person who has authority over those things. Adam
15 had sole and authoritative responsibility for naming the animals prior to the creation of Eve.
16 The woman, having no participation in the naming process, simply accepted the names
17 authorized by Adam, giving further evidence of his creation headship.

18 **Point 6: The woman is derived from man.** “Then the rib which the LORD God had taken
19 *from man* He made into a woman, and He brought her to the man” (Gen 2:22). The apostle
20 Paul refers to Genesis 2:22 in 1 Corinthians 11:3-16 where he presents justification for the
21 headship of man in the home and the church. He first asserts the headship of man in
22 1 Corinthians 11:3—“The head of every man is Christ, the head of the woman [wife] is man
23 [husband], and the head of Christ is God.” He then establishes its rationale in 1 Corinthians
24 11:8—“For man is not from the woman, but the woman *from man*.” Paul substantiates the
25 headship/submission principle by referring to the historical and biblical evidence that the
26 woman derived her existence from the man. The priority of the creation of Adam from whom
27 Eve derived her existence supports the creation headship of Adam.

⁴⁴ Ratsara & Bediako, 25-26.

1 It seems clear that “God wanted to convey *two theological truths* (not just one) in the
2 formation of the woman from the rib of Adam: Since the woman was taken out of the man, 1)
3 she is *fully and equally human* since she has come from his bones and his flesh, and 2) her very
4 human nature is constituted, not in parallel fashion to his where both would have been formed
5 from the same earth, but as *derived from his own nature*, so showing a God-chosen
6 dependence upon him for her origination.”⁴⁵

7 Adam’s protective role as head of the woman in relation to her origin (*from man*) is
8 conveyed in the following statement. “Eve was created from a rib taken from the side of Adam,
9 signifying that she was not to control him as the head, nor to be trampled under his feet as an
10 inferior, but to stand by his side as an equal, to be loved and protected by him.”⁴⁶ Adventist
11 feminists assert that the Ellen White’s reference to *protection* has no connection with headship
12 responsibility, only physical strength.⁴⁷ It must be noted, however, that in the perfect
13 environment of the Garden the physical strength of Adam was not required to protect Eve;
14 Adam was to be her “protector” from the deception of the fallen angel. Only after the Fall did
15 physical strength and protection become a necessity. Just as the stronger of two allies protects
16 the weaker, or a father the child, the husband is to protect the wife. In a post-Fall setting,
17 White states that “The Lord has constituted the husband as head of the wife to be her
18 protector.”⁴⁸ According to White, the man’s function as head and protector of the wife applies
19 to both the pre-Fall and post-Fall condition. Adam was responsible for the protection and
20 welfare of the woman, who was derived from the man, signifying the servant-leadership
21 (headship) of the man.

22 **Point 7: God presents the woman to Adam.** “[A]nd He [God] brought her to the man”
23 (Gen 2:23). This apparently unremarkable statement is embedded with deep significance. The
24 woman is “brought” to one in authority. God does not present the man to the woman; He
25 presents the woman, as a gift, to the man in his previously established role as monarch of the
26 world. Of all the gifts given to Adam by God, Eve was “that one gift which in his eyes outvalued

⁴⁵ Bruce Ware, “Male and Female Complementarity and the Image of God,” in Wayne Grudem, ed., *Biblical Foundations for Manhood and Womanhood* (Wheaton, IL, 2002), 83.

⁴⁶ White, *Patriarchs and Prophets*, 46.

⁴⁷ Davidson, “Should Women Be Ordained as Pastors? Old Testament Considerations,” 10.

⁴⁸ White, *The Adventist Home*, 215.

1 every other.”⁴⁹ One who receives a gift has responsibility to cherish and protect it. So now
2 Adam has responsibility to care for the woman, and to protect and cherish her. The whole
3 scene is infused with Adamic headship as the woman recognizes the priority of Adam’s creation
4 and she listens to Adam explain her origin.

5 **Point 8: Adam speaks first upon creation of the woman.** “And Adam said: ‘This is now
6 bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh; she shall be called Woman, because she was taken out
7 of Man’” (Gen 2:23). These words imply the equality and close affection of love that was to
8 exist in the union of the man and the woman. But these words also convey a unique message.
9 The woman begins to gain an understanding of herself. Assuming his headship responsibility,
10 Adam initiates communication with the newly created Eve and informs her of her origin,
11 explaining the source (from him: “taken out of Man”) of her existence. These words spoken by
12 Adam communicate his leadership responsibility to Eve. The apostle Paul alludes to this text as
13 well as 2:22 (Point 6) in confirming the headship principle as found in 1 Corinthians 11:8 (“the
14 woman [is] from man”).

15 **Point 9: Adam names the woman.** “She shall be called [*qārā*] Woman, because she was
16 taken out of Man” (Gen 2:23). God brings the woman to Adam, and the first words she hears
17 from Adam conclude with: “she shall be called Woman because she was taken out of man.” The
18 assertion that the foregoing quotation contains a pair of divine passives is unpersuasive.⁵⁰
19 Adam informs her that she is part of him (“she is bone of my bone”) and was derived from him
20 (“she was taken out of man”). These first words the woman hears from Adam, including naming
21 her, instills within her the unmistakable sense of Adam’s leadership responsibility, and she finds
22 her own identity in relation to the man as his equal and helper by man’s definition.⁵¹ Adam
23 names his partner in order to distinguish the gender difference between himself (man: *’ish*) and

⁴⁹ White, *Patriarchs and Prophets*, 56.

⁵⁰ It has been asserted that Gen 2:23 contains a pair of “divine passives” indicating the designation of “woman” comes *from God*, not man (see Davidson, “Should Women Be Ordained as Pastors? Old Testament Considerations,” 11). But this creative proposition to deconstruct the text is tainted with eisegesis. More correctly stated, Gen 2:23 contains a pair of “Adamic passives.” It simply ignores the plain reading of Scripture: “Adam said . . . ‘She shall be called Woman.’” The responsibility given to Adam in naming indicates the leadership function and authority God gave to him, which Eve did not have over her husband.

⁵¹ Edwin Reynolds and Clinton Wahlen, “NAD Theology of Ordination Study Committee Report” Theology of Ordination Study Committee, January, 2014, 199.

1 his partner (woman: *'ishshah*). As with Adam's naming of the animals, the person doing the
2 "naming" of created things is always the person who has authority over those things.

3 To claim that the assigning of the name "woman" in 2:23 is only a generic
4 identification,⁵² contradicts the pattern of naming activities found throughout the first two
5 chapters of Genesis where same verb (*qārā'*, "to call") is used in contexts of naming. For
6 example, God calls (*qārā'*) the light Day; calls (*qārā'*) the expanse Heaven; calls (*qārā'*) the dry
7 land Earth. Thus when Adam says, "She shall be called woman," the term *Woman* is surely
8 taken as a name in 2:23, which coincides with the naming of mankind (Adam) in Genesis 5.⁵³
9 "He created them male and female and [God] blessed them and called (*qārā'*) their name Adam
10 (*'adam*; mankind) (v.2)." When God names male and female, "man" ("Adam"), in Genesis 5, a
11 male priority is indicated along with full male-female equality. The responsibility given to Adam
12 in naming indicates the leadership function and authority God gave to him, which Eve did not
13 have over her husband.⁵⁴

14 **Point 10: Man to take the initiative in marriage.** "Therefore a man shall leave his father
15 and mother and be joined to his wife, and they shall become one flesh" (Gen 2:24). The man,
16 not the woman, exercises a leadership role and initiates the marital relationship, thereby
17 assuming responsibility for the welfare of his spouse. This command of Scripture for the man to
18 initiate marriage reaffirms the creation headship of the man in the home and in the church, for
19 the Garden of Eden constituted both the home and church for Adam and Eve.

20 Irrefutable confirmation of pre-Fall male headship is derived from the ideal pre-Fall
21 marriage: ". . . the two shall become one flesh." The apostle Paul asserts that this mystery
22 ("two shall be one flesh") "concerns Christ and His church" (Eph 5:32). But he has already
23 affirmed that "the husband is the head of the wife, as also Christ is head of the church. . . [and]
24 just as the church is subject to Christ, so let the wives be subject to their own husbands in

⁵² Davidson, *Women in Ministry*, 263.

⁵³ Wayne Grudem, *Evangelical Feminism and Biblical Truth* (Wheaton, IL, 2012), 31 (note 14).

⁵⁴ It is noted here that Adam does not give the personal name "Eve" to his wife until Genesis 3:20 ("the man *called* [Hebrew *qārā'*] his wife's name Eve, because she was the mother of all living"). This is because in the creation story in Genesis 2 Adam is giving a broad category name to his wife, indicating the name that would be given to womanhood generally, and he is not giving specific personal names designating the character of the individual person. This is analogous to Adam naming the animals with broad category names rather than personal names. (See Grudem, *Biblical Foundations of Manhood and Womanhood*, 28.)

1 everything” (vv. 23-24). The ideal marriage in Eden, where the man and the woman were one
2 flesh, was to be based upon the mystery of “oneness” between Christ and His church (the two
3 are to be one flesh). Since Christ is head of the church, as the husband is head of the wife, it is
4 apparent that Adam, in Eden, was ordained by God to be head of the woman/wife. Paul uses
5 Genesis 2 to ground and establish his teaching on headship both in the home (Eph 5) and in the
6 church (1 Cor 11 and 1 Tim 2-3).

7 The record of creation in Genesis 2 delineates at least ten definitive actions on the part
8 of God or Adam, all of which illustrate the *non-hierarchical* servant-leadership responsibility
9 that God intended for Adam with respect to his wife.

10 In Genesis 3, the servant-leadership of man in the Garden home was now divinely
11 mandated for our parents in their post-Fall condition. Just as the Garden home was to be a little
12 church, now the Christian home in a post-Fall world was to be a little church where a man was
13 appointed leadership responsibility. The church was to be an extension of the home. “The
14 home of every Christian should be a little church, a representation of the heavenly home, from
15 which others may learn what a family can become in this world through obedience to God's
16 word.”⁵⁵ Genesis 3 continues as a commentary on the reversal of the divine creation order of
17 Genesis 2.

18 **Point 11: The woman leaves Adam’s protective sphere, initiating role reversal.** The
19 serpent said to the woman, “Has God said, ‘You shall not eat of every tree of the Garden?’”
20 (Gen 3:1). Eve wanders from her husband’s protective care and becomes deceived by the
21 serpent. Eve asserts independence from her husband and begins to assume a leadership-
22 headship role. “[S]he had fallen into temptation by *separating from her companion, contrary to*
23 *the divine direction*. . . . Eve had been perfectly happy by her husband's side in her Eden home;
24 but, like restless modern Eves, she was flattered with the hope of entering a higher sphere than
25 that which *God had assigned her*. In attempting to *rise above her original position*, she fell far
26 below it. A similar result will be reached by all who are unwilling to take up cheerfully their life
27 duties in accordance with God's plan.”⁵⁶ The immediate context of this statement indicates
28 that the “higher sphere” which Eve hoped to enter was “to rise above her original position” “by

⁵⁵ White, *Bible Echo*, February 16, 1903, par. 1.

⁵⁶ White, *Patriarchs and Prophets*, 58-59, emphasis added.

1 her husband's side." The passage concludes with the warning that today the same process is
2 being repeated by modern Eves. Eve's hope to be like God was *not* the "higher sphere" which
3 she sought to enter, nor is that the higher sphere that modern Eves hope to enter.⁵⁷ The
4 context suggests that modern Eves hope to enter a higher sphere by attempting to rise above
5 their original positions, by their husband's side, in a manner congruent with the actions of the
6 first Eve. In addition to the evidence of Eve's seeking a "higher sphere" instead of remaining in
7 "her original position" "by her husband's side," the text of Genesis 3 reveals at least fourteen
8 other indications of Adam's leadership role.⁵⁸

9 **Point 12: Serpent and woman initiate dialogue, continuing role reversal.** "Has God
10 indeed said, 'You shall not eat of every tree . . .?' And the woman said to the serpent, 'We may
11 eat the fruit of the trees of the Garden'" (Gen 3:1-2). The serpent speaks to the woman as if
12 she were the head, reversing the headship principle.⁵⁹ Rather than first seeking her husband's
13 counsel upon encountering this mysterious phenomenon, Eve asserts her independence, and in
14 contradiction to the warning concerning the forbidden tree responds to the serpent's question.
15 Further advancing her leadership aspirations, and seeking a higher sphere, Eve initiates
16 communication and responds to the serpent's temptation.

17 **Point 13: The woman initiates transgression, continuing role reversal.** "And when the
18 woman saw that the tree was good for food, that it was pleasant to the eyes, and a tree
19 desirable to make one wise, she took of its fruit and ate" (Gen 3:6a). Embracing her perceived
20 leadership potential and disregarding the warning of angels⁶⁰ regarding the forbidden tree, and
21 seeking to enter a higher sphere, Eve was deceived and fell into transgression. The apostle Paul
22 alludes to Eve's attempted role reversal and seeking of a higher sphere in 1 Timothy 2:14,
23 where he justifies the headship of man in the home and in the church by stating that "Adam
24 was not deceived, but the woman being deceived fell into transgression" (v. 14). "As the first
25 reason for male headship, Paul pointed to the creation order in which God created human

⁵⁷ Davidson contends that the higher sphere to which Eve hoped to enter was to be like God. This assertion violates the context of the passage. See Davidson, "Should Women Be Ordained as Pastors? Old Testament Considerations," 24.

⁵⁸ Contra Davidson who contends that there is no "indication of male leadership over the woman, and female submission to the man in the account of the Temptation and Fall" in Genesis 3:1-7. Ibid. p.23.

⁵⁹ Wahlen and Reynolds, "NAD Theology of Ordination Study Committee Report (Minority Report)," 204.

⁶⁰ White, *Patriarchs and Prophets*, 53.

1 beings: 'For Adam was formed first, then Eve' (1 Tim 2:12). The second argument points to the
2 order of transgression: 'Adam was not deceived, but the woman being deceived, fell into
3 transgression' (1 Tim 2:14)."⁶¹ The reason for male headship: Adam was created first, and Eve
4 sinned first. Ingo Sorke, perceptively identifying the reversal of roles, states that "by conceding
5 to Satan, Eve substituted Adam's authority [headship] with Satan's, introducing sin and death
6 to the world (an 'unutterable woe')."⁶² She began to assume headship over Adam and made
7 Satan her head. The serpent misled Eve, and she now proceeds to usurp Adam's headship
8 authority.⁶³

9 Since Eve sinned first, we might expect that the New Testament would tell us that we
10 inherit a sinful nature and die because of Eve's sin, or that we are counted guilty because of
11 Eve's sin. But this is not the case. In fact, it is just the opposite. We read in the New Testament,
12 "For as *in Adam* all die, so also *in Christ* shall all be made alive" (1 Cor 15:22). The New
13 Testament does not say, "As *in Eve* all die, so also in Christ shall all be made alive." It is
14 unmistakable, then, that Adam had a leadership role in representing the entire human race, a
15 leadership role that Eve did not have.⁶⁴

16 **Point 14: The woman initiates usurpation of Adam's headship role.** "She also gave to
17 her husband with her" (Gen 3:6b). When she conveys the fruit to Adam, he—in distress and
18 astonishment—realizes the tragedy unfolding as Eve explains her experience at the forbidden
19 tree. He declares to his wife that "by the divine sentence she must die. In answer **she urged**
20 **him to eat**, repeating the words of the serpent that they should not surely die."⁶⁵ Adam was
21 not deceived (1 Tim 2:14)—he sees that his headship has been reversed, and realizes his
22 headship hangs in the balance. "There was a terrible struggle in his mind. **He mourned** that he
23 had **permitted Eve** to wander from his side."⁶⁶ "Adam reproached his companion for *her folly*

⁶¹ P. Gerard Damsteegt, "Headship, Gender, and Ordination in the Writings of Ellen G. White," Theology of Ordination Study Committee, July, 2013, 29.

⁶² Ingo Sorke, "Adam, Where Are You?" Theology of Ordination Study Committee, July, 2013, 24.

⁶³ *Ibid.*, p. 26. Wherein Sorke (note 98) also cites Thomas Schreiner who concludes that Eve's transgression "is indicative of what happens when male leadership is abrogated."

⁶⁴ Wayne Grudem, *Biblical Foundations for Manhood and Womanhood* (Wheaton, IL, 2002), 25-26.

⁶⁵ *Patriarchs and Prophets*, 56, emphasis added.

⁶⁶ *Ibid.*, emphasis added.

1 *in leaving his side* and permitting herself to be deceived by the serpent.”⁶⁷ Usurpation of
2 Adam’s headship role is nearly consummated.

3 Adam did not initiate taking the fruit from Eve. She preemptively *urges* Adam to
4 relinquish his headship responsibility and simultaneously to disobey God by offering him the
5 exhilarating experience of eating the fruit. The headship of Adam is illustrated in two ways in
6 this scene: 1) Eve attempts to usurp his headship by taking the initiative and urging Adam to
7 disobey; 2) Adam realizes his failure in exercising headship responsibility by permitting Eve to
8 wander from his side. He then contemplates the consequences. The headship of Adam remains
9 in the balance, awaiting his decision.

10 **Point 15: The usurpation of Adam’s headship and role reversal is consummated.**

11 “[A]nd he ate” (Gen 3:6c). By choosing to take the fruit from Eve and eating the fruit, Adam
12 relinquished his headship role. In effect Adam transferred his headship role to his wife, and the
13 role reversal between Adam and Eve was consummated. Through the woman Satan succeeded
14 in his purpose to overthrow the man, the monarch of the world. Through Adam, Satan
15 conquered the human race. “Having conquered Adam, the monarch of the world, he [Satan]
16 had gained the race as his subjects.”⁶⁸ “By one man sin entered the world . . .” (Rom 5:12).
17 What was it that led to the entrance of sin into the world? Ellen White’s writings indicate that it
18 was the reversal of the God-appointed roles for the couple.⁶⁹

19 **Point 16: The unequivocal evidence of role-reversal—nakedness.** “Then the eyes of

20 both of them were opened, and they knew that they were naked; and they sewed fig leaves
21 together and made themselves coverings” (Gen 3:7). This defining moment, Adam’s
22 transgression and resulting nakedness, marks the official Fall of the human race. It is
23 noteworthy that the woman did not become naked upon eating the fruit. Only after the

⁶⁷ Ibid., 57, emphasis added.

⁶⁸ White, “Redemption—No. 1,” *Review and Herald*, Feb 24, 1874.

⁶⁹ Damsteegt, 20. It was Eve who took on an independent leadership role. She left her husband’s side, not following the warning “*to beware of separating herself from her husband*” (PP 53). “*She had fallen into temptation by separating from her companion, contrary to the divine direction*” (PP 58). Having followed Satan’s advice, “*she became the agent of Satan in working the ruin of her husband*” (PP 56). “*It was by her solicitation that Adam sinned*” (PP 58). Satan “*had tempted the woman to distrust God’s love, to doubt His wisdom, and to transgress His law, and through her he had caused the overthrow of Adam*” (PP 57). Eve had not been content with her God-given role. “*She was flattered with the hope of entering a higher sphere than that which God had assigned her. In attempting to rise above her original position, she fell far below it*” (PP 59).

1 transgression of Adam, who had headship responsibility for the family, did they both become
2 naked. Generic transgression *per se* did not cause the resulting nakedness. Nakedness was the
3 result of Adam's unique transgression of relinquishing his headship role that God had assigned
4 to him. In addition to disobeying a face-to-face command of God, Adam's willing role reversal,
5 resulting in the visible sign of nakedness, is an additional and parallel reason he is held
6 responsible for the Fall of the human race. This *highly* underscores the fact that Adam was the
7 head and representative of the human race, and only his sin caused the Fall. The Scriptures are
8 clear in confirming the leadership/headship role of Adam. Sin and death entered the world
9 through the actions of Adam, even though Eve sinned first. "Therefore, just as through one
10 man sin entered the world, and death through sin, and thus death spread to all men because all
11 sinned" (Rom 5:12).

12 It is interesting to note that if Adam had resisted the temptation, God could have
13 supplied a new wife for him, and the race would have remained unfallen. "*He did not realize*
14 *that the same Infinite Power who had from the dust of the earth created him, a living, beautiful*
15 *form, and had in love given him a companion, could supply her place.*" The possibility of a new
16 wife for Adam shows that Eve's act alone was insufficient to curse the human race. This is
17 further evidence of the creation headship of Adam.

18 **Point 17: God calls and seeks and apprehends Adam first, then Eve.** "Then the LORD
19 God called to Adam and said to him, 'Where are you?'" (Gen 3:9). Although Eve sinned first,
20 God did not call Eve asking why she ate of the tree of which she had been forbidden not to eat.
21 God had warned Adam about the forbidden tree prior to the creation of Eve, thus conferring
22 headship responsibility upon Adam. Therefore God calls Adam and holds him accountable for
23 not maintaining the integrity of his headship responsibility. The uniqueness of Adam's
24 headship role can explain not only the nakedness issue but also why God calls and seeks and
25 apprehends Adam prior to Eve.

26 **Point 18: God interrogates Adam first and indicts Adam for the Fall, bypassing Eve.**
27 "Have you eaten of the tree of which I commanded you that you should not eat" (3:11)? God
28 indicts Adam by reminding him that He commanded the man, not the woman, regarding the
29 forbidden tree (the Hebrew has the singular "you"). Prior to woman's creation, God expressly

1 forbade Adam from eating of the tree, thereby giving him headship responsibility. Responding
2 to Eve’s initiative and agreeing to take the fruit from his wife and eating thereof, Adam allowed
3 Eve to usurp his headship role. The reversal of headship roles led to Adam’s disobedience and
4 resulted in the Fall of the human race. Evangelical feminists strain credulity to refute the
5 obvious evidence of headship in view of the priority of God’s interrogation of Adam.⁷⁰

6 **Point 19: Adam indicts himself.** “The woman You gave to be with me, she gave me of
7 the tree, and I ate” (3:12). First, Adam acknowledges his headship responsibility by virtue of
8 the fact that God gave him the woman as a gift (“You gave me”) to be loved and protected by
9 him. “God Himself gave Adam a companion . . . as an equal, to be loved and protected by
10 him.”⁷¹ Again, it is noteworthy that God did not bring Adam to the woman and give him to her.
11 Nor did He bring the two simultaneously to each other. Second, Adam concedes that he yielded
12 to Eve’s assumed leadership role by accepting the fruit (“she gave me”). Third, he relinquished
13 his headship role when he ate (“and I ate”).

14 **Point 20: God interrogates Eve second even though she sinned first, being deceived.**
15 “And the LORD God said to the woman, ‘What is this you have done?’ And the woman said,
16 ‘The serpent deceived me, and I ate’” (Gen 3:13). Having previously indicted Adam for failure in
17 maintaining his headship responsibilities by yielding to his wife, God addresses the woman. The
18 woman, seeking to enter a higher sphere than her position by her husband’s side, was deceived
19 and fell into transgression, but Adam willingly transgressed the face-to-face command of God
20 regarding the forbidden tree, thereby relinquishing his headship role. The apostle Paul
21 confirms the Genesis 3 account of Eve’s deception in 1 Timothy 2:14, where he justifies Adam’s

⁷⁰ Davidson denies that the priority of Adam’s interrogation implies pre-Fall leadership over his wife, but acknowledges that it was natural for God to question him first because he was 1) created first, 2) the first to have received the command about the tree, and 3) personally warned of the consequences of disobeying the command. Although denying it, Davidson effectively acknowledges Adam’s leadership role by acknowledging the previous three facts. Davidson simply suggests that the man is not questioned “by God on behalf of his wife, but solely on his own behalf” and then, rather than embracing the obvious implications of the interrogation sequence, he employs a literary chiasmic argument to deny the divinely instituted leadership of Adam. But ignoring the clear evidences of headship with such reasoning is unconvincing. He concludes that those opposing the ordination of women as elders/ministers are “reading into the text what does not exist in the chapter.” By that same accusation, Davidson indicts himself by ignoring both the plain testimony of Scripture in Genesis 2-3 as well NT confirmation of headship in the OT text in 1 Timothy 2 and 1 Corinthians 11, 14 (see Davidson, “Should Women Be Ordained as Pastors? Old Testament Considerations,” 24-25).

⁷¹ White, *Patriarchs and Prophets*, 46.

1 headship role over the woman. “Adam was not deceived, but the woman being deceived fell
2 into transgression.”

3 **Point 21: Adam’s role reversal is corrected.** “To the woman He said ‘Your desire
4 shall be for [against]⁷² your husband, and he shall rule⁷³ over you’” (Gen 3:16). Although Adam
5 relinquished his headship responsibility upon the act of eating the fruit, with its consequential
6 nakedness, that same role reversal was corrected by the expressed declaration of God that
7 Adam was to rule over the woman by divine decree.⁷⁴ Prior to the Fall there existed a natural
8 and harmonious headship/submission relationship of the man and the woman. Now after the
9 Fall, the woman was placed in subjection to her husband by divine decree. The *harmonious*
10 headship/submission relationship of the man and the woman could only be restored through
11 divine decree and reception of the gospel by both husband and wife.

12 Evangelical feminists find evidence for the appearance of headship and submission only
13 after the Fall. Adventists in favor of the ordination of women elders/ministers cite, for
14 example, the passage in *Patriarchs and Prophets* where it is stated that “God had made [Eve]
15 the equal of Adam. . . in *harmony* with each other.” But after the Fall “their union could be
16 maintained and *harmony* preserved only by submission on the part of the one or the other. Eve
17 had been first in transgression; . . . and she was placed in subjection to her husband.”⁷⁵

⁷² Strong evidence has been set forth that *tšûqâ* (desire) with the particle *el* should be translated as “desire against” rather than “desire for” (with a different particle *al*) as in Song of Solomon 7:10. Thus the Fall did not bring about headship in marriage. The Fall brought about a *distortion* of previous roles, not the introduction of new roles. The distortion was that Eve would now rebel against her husband’s authority, and Adam could misuse that authority to rule forcefully and even harshly over Eve. See Ratsara & Bediako, pp. 38-43 and also Grudem, *Biblical Foundations of Manhood and Womanhood*, 32-35.

⁷³ The Hebrew *māšal* (to rule) does not convey negative connotations of the word dominate. The word *māšal* has several nuances within the semantic range of “rule” —for example, to “rule” over siblings (Gen 37:8), slaves (Exod 21:8), nations (Deut 15:6), to “take charge” over someone’s possessions (Gen 24:2; Ps 105:21), to control (Gen 4:7; Ps 19:14), or to exercise self-control (Prov 16:32). See Ratsara & Bediako, 42.

⁷⁴ Ratsara & Bediako (pp. 39-42) present convincing evidence that the woman’s “desire” (*tšûqâ*) denotes mastery or control over the man. The woman exercised authority over the man and influenced him to disobey. The divine pronouncement is predicated on the man’s having yielded to the leadership of the woman. But God divinely mandates and restores the headship of the man. The woman’s desire for mastery is reversed by the authority bestowed on the man to “rule.”

⁷⁵ *Patriarchs and Prophets*, 58-59. “Eve was told of the sorrow and pain that must henceforth be her portion. And the Lord said, ‘Thy desire shall be to thy husband, and he shall rule over thee.’ In the creation God had made her the equal of Adam. Had they remained obedient to God—in harmony with His great law of love—they would ever have been in harmony with each other; but sin had brought discord, and now their union could be maintained and harmony preserved only by submission on the part of the one or the other. Eve had been the first in transgression; and she had fallen into temptation by separating from her companion, contrary to the divine direction. It was by

1 However, evidence for Adam’s pre-fall headship responsibility is indicated by at least four facts:
2 first, Adam “mourned that he had *permitted* Eve to wander from his side;”⁷⁶ second, Satan by-
3 passed Adam and caused his overthrow through the woman;⁷⁷ third, angels had warned Eve
4 not to separate from her husband, for she would be in less danger from temptation,⁷⁸ and
5 fourth, Eve sought to enter a “higher sphere” by “separating from her companion” instead of
6 remaining in “her original position” “by her husband’s side.”⁷⁹ In the context of the full
7 statement that “harmony [could be] preserved only by submission” and that Eve was “placed in
8 subjection to her husband,” the author distinguishes between pre-fall harmony and the
9 necessary means for preserving harmony in a post-Fall condition. Pre-fall harmony was natural
10 with the principle of headship/submission as part of the natural creation order, as documented
11 in the previous points 1-21. But upon Adam’s relinquishing of his headship role to Eve,
12 harmony in a post-Fall condition now could be preserved only by divinely mandated
13 headship/submission (unnatural in the initial, inherent post-fall condition) on the part of the
14 one or the other. Therefore God said, "Thy desire shall be for [against] thy husband, and he
15 shall rule over you."

16 The servant-leadership of man in the Garden home was now divinely mandated for our
17 parents in their post-Fall condition. Just as the Garden home was to be a little church, now in
18 the post-Fall world, the Christian home was to be a little church where a man was appointed
19 leadership responsibility. Even before the Fall, Adam’s headship in his relationship with Eve
20 would serve as model of male headship in subsequent families.

21 The home of our first parents was to be a pattern for other homes as their children should
22 go forth to occupy the earth.⁸⁰
23

her solicitation that Adam sinned, and she was now placed in subjection to her husband. Had the principles joined in the law of God been cherished by the fallen race, this sentence, though growing out of the results of sin, would have proved a blessing to them; but man's abuse of the supremacy thus given him has too often rendered the lot of woman very bitter and made her life a burden."

⁷⁶ Ibid., 56.

⁷⁷ Ibid., 57. "Satan exulted in his success. He had tempted the woman to distrust God's love, to doubt His wisdom, and to transgress His law, and through her he had caused the overthrow of Adam." PP 57.

⁷⁸ Ibid., 53.

⁷⁹ Ibid., 58-59.

⁸⁰ Ibid., 49.

1 The home of every Christian should be a little church, a representation of the heavenly
2 home, from which others may learn what a family can become in this world through
3 obedience to God's word.⁸¹
4

5 **Point 22: God holds Adam accountable for relinquishing headship responsibility.** “Then
6 to Adam He said, ‘Because you have heeded the voice of your wife and have eaten from the
7 tree of which I commanded you, saying, “You shall not eat of it”: Cursed is the ground for your
8 sake’” (Gen 3:17). God holds Adam accountable not for explicit disobedience of His command,
9 but explicitly for listening to the voice of his wife. God reminds Adam that He commanded the
10 man, not the woman, regarding the forbidden tree. Adam relinquished his headship
11 responsibility by listening to the voice of his wife, yielding to his emotions, and disregarding the
12 face-to-face command of God prior to Eve’s creation. God’s indictment of Adam for
13 relinquishing his headship position is the primary reason Paul assigns the responsibility of the
14 Fall of the human race to Adam (Rom 5:12, 15, 17). Adam’s headship is confirmed by 1) priority
15 of creation, 2) priority of the Forbidden Tree test, 3) priority of nakedness, 4) priority of
16 apprehension, 5) priority of indictment and interrogation, and 6) priority of accountability—
17 heeding the voice of his wife.

18 **Point 23: Death sentence pronounced on Adam, not Eve.** “. . . till you return to the
19 ground, for out of it you were taken; for dust you are, and to dust you shall return” (Gen 3:19).
20 Although the woman sinned first, the death sentence is pronounced on Adam for failure to
21 exercise his headship responsibilities with the woman. The relinquishing of Adam’s headship
22 role brought sin into the world and death through sin that affected every human being (Rom
23 5:12). The headship of Adam over the human race is amplified by Paul, who attributes the
24 entrance of death to Adam’s sin.

25 **Point 24: Adam reassumes his headship responsibility.** “And Adam called his wife’s
26 name Eve, because she was the mother of all living” (Gen 3:20). The assigning of names in
27 Scripture signifies authority over the one named, as noted previously. By naming Eve, Adam
28 reassumes his headship role, now divinely imposed, as God decreed in Genesis 3:16. This
29 declaration also seems to be a fulfillment of the divine command to “be fruitful and multiply” in

⁸¹ White, *Bible Echo*, February 16, 1903.

1 Genesis 1. It also serves as an affirmation that life and salvation would come through the
2 woman’s giving birth to the promised Seed (as God promised in 3:15 and as Paul seems to
3 confirm in 1 Tim 2:15).

4 **Point 25: Adam is driven out of the Garden—the woman follows.** “The LORD God sent
5 him out of the Garden of Eden. . . . He drove out the man, and placed cherubim at the east of
6 the Garden of Eden. . .” (Gen 3:23-24). Adam’s headship responsibility is reaffirmed, when God
7 drives the man out of the Garden leaving the woman to follow. When “the man is driven out of
8 the Garden, it is understood that where the man leads, the woman follows. The man will
9 continue to be the head of the human family. It is he who is given primary responsibility for the
10 life of the family and society. (Gen 2).”⁸² Thus, Genesis 2-3 forms a perfect *inclusio* with perfect
11 symmetry; Genesis 2 begins with the creation of Adam (placed in the Garden), followed by the
12 woman placed in the Garden, and Genesis 3 ends with the expulsion of the Adam, followed by
13 the woman, from the Garden of Eden.

14 **Point 26: The Image of God.** God said, “Let Us make man in our image . . . So God
15 created man in His own image; in the image of God He created him; male and female He
16 created them” (Gen 1:26-27). It is important to observe that the order in Genesis 1:27 of male
17 and then female prepares for the creation order of the man and then the woman in Genesis 2.
18 Genesis 1:27 is expanded upon in Genesis 2. Both those in favor and those against ordination
19 of women agree on the equality of being of male and female; they agree that the creation of
20 male and female as the image of God indicates the equal value of women with men as being
21 fully human, with equal dignity, worth, and importance.⁸³ The plurality of the Divinity,
22 expressed in the declaration, “Let *Us* make man in our image [male and female],” suggests that
23 some unique difference associated with male and female, beyond gender, is imaged in the
24 Godhead, “Us.” Although evangelical and Adventist feminists acknowledge that humans are
25 created in God’s image in terms of resemblance, relationship, and representation or function,

⁸² Ratsara & Bediako, 45.

⁸³ For a representative complimentary view of the image of God see Bruce Ware, “Male and Female Complementarity and the Image of God,” *Biblical Foundations of Manhood and Womanhood*, ed. Wayne Grudem (Wheaton, IL, 2002), pp. 71-86. For a representative egalitarian view, see: Richard Davidson, “Biblical Anthropology and the Old Testament” (Third International Bible Conference, Jerusalem, Israel, June 16, 2012), 2-17.

1 they deny that this implies any functional role of relationships among the members of the
2 Trinity. They assert that the emphasis is on the “fellowship of equals;” and “if there is any
3 submission implied, it is a *mutual submission* of Equals.”⁸⁴ In contrast to this limited view, it is
4 evident that the declaration by one member of the Trinity, “Let *Us* make man in our image,”
5 suggests that the one speaking is giving *permission* to the other members to commence the
6 creation of mankind. The one in authority gives the command, “Let *Us*.” Thus, in addition to
7 equality of being in the Trinity, we also see evidence for authority/submission roles with the
8 Godhead. Consequently, if male and female are made in the image of God, we can be certain
9 they would reflect the authority and submission roles operative within the Godhead.⁸⁵
10 Confirming evidence for the principle of headship and submission within the Trinity will
11 presented in Section VI.

12 **B. The Mystery of Godliness Embraces Headship and Submission**

13 The biblical principle of headship and submission has been demonstrated with the initial
14 evidence from Genesis 2-3. But evidence is piled upon evidence with the headship of the 12
15 Patriarchs, the male headship of the Levitical priesthood, Jesus’ appointment of 12 male
16 Apostles, and the replacement of Judas by a male apostle. The evidence continues in 1
17 Corinthians 11:3-16 where Paul uses the creation order (Adam first, Eve second) as the
18 rationale for the headship principle and for behavior in the church. Paul then uses the same
19 rationale (creation order) for the headship principle as the basis for the appointment of men as
20 elders who have teaching and governing authority in the church in 1 Timothy 2-3.

21 Paul gives these instructions to Timothy so the saints might know how to conduct
22 themselves in the household of God, the pillar and ground of the truth (1 Tim 3:15). What is
23 truth? Jesus came to bear witness to the truth (John 18:37). Jesus came to reveal who God is—
24 to reveal the Father, His character of self-sacrificing love, which was demonstrated with the

⁸⁴ Davidson, “Should Women Be Ordained as Pastors? Old Testament Considerations,” 3. Davidson limits the relationship in the Trinity, quoting J. Moskala, only to a “plural of fellowship or community within the Godhead” suggesting a process of deliberation among the members. He concludes that the text gives “no indication of hierarchy in the Godhead.” The assertion of such as Davidson regarding mutual submission in the Trinity “is an egalitarian invention created to justify the egalitarian idea of mutual submission in marriage.” See Wayne Grudem, *Evangelical Feminism and Biblical Truth*, 429-433 for a discussion on mutual submission in the Trinity.

⁸⁵ For a more extensive discussion on the pattern of authority that gives order to the universe see: Jerry Moon, “Ellen White, Ordination, and Authority,” paper presented to the Theology of Ordination Study Committee, Baltimore, MD, July 22-24, 2013.

1 incarnation (the gift of His Son) and supremely at the cross. With the incarnation we see the
2 principle of headship and submission clearly portrayed. Paul concludes his instruction on
3 conduct in the church in verse 16 with the enigmatic phrase: “Without controversy great is the
4 mystery of godliness: God was manifested in the flesh. . . .” The “mystery of godliness” captures
5 the biblical principle of headship and submission, and this mystery which is inherent in the
6 Trinity is to be manifested in conduct and order within the church. The *truth* of self-sacrificing
7 love is the mystery of godliness, and this truth is opposed by the *lie* of self-exaltation—the
8 mystery of iniquity. The truth—the mystery of godliness which embraces the principle of
9 headship and submission—is to be manifested within and by the church.

10 The nature of the Godhead, the image of God, was to be reproduced in the creation of
11 mankind—Adam and Eve. In some unique and fundamental way, the male/female relationship
12 was a reflection of the image of God. Of all the created beings, only man was created to reflect
13 the complete image of God. “*Human beings were a new and a distinct order. They were made*
14 *‘in the image of God.’”*⁸⁶ The complete reflection of the image of God included not just the
15 outward resemblance and moral character of God but also the headship/submission roles that
16 have always existed among the three persons of the heavenly trio of the Godhead. Equality of
17 being and the principle of headship/submission are inherent within the nature of the Trinity,
18 and this nature of the Trinity, the image of God, was reproduced in the creation of mankind,
19 male and female. This point is at heart of the controversy: the nature of the Trinity⁸⁷ is to be
20 reflected in the nature of mankind (male and female). Thus, the assertion⁸⁸ is misleading that
21 the passage in Genesis 1:27 gives “no hint of a divine creation order.” In fact this passage, in
22 combination with verse 26, shouts creation headship. “Let *Us* make man in our image . . . male
23 and female He created them.” The overarching purpose of the gospel is to restore the image of
24 God in mankind, namely the church, the pillar and ground of truth.

25 The evidence for creation headship in Genesis 2-3 is voluminous and overwhelming to
26 the honest student who allows Scripture to interpret itself, using the same hermeneutic that

⁸⁶ Ellen G. White, *Review and Herald*, February 11, 1902.

⁸⁷ For an extended discussion of the principle of Headship, Submission and Equality in the Trinity, including pros and cons, see Wayne Grudem, *Evangelical Feminism and Biblical Truth*, 45-48; 405-441 and references cited therein.

⁸⁸ Davidson, *Spectrum*, April 10, 2010.

1 the Reformers and our Adventist pioneers employed. It should be noted also that changing
2 cultural influences played no part in the establishment of male headship in Eden, since it was
3 the perfect culture established by God.

4 The case for male headship throughout the history of Israel is evident to any student of
5 the OT and need not be documented here. In the NT the same headship principle was carried
6 into the ministry of Christ, the Cornerstone of the church. Jesus Christ was incarnated in the
7 form of a male. He is the Head of the church. The twelve disciples chosen by Jesus were all
8 men (Mark 3:13-19). To the Rabbinical community Jesus was known as radical, and He surely
9 could have rocked the boat further by appointing women as apostles. After the ascension of
10 Christ the disciples gathered together to appoint one of two candidates to replace Judas—but
11 both were men (Acts 1:12-23). And not surprisingly, the seven deacons chosen in Acts 6 were
12 all men. Male headship and leadership is unmistakably evident in the four gospel accounts of
13 the ministry of Christ. We turn next to the principle of headship and submission in
14 1 Corinthians 11 and 14 followed by 1 Timothy 2-3 where the apostle Paul affirms the creation
15 headship principle of Genesis 2-3.

16

17 **III. Headship and Submission in 1 Corinthians 11 and 14**⁸⁹

18 The earliest place in Paul's letters where he addresses the subject of headship and
19 submission and its implications for the church is 1 Corinthians 11:2-16 where he lays the
20 groundwork rather thoroughly. This passage forms the theological basis for his later instruction
21 on the same subject. Written approximately twenty years into his ministry, his teaching
22 remained consistent in this matter until the end of his ministry, as seen in 1 Timothy 2-3 and
23 Titus 1-2, written perhaps nine years later. Thus, 1 Corinthians 11 was grounded in solid biblical
24 theology, not merely on the local cultural context in Corinth.

25 **Local vs. Universal Application.** The text of 1 Corinthians gives us very little insight into
26 what was happening in Corinth at that time. Only extra-biblical sources would provide that
27 information. But Scripture is supposed to be self-interpreting, internally coherent without

⁸⁹ This section is adapted in part from Edwin Reynolds, "Biblical Hermeneutics and Headship in First Corinthians,"
Theology of Ordination Study Committee, July, 2013.

1 recourse to extra-biblical sources.⁹⁰ There is no evidence that the text in 1 Corinthians 11 was
2 culturally conditioned and applied only to a local situation.⁹¹ The text is self-interpreting, and as
3 such it sets forth universal principles. The instructions in 1 Corinthians 11 are based on biblical
4 and theological reasons given in 1 Corinthians 11:7-9. Each of the reasons given in vv. 7-16 has a
5 universal basis, not a local basis. The first ones (vv. 7-9) appeal to the order and purpose of the
6 creation of man and woman. The appeal to the angels (v. 10) is based on the order of heavenly
7 beings. The appeal to the nature of things (v. 14) is universal but ultimately appeals back to the
8 design in creation: “for her hair is given to her for a covering” (v. 15). The last appeal, in case of
9 contention, is to the universal practice of the churches (v. 16).

10 **Immediate Context of Submission.** Principles found in the immediate literary context of
11 1 Corinthians 11 include submitting to the will of God and submitting one’s own rights for the
12 good of the community (chapters 8-10). Submitting to all levels of God-ordained authority is
13 then introduced (11:3). As Paul prepares to approach the subject of the Lord’s Supper in 1
14 Corinthians 11, he urges the Corinthians to “Give no offense . . . to the church of God” by
15 following Paul in pointing to the model of Christ’s submission. This is the most immediate
16 context of the headship passage in 1 Corinthians 11.

17

18 **A. Headship Principle in 1 Corinthians 11**

19 Paul then informs his readers that there is something they must understand. There are
20 categories of nonreciprocal relationships in which some individuals are designated as “head”
21 while others are not in a reciprocal relationship with them. In each pair, only one is the head.
22 The other submits to the head. Even in the Trinity, biblically, the Father is the Head, and Christ
23 submits to His headship. The Father may honor Christ and give Him all power and authority, but
24 1 Corinthians 15:27 clearly states, “But when it says, ‘all things are put in subjection,’ it is plain
25 that He is excepted who put all things in subjection under Him.” There is no reciprocity in
26 headship relations, even within the Godhead. Mutual submission is outside of the headship

⁹⁰ “Although many biblical passages had local significance, nonetheless they contain timeless principles applicable to every age and culture.” “Methods of Bible Study” [MBSD], a statement voted by the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists Executive Committee at the Annual Council in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, 12 October 1986, available from <http://www.adventist.org/beliefs/other-documents/other-doc4.html> accessed 22 May 2013.

⁹¹ For example, there is no allusion in the text to Corinth’s cosmopolitan populace, its commerce, its immorality, and its Temple of Aphrodite up on the Acrocorinth.

1 relation. Within the headship relation, there is no reciprocity, although Christ's attitude as Head
2 of the church was one of self-sacrificing love, and the same is supposed to be true of the
3 husband's relation to his wife. That is not the same as reciprocity, where the husband would
4 submit to the wife as head or where Christ would submit to the church as head, even where the
5 Father would submit to the Son as Head.

6 It is possible to be the head in a relationship to one party but not another. In the three
7 nonreciprocal relationships defined in the text, God (the Father) is the only one who is under no
8 one else's headship, and the woman is the only one who has no explicit headship over another.
9 "The head of every man is Christ, and the head of the woman is man, and the head of Christ is
10 God" (NIV). This headship principle in 1 Corinthians 11:3 is the ground for all that follows in the
11 passage.

12 **Metaphorically, *Kephalē* Means Authority Over One in Subordination.** The Greek word
13 for head, *kephalē*, both in the NT and the OT (LXX), can mean either a literal anatomical head
14 (on a body) or a metaphorical head (ruler, leader, authority figure). The claimed meaning of
15 *kephalē* as "source" in 1 Corinthians 11 has been shown to be without foundation.⁹² Paul uses
16 the *body* as a metaphor in 1 Corinthians 12 for the relation of Christ to His church (cf. Col 1:18;
17 Eph 5:23). Just as the head directs the body, so Christ directs His church. The head is not the
18 source of the body, but it is the part that sends directions to the bodily parts. Reynolds cites
19 Ranzolin that whether *kephalē* means "ruler" or "source," "it's hard to escape the notion that
20 *kephalē* conveys the sense of subordination."⁹³ In the NT the meaning of *kephalē* as "head,"
21 (not "source") is unmistakable as in Ephesians 5:23-24 where the church is subject to its Head,
22 "Christ is head [authority] of the church" and "the church is subject to Christ"; likewise in the
23 same passage "the husband is head [authority] of the wife" and "so let wives be [subject] to
24 their own husbands." The meaning of *kephalē* as "head" or "authority" (not source) is also

⁹² Those in favor of the ordination of women as elders/ministers have argued for interpreting *kephalē* as "source." This meaning seems possible in Eph 4:15-16 and Col 2:19; however, this simply does not work in 1 Cor 11:3 or Eph 5:23. Rather, it results in both logical and theological problems. James B. Hurley, *Man and Woman in Biblical Perspective* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1981), 166, shows then that "there is no way to construct a satisfactory set of parallels" in 1 Cor 11:3. Is man the source of woman (or husband, of wife) or is God the source of Christ in the same sense that Christ is the source of man? The obvious answer is No.

⁹³ Reynolds, 20 (see note 40).

1 evident in Ephesians 1:22 where Christ is “the head (*kephalē*) over (*huper*) all things.”⁹⁴ The
2 authoritative head of the church is confirmed by White. “*The great Head of the church*
3 *superintends His work through the instrumentality of men ordained by God to act as His*
4 *representatives.*”⁹⁵

5 Those in favor of the ordination of women as elder/minister repeatedly cite, with
6 authoritative emphasis, the culmination of over thirty years of effort by Philip B. Payne in
7 support of this issue.⁹⁶ Payne devotes 100 of 500 pages dealing with 1 Cor 11:3-16 and argues
8 that *kephalē* in v. 3 means “source,” giving a number of reasons to support such a translation.
9 For example, he says the Greek translation of the OT (LXX) only uses the word “head” as leader
10 6 out of 171 times. In fact the LXX uses the word “head” (*kephalē*) in the context of authority or
11 ruling at least 16 times.⁹⁷ Thus his credibility immediately comes into question. Payne’s
12 discussion of the word “head” does not advance the discussion. Second, there may be a few
13 examples where *kephalē* means “source,” but Payne actually gives very few examples (which
14 are themselves debatable) to substantiate his thesis. By way of comparison, Grudem has
15 carefully sifted the evidence in three major articles, showing that the meaning “authority over”
16 for *kephalē* is well attested.⁹⁸ Payne alleges that the term cannot mean “authority over” in
17 1 Corinthians 11:3 since not all acknowledge Christ’s authority. But this misses the point. Christ
18 is the authority over all men even if they do not recognize it. Payne goes on to say that 1
19 Corinthians 11:3 points to Christ as the source of Adam, but the text says that Christ is the

⁹⁴ For a comprehensive summary of *kephalē* as “head,” see: Joseph A. Fitzmyer, “*Kephalē* in 1 Corinthians 11:3,” *Int* 47 (1993): 52-59; Wayne Grudem, “The Meaning of κεφαλή (“Head”): An Evaluation of New Evidence, Real and Alleged,” *JETS* 44/1 (2001): 25-65, who on 61-64 cites many others reaching this conclusion. See also Grudem, *Evangelical Feminism and Biblical Truth*, 201-211, 544-599.

⁹⁵ White, *The Acts of the Apostles*, 360.

⁹⁶ Philip B. Payne, *Man and Woman, One in Christ: An Exegetical and Theological Study of Paul’s Letters* (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Zondervan, 2009).

⁹⁷ Duet 28:13; 28:44; Jud 10:18; 11:8; 11:9; 11:11; 2 Sam 22:44; 1 Kings 8:1; Ps 18:43; Is 7:8 (x2); Is 7:9 (x2); Is 9:14-16; Jer 31:7; Lam 1:5.

⁹⁸ Review of Philip Payne’s book by Thomas R. Schreiner, “Philip Payne on Familiar Ground,” <http://cbmw.org/uncategorized/philip-payne-on-familiar-ground/> accessed 11-25-2013, in note 2 cites Wayne Grudem, “Does *Kephalē* (‘Head’) Mean ‘Source’ or ‘Authority Over’ in Greek Literature? A Survey of 2,336 Examples,” *Trinity Journal* 6 (1985): 38–59; idem, “The Meaning of *Kephalē* (‘Head’): A Response to Recent studies,” in *Recovering Biblical Manhood and Womanhood* (ed. John Piper and Wayne Grudem (Wheaton: Crossway, 1991), 425–68, 534–41; idem, “The Meaning of *Kephalē* (‘Head’): An Examination of New Evidence, Real and Alleged,” *Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society* 44 (2001): 25-65. See also Joseph A. Fitzmyer, “*Kephalē* in 1 Corinthians 11:3,” *Interpretation* 47 (1993): 52–59; idem, “Another Look at *Kephalē* in 1 Corinthians 11:3,” *New Testament Studies* 35 (1989): 503-11.

1 “head of every man.” There is nothing about Adam in particular in this verse. Paul speaks
2 universally here.

3 Finally, Payne suggests that, in 1 Corinthians 15:28, “God” refers to “the Godhead”
4 rather than to the Father. This is rather strange and fits awkwardly with the idea that Christ
5 submits to God. Is the verse saying that Christ submits to himself insofar as he is God? Such an
6 interpretation seems quite improbable. Payne’s discussion of *kephalē* is unpersuasive and
7 should be rejected.⁹⁹

8 In summary, no textual evidence from ancient Greek literature has been produced
9 where a person is called the *kephalē* of another person or group and that person is not the one
10 in authority over that other person or group. Over fifty examples of *kephalē* meaning “ruler,
11 authority over” have been found and compiled, but no examples of “source without
12 authority.”¹⁰⁰

13 **Headship in the Trinity—Basis for Headship of Man.** The passage itself (11:3) suggests a
14 Christological and theological framework for the headship of man in relation to woman. Thus,
15 the headship of Christ and the headship of God the Father form the pattern for the headship of
16 the husband-wife (in the home) and man-woman (in the church). One objection to headship
17 has been that the principle of submission is a negative concept, a consequence of sin. This verse
18 invalidates that objection, since Christ is shown to be in submission to the headship of God and
19 every man is in submission to the headship of Christ, and these are not negative relationships.

20 There is no essential conflict between equality of being and submission, for God and
21 Christ are equal in being or nature, yet Christ submits to His Father. The submission is
22 functional, providing for different role relationships; it does not express or imply any inequality
23 of being. And this submission to the headship authority is not a consequence of sin (evidence
24 will be presented—that functional differentiation in the Trinity existed already in heaven before
25 sin).

26 **Application of Headship Principle in the Church.** The application of the headship
27 principle in the church is connected with the first two elements in 11:3. Christ is the head of

⁹⁹ Ibid., “Philip Payne on Familiar Ground.” The foregoing discussion has been extracted largely from this review article.

¹⁰⁰ Grudem, *Evangelical Feminism and Biblical Truth*, Appendix 3, 544-551.

1 man, and man is the head of the woman. Men must pray with their head uncovered; women
2 must pray with their head covered (11:4). The context is public worship in the church. Men and
3 women may pray or prophesy in the church, but only under conditions appropriate to each
4 gender following the headship principle. The same conditions are not appropriate to each. The
5 literal head now represents the spiritual head. To cover or not to cover signifies honor or
6 dishonor depending on whose the head is. In the case of man, his head—representing Christ—
7 should be uncovered, or He is dishonored. In the case of the woman, her head—representing
8 the man—should be covered. Whatever form the covering takes, it represented a means of
9 showing honor or respect for the head or authority. (It is well to note that “authority” is explicit
10 in the text here, a point that many overlook—Headship, *kephalē*, explicitly represents authority,
11 not source.) The covering may change, but the principle is eternal, which is honored in heaven
12 (v. 3) and by angels (v. 10).

13 **Theological Rationale for Man’s Uncovered Head.** Man ought not to cover his head,
14 since man is the image and glory of God, but the woman is the glory of man (v. 7). The basis for
15 this admonition is solely biblical and theological, lacking any reference to the cultural situation
16 in Corinth. The man and the woman were created for distinctly different purposes. Man—as a
17 gendered human being, not as a husband—was created for the glory of God. The woman,
18 although created in the image of God like the man, was created subsequently for the glory of
19 man. Man existed and accomplished tasks for God before he began to experience a need for a
20 helper. Woman was made a helper for the man to supply an inward need of the man, according
21 to the Genesis record (Gen 2:18).

22 **Headship of Man and Priority of Creation.** Paul now bolsters his rationale for head
23 coverings by appealing to the creation story: “For man was not made from the woman, but the
24 woman from man. Neither was man created for the woman, but woman for the man” (1 Cor
25 11:8-9). Paul has already declared that man is head of the woman (v. 3). He now gives the
26 biblical/theological reason for the headship of man and consequently the reason why a woman
27 should have a symbol of authority (the covering) on her head—she was created for (the glory
28 of) man, and she was created from man. It is important to note Paul’s instruction that a man
29 *ought not* to cover his head (v. 7) and a woman *ought* to cover head (v. 10) is based on the

1 identical rationale—man is the glory of God and the woman is the glory of man (v. 7); the
2 woman was derived from man and the woman was created for man (vv. 8-9). The headship of
3 man is based on the priority of the creation of the man, and the woman was created for him—
4 to be man’s equal, but opposite (gender), helper. The symbol of the head as authority
5 represents the man who is her spiritual head by virtue of priority and purpose in creation. Man
6 and woman were created for different purposes, the man for God and the woman for man.

7 **Equality of Being and Functional Differentiation.** Paul’s rationale for male headship is
8 based exclusively on the Genesis 2 creation record. The issue in Genesis 2 is not equality of
9 being, because male and female were both created in the image of God. The issue in Genesis 2
10 relates to the purpose and function in creation for the two genders. Man had priority in
11 creation, and his purpose was for the “glory of God.” The woman’s purpose was for “the glory
12 of man.”¹⁰¹ Paul is quite clear that man’s headship was established already in Genesis 2, prior
13 to the entrance of sin. The biblical text of Genesis 1-2, which has been debated as to the
14 matter of when headship was established—whether before or after the Fall—needs to be
15 interpreted carefully in the light of this NT interpretation of the creation record that makes
16 plain that headship derives from before the Fall, already in Gen 1-2, based on the order and
17 purpose of the genders in creation.

18 **Interdependence of Genders and Nature Speaks of the Created Order.** The text (vv. 12-
19 13) does not pertain only to married individuals; it pertains to male-female relationships,
20 especially in the context of the church. For example, in 1 Cor 11: 12 the text would make no
21 sense if it were to be translated, “For just as the wife [came] from the husband, so also the
22 husband [came/comes] from the wife.” The text does make clear that the gender classes are
23 interdependent (vv. 11-12), but their relationship is properly defined by creation, from which
24 derives the headship principle.

¹⁰¹ Reynolds (p. 30, see note 66) states: “This does not imply that woman did not have a direct, unmediated relationship to God, in whose image she was created. But it does suggest that her purpose and role in creation was intentionally different from that of the man, even prior to the entrance of sin. There is nothing about functional difference that implies inferiority of being. There is no injustice in functional differences created by God, for there is no injustice with God (2 Chr 19:7; Zeph 3:5; Rom 9:14). The issue of injustice merely detracts from the real issues that need to be addressed.”

1 Paul appeals to reason in demonstrating the universal nature of the headship (v. 13). Paul then
2 reaffirms God’s created order with the universal practice that always existed in nature (vv. 14-
3 15) of women having long hair and men having relatively short hair, for God gave the woman
4 long hair for a covering with the creation of the woman in Eden (v. 15). Upon the practical
5 application of the universal headship principle with covering or uncovering the head, all the
6 churches are united (v. 16).

7

8 **B. 1 Corinthians 14—Women Submissive in the Church as the Law Says**

9 Following a discussion of spiritual gifts and the greatest gift (love) in 1 Corinthians 12-13,
10 Paul describes the misuse and abuse of the gifts where love has been disregarded (1 Cor 14).
11 Proper conduct in the church includes being willing to submit one’s personal desires and
12 interests to the higher goal of maintaining church order for edification of the church. “All things
13 should be done decently and in order” (14:40), “for God is not a God of confusion but of peace”
14 (v. 33a). Apparently some women were interrupting with questions about what was being
15 prophesied¹⁰² and Paul instructed the women: “As in all the churches of the saints, the women
16 should keep silent in the churches. For they are not permitted to speak, but should be in
17 submission, as the Law also says” (vv. 33b-34). No variance was permitted; it was a universal
18 practice—“as in all the churches of the saints.” The rationale is given: the Law says that women
19 should be in submission. Although many scholars consider Gen 3:16, where the Law (Torah)
20 says the man was to rule over the women, to be the allusion in v. 34, others believe the Law
21 refers to the record of Genesis 1-2, upon which Paul based the argument of 1 Corinthians 11:3-
22 9, which appeals to creation order.¹⁰³ Whether it refers to the pre-Fall order or to prescriptive
23 post-Fall submission, Paul seems to understand it as something ordained by God in the earliest
24 part of Scripture, from the very beginning of time. Submission, shown by not speaking out of
25 order, was not limited to women (see 14:29-31). But the role of women is especially appealed
26 to here in harmony with the spirit of the Law, which expects women to manifest a submissive
27 spirit, especially in the presence of men in the context of worship, where, according to chap.

¹⁰² See Reynolds, 38.

¹⁰³ Ibid., 36-37 and citations therein. Reynolds presents evidence for both Gen 3:16 and also Gen 1-2.

1 11, men have a spiritual headship. Paul is very decisive on this issue; he is not being arbitrary; it
2 is a commandment of the Lord (v. 37). Those who disagree should not be recognized (v. 38).

3 Finally, it must be noted, Philip Payne argues along similar lines as Gordon Fee¹⁰⁴ that 1
4 Corinthians 14:34-35 is a non-canonical interpolation, and hence carries no apostolic authority,
5 and in fact does not belong in the Bible even though no Greek manuscripts of the NT lack these
6 verses. Payne claims that he recently discovered scribal marks of 14:34, called “distigmai,” in
7 Codex Vaticanus indicating the text (14:34-35) is an interpolation.¹⁰⁵ However, his
8 interpretation of scribal marks has been shown to be factually unstable and easily refutable.¹⁰⁶
9 Payne essentially employs a form of literary criticism and a variant of a hermeneutic called
10 “deconstruction,” derived from the writings of Martin Heidegger and Jacques Derrida, wherein
11 the text is deconstructed to uncertain multiple meanings or the meaning the interpreter
12 desires.¹⁰⁷

13

14 **C. Implications of 1 Corinthians 11 and 14**

15 There is a clear principle of headship taught in 1 Corinthians 11:3 that was established
16 by God based on the pattern set within the Trinity by the headship of the Father in relationship
17 to Christ, which is an eternal headship grounded in differences in function rather than in
18 essence, which will be documented in Section VI. Paul is abundantly clear that not all
19 relationships are reciprocal, nor are all are egalitarian. The relationship between Christ and man
20 is not egalitarian, for example, and while there may be an equality of being between God and
21 Christ and between man and woman, there are differing functional statuses, with God being
22 the head of Christ and man being the head of the woman. Headship is a metaphor for
23 designated authority. The proper response to designated authority is submission, honor, and
24 respect for that authority. Those who do not honor the authority that God has established do
25 not honor God (Rom 13:1-2). All authority that derives from God must be respected. Now we

¹⁰⁴ Gordon Fee, *First Epistle to the Corinthians*, New International Commentary on the New Testament (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1987).

¹⁰⁵ Payne, 232-246.

¹⁰⁶ See Thomas R. Schreiner, “Philip Payne on Familiar Ground,” <http://cbmw.org/uncategorized/philip-payne-on-familiar-ground/> accessed 11-25-2013; also Jim Hamilton, <http://jimhamilton.info/2011/04/19/review-of-philip-b-paynes-man-and-woman-one-in-christ/> accessed 12-3-2013.

¹⁰⁷ See above, note 3.

1 turn to the one passage in the NT that focuses extensively on the spiritual authority of men and
2 women in the church as it relates to the appointment of officers.

3

4

IV. Headship and Submission in 1 Timothy 2-3

5 More than any other passage dealing with men and women in the church, 1 Timothy
6 2:11-15 has caused the polarization among those for and against the ordination of women as
7 elder/minister. *“Let a woman learn in silence with all submission. And I do not permit a woman
8 to teach or to have authority over a man, but to be in silence. For Adam was formed first, then
9 Eve. And Adam was not deceived, but the woman being deceived, fell into transgression.
10 Nevertheless she will be saved in childbearing if they continue in faith, love, and holiness, with
11 self-control.”* Based on this passage, historically the Christian church has believed that certain
12 restrictions are placed on women in the church. However, with the rise of the evangelical
13 feminist movement in the 1960s and 70s, new interpretations have been imposed on this
14 passage. Extended expositions on both ends of the spectrum have been documented by
15 others.¹⁰⁸

16

A. Authority and Priority of Creation

17 Paul’s argument for the teaching authority of men and the submission of women to that
18 authority in the church is based on the priority of the creation of Adam in Genesis 2 to which
19 he refers in 1 Timothy 2:13—*“For Adam was formed (*plassō*, echoing in Gen 2, LXX) first, then
20 Eve.”* Priority of creation/birth is also cited by Ellen White for Abel being subject to Cain.¹⁰⁹
21 Those desiring female leadership in the church must deny the creation headship principle in
22 Genesis 1-3, or their arguments for interchangeable leadership in the church fall apart. Since

¹⁰⁸ For those advocating the male headship perspective, see *Women in the Church: A Fresh Analysis of 1 Timothy 2:9-15*, ed. A. J. Kostenberger, T. R. Schreiner, H. S. Baldwin (Grand Rapids, MI, 1995); *Prove All Things*, ed. Mercedes H. Dyer (Berrien Springs, MI, 2000); Wayne Grudem, *Evangelical Feminism and Biblical Truth* (Wheaton, IL, 2012); *Recovering Biblical Manhood and Womanhood*, ed., John Piper and Wayne Grudem (Wheaton, IL, 1998), 237-250. For those advocating the female leadership perspective, see Stanley J. Grenz, *Women in the Church: A Biblical Theology of Women in Ministry* (Downers Grove, IL: Intervarsity Press, 1995); Rebecca Merrill Groothuis, *Women Caught in the Conflict: The Culture War Between Traditionalism and Feminism* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Book House, 1994); Virginia Mollenkott, *Women, Men, and the Bible* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1977); *Women in Ministry*, ed. Nancy Vyhmeister (Berrien Springs, MI, 1998); Richard M. Davidson, *Flame of Yahweh: Sexuality in the Old Testament* (Peabody, MA, 2007).

¹⁰⁹ Ellen G. White, *Bible Echo*, Apr 8, 1912. “Abel would not only love his brother, but, as the younger would also be subject to him.”

1 the creation headship principle has been firmly established in this paper, it is apparent that
2 Paul's justification, based on the priority of creation as explained in 1 Timothy 2:13, for the
3 teaching authority of men and submission of women in the church is indeed valid. Paul's
4 second argument for the teaching authority of men and the submission of women is based on
5 Eve's being deceived.

6 The serpent deceived Eve by approaching her as if she were the head, reversing the
7 headship principle. Moreover, Eve's attempt to usurp Adam's headship role and to enter a
8 higher sphere than that assigned to her led to her deception by the serpent. Adam then
9 knowingly yielded to her attempt to usurp his leadership position. Thus, we have Paul's second
10 justification for Adam's headship, "Adam was not deceived, but the woman being deceived, fell
11 into transgression" (v. 14). Gerhard Hasel supports this understanding: "Eve's deception is the
12 result of her asserting a role independent of and above Adam."¹¹⁰ Paul concludes by
13 encouraging women to remain in their dignified role and in their highest and most exalted
14 sphere of activity, bearing and nurturing children (v. 15). This sphere of activity would
15 complement their role of being submissive to male spiritual leadership in the church and home
16 (vv. 11-12).

17

18 **B. Context: Culture or Scriptural Evidence**

19 It is important to establish the context of 1 Timothy 2-3. Why did Paul give the
20 instructions in 1 Timothy 2 regarding the teaching authority between men and women and the
21 appointment of elders and deacons in chapter 3? Paul answers: "I write so that you may know
22 how you ought to conduct yourself in the house of God, which is the church of the living God"
23 (3:15). The theme of God's household runs throughout 1 Timothy and is used as the basis for
24 inferences about Christian behavior.¹¹¹ A thorough discussion of the church as the extended
25 family appears in *Recovering Biblical Manhood and Womanhood*.¹¹²

¹¹⁰ Gerhard Hasel, "Biblical Authority, Hermeneutics, and the Role of Women," Commission on the Role of Women (March, 1988), 42.

¹¹¹ Vern Sheridan Poythress, "The Church as Family: Why Male Leadership in the Family Requires Male Leadership in the Church," *Recovering Biblical Manhood and Womanhood*, ed. John Piper and Wayne Grudem (Wheaton, IL, 1998), 237-250.

¹¹² Ibid.

1 Evangelical feminists attempt to ignore the plain reading of Scripture and claim that Paul
2 was refuting radical feminists in first-century Ephesus¹¹³ who were teaching the priority of the
3 creation of Eve over Adam. For example, in 1 Timothy 2:13-14 Paul is “correcting a false
4 syncretistic theology in Ephesus which claimed that the woman was created first and man fell
5 first, and therefore women are superior to men.”¹¹⁴ This view was popularized by Richard and
6 Catherine Kroeger¹¹⁵ and has been adopted by Adventist feminists.¹¹⁶

7 The only biblical evidence for false teachers in Ephesus relates to men not women:
8 1) Hymenaeus and Alexander in 1 Timothy 1:19-20; 2) Hymenaeus and Philetus in 2 Timothy
9 1:17-18; and 3) Paul’s warnings to the elders in Ephesus that “from among your own selves will
10 arise *men* speaking twisted things” in Acts 20:30.¹¹⁷ If the church in Ephesus had been infected
11 with false doctrine brought in by radical feminists in Ephesus, Paul certainly would have
12 addressed the issue in his epistle to “saints in Ephesus” (v. 1).¹¹⁸ But the Epistle is silent on the
13 issue. In fact there is no historical evidence that a feminist culture existed in first-century
14 Ephesus¹¹⁹ as the Kroegers’ assert (their assertion is merely an assumption¹²⁰), and their claim
15 of a proto-Gnostic heresy that Eve was created first has no persuasive historical basis.¹²¹

¹¹³ John Stott warns that “the danger of declaring any passage of Scripture to have only local (not universal), and only transient (not perpetual) validity is that it opens the door to a wholesale rejection of apostolic teaching, since virtually the whole of the New Testament was addressed to specific situations.” *The Message of 1 Timothy & Titus* (Downers Grove: InterVarsity, 1996), 77.

¹¹⁴ Davidson, quoted in *Spectrum*, 10 Apr 2010; see: <http://spectrummagazine.org/node/2305> accessed 11-25-2013.

¹¹⁵ Richard C. Kroeger and Catherine C. Kroeger, *I Suffer Not a Woman: Rethinking 1 Timothy 2:11-15 in Light of Ancient Evidence* (Grand Rapids, MI, 1992). See also see Gordon P. Hugenberger, “Women in Church Office: Hermeneutics or Exegesis? A Survey of Approaches to 1 Tim 2:8–15,” *JETS* 35 [1992]: 341–360; and Sharon Gritz, *Paul, Woman Teachers, and the Mother Goddess at Ephesus: A Study of 1 Timothy 2:9-15 in Light of The Religious and Cultural Milieu of The First Century* [Lanham, MD: University Press of America, 1991].

¹¹⁶ For example, Nancy Vyhmeister, “Proper Church Behavior in 1 Timothy 2:8-15,” *Women in Ministry*, ed. Nancy Vyhmeister (Berrien Springs, MI, 1998), 335-354; and Carl P. Cosaert, “Paul, Women, and the Ephesian Church: An Examination of 1 Timothy 2:8-15,” *Theology of Ordination Study Committee*, July, 2013.

¹¹⁷ Sorke, 13.

¹¹⁸ The words “in Ephesus” of verse 1 are not found in some of the earliest witnesses (P46, Sinaiticus, Vaticanus). However, the critical editions of the NT include the words (albeit in brackets), indicating that they are original.

¹¹⁹ Grudem, *Evangelical Feminism and Biblical Truth*, Appendix 6 (Wheaton, IL, 2012), pp. 279-328. For three devastating reviews of the Kroegers’ work, see Wayne Grudem, “Three Reviews of *I Suffer Not a Woman* by Richard and Catherine Kroeger,” *Evangelical Feminism and Biblical Truth*, Appendix 6 (Wheaton, IL, 2012), 646-674 (See p. 654).

¹²⁰ S. M. Baugh, “Apostle Among the Amazons,” *Westminster Theological Journal* 56 (1994), 153-171.

¹²¹ “The Kroegers’ reconstruction is riddled with methodological errors. They nod in the direction saying that the heresy is ‘proto-gnostic,’ but consistently appeal to later sources to establish the contours of the heresy. The lack

1 Schreiner counters the Kroegers' argument that Ephesus faced 'proto-gnostic' forces
2 with the fact that such proposals "consistently appeal to later sources to establish the
3 contours of the heresy." Köstenberger and Schreiner refute an Ephesian feminism that
4 Paul is seeking to counter. In their assessment, "Ephesus never adopted an egalitarian
5 democratic ideology that would necessitate feminism, or minimally, the inclusion of
6 women in public offices." Historians are greeted by a "blaring silence regarding
7 feminism from curious explorers like Strabo and Pliny the Elder in their comments on
8 Ephesus. They give no hint whatsoever that women dominated this city." In short, "at
9 the time of Paul, the political climate was Roman—not feminist." Even the existence
10 of an Ephesian feminism remains nebulous as far as Paul's counsel is concerned;
11 cultural context remains a speculative construct based on which quote is selected,
12 what extra-biblical author is quoted.¹²²

13
14 William Mounce has assembled an extensive summary of the nature¹²³ of the Ephesian
15 heresy and the source¹²⁴ of the Ephesian heresy with emphasis on 1 Timothy 4:1-6 with respect
16 to the source of the heresy.

17 Finally, it is significant that "the apostle does not command Timothy in the form of a
18 second person imperative prohibition (i.e., 'you should not permit women'). Paul is *not* telling
19 Timothy what to do in his particular situation; rather, he communicates what *he* thinks is
20 universally appropriate for men and women in the church. This shifts the command from a
21 local Ephesian situation (Timothy's context) to a universally applicable mandate for all churches
22 across time and place.¹²⁵ His counsel to Timothy is the apostle's understanding of God's
23 prerogative as subsequently expressed in 1 Timothy 2:13-14."¹²⁶ "Our task . . . is to interpret
24 texts according to the intention of the author, and thus we must be careful that an
25 interpretation is not rejected merely because it offends our sense of justice."¹²⁷

of historical rigor . . . is nothing less than astonishing. They have clearly not grasped how one should apply the historical method in discerning the nature of false teaching in the Pauline letters." Thomas Schreiner, "An Interpretation of 1 Timothy 2:9-15: A Dialogue with Scholarship," *Women in the Church: A Fresh Analysis of 1 Timothy 2:9-15*, ed. A. J. Köstenberger, T. R. Schreiner, and H. S. Baldwin (Grand Rapids, MI, 1995), pp. 109-110. See also William D. Mounce, *Pastoral Epistles* (Word Biblical Commentary, vol. 46; Nashville: Nelson, 2000), see pp. lxxix-lxxxix; 130-143; 232-243, and citations therein.

¹²² Extended quote from Sorke, (see pp. 22-23 and citations therein).

¹²³ Mounce, *Pastoral Epistles* (Word Biblical Commentary) pp. lxxix-lxxxvi.

¹²⁴ *Ibid.*, 232-243.

¹²⁵ Contra Payne, 320, who does not consider this aspect.

¹²⁶ Sorke, 17.

¹²⁷ Thomas Schreiner, "An Interpretation of 1 Timothy 2:9-15: A Dialogue with Scholarship," 114, in Köstenberger, 85-120.

1 **Men and Women or Husbands and Wives?** The instruction in 1 Timothy 2 applies to
2 men and women in a universal sense and is not limited to husbands and wives as evangelical
3 feminists would contend.¹²⁸ For example, when Paul exhorts that “men pray everywhere” and
4 “in like manner . . . women adorn themselves,” a local Ephesus situation is not intended, and it
5 is unlikely that Paul could mean that only “*husbands* should pray, lifting holy hands” or that
6 only “*wives* should adorn themselves in modest apparel” (v. 8-9). Should not single women
7 dress modestly also? Paul does not say “I do not permit a woman to teach or exercise authority
8 over **her own** husband” (as he could have done). He simply says, “I do not permit a woman to
9 teach or exercise authority over a man.” Paul’s original readers likely would have understood
10 the directions in 1 Timothy 2 as applying to all men and women in the church.¹²⁹ The entire
11 context of 1 Timothy 1-5 appears to be concerned with conduct in the church as a whole, not
12 with the issue of husbands and wives in marriage.¹³⁰

13 However, if we allow that the passage is limited to husbands and wives in the church,
14 then married women would be excluded from exercising teaching authority over their
15 husbands in the church. This would also preclude appointment of married women as elders in
16 the church, since teaching is one of the qualifications of elders (1 Tim 3:2) and the elder must
17 also be able to rule his own house well (v. 4), a role reserved for men. The idea of gender
18 distinction in family government is plainly present in several other New Testament passages.
19 (See Col 3:18, Eph 5:22-24, 1 Peter 3:1, 5-6). If we interpret 1 Tim 2:12 that only married
20 women are excluded from teaching men, could a single woman fill that teaching/leadership
21 role? That would compound the problem. To put her in the elder’s position would not only
22 violate 1 Tim 3:2, but it would also forbid her to marry (since any future marriage would
23 disqualify her to teach men), and that would be contrary to nature and Scripture (Gen 2:24;

¹²⁸ Davidson, *Women in Ministry*, 278-280. Davidson argues strenuously that the teaching authority issue in 1 Tim 2:11-12 is limited to husband and wives, not to men and women in general in the church. The Greek word *gynē* can be translated either woman or wife, and the Greek word *anēr* can be translated either man or husband. He notes that whenever *anēr* and *gynē* are used together in close proximity, they should be translated husband and wife. But he fails to note that when this is the case, the subject under discussion is marriage, and there are decisive clues that require the meaning related to marriage. For example, “Likewise, wives, be subject to your **own** [*idios*] husbands” (1 Peter 3:1). There are also other passages in the NT where the terminology of “men” and “women” uses the plural of the Greek terms *anēr* and *gynē* with the clear connotation of “men and women” (*andres kai gynaikes*) as in Acts 5:14; 8:3, among others.

¹²⁹ Grudem, *Evangelical Feminism and Biblical Truth*, 297-299.

¹³⁰ See Sorke, 16-18 for evidence of universality (male and husband) in the context of Gen 2.

1 1 Cor 7:2; 1 Tim 4:3).¹³¹

2

3 **C. Elder Qualifications and Male Headship**

4 Immediately following Paul's instruction that a woman is not to teach or to have
5 authority over a man, he begins his instruction for the qualifications of elders with the
6 somewhat familiar phrase or formula: "This is a faithful saying."¹³² The "saying" itself can come
7 either before or after the introductory formula, depending on the subjective criterion of what
8 appears to be a doctrinal statement based on church tradition.¹³³ Paul uses this formula five
9 times (1 Tim 1:15; 3:1; 4:9; 2 Tim 2:11; Titus 3:8). In all five examples, the phrase thematically
10 links, by key words or ideas, what follows the formula with what precedes the formula, "This is
11 a faithful saying." William Mounce cites Oberlinner who concludes that the formula, "This is a
12 faithful saying," is the vehicle by which Paul introduces "sayings" as supporting evidence for the
13 argument that he is setting forth either before or after the formula.¹³⁴

14 For example, in 1 Timothy 1:15, the theme of *mercy and grace of Christ* precedes and
15 follows the formula, "This is a faithful saying." In 1 Timothy 4:9, the theme of *exercising to and*
16 *laboring in godliness* precedes and follows the formula. In 2 Timothy 2:11, ideas of *endurance*
17 *and salvation* precede and follow the phrase, "This is a faithful saying." In Titus 3:8, the theme
18 of *justification and its fruit* is expanded and explained prior to the formula, and the theme is
19 reconfirmed following the formula with the concise words, "these things I want to affirm
20 constantly" in 3:8. It is apparent that in 1 Timothy 2:12, the theme of *teaching within the*
21 *context of the male leadership/headship role*" precedes and follows the formula, "This is a
22 faithful saying" in 3:1. Here, Paul is linking the qualification for elder (man of one wife/able to
23 teach) in 1 Timothy 3 with the substance of 1 Timothy 2, especially 2:12, (not permitting a
24 woman to teach or have authority over a man). This linkage is a key that lends confirmation
25 that to qualify to be an elder, the candidate, at a minimum, must be a man.

¹³¹ Eugene Prewitt, <http://advindicate.com/?p=1842>

¹³² For the significance of the "faithful sayings" see Mounce, *Pastoral Epistles* (Word Biblical Commentary, vol. 46; Nashville: Nelson, 2000), pp. 48-49 and citations therein.

¹³³ *Ibid.*, p. 48.

¹³⁴ *Ibid.*

1 In the face of obvious gender distinctions in 1 Timothy 2-3, evangelical feminists claim
 2 that the qualifications for elder in 1 Timothy 3 are gender neutral.¹³⁵ Gender neutrality is
 3 completely foreign to the context of the passage in 1 Timothy 2-3. The passage exhibits a
 4 consistent contrast between the conduct of men and women in the worship setting of the
 5 church in chapters 2-3 of 1 Timothy. The male/female distinctions in 1 Timothy 2 parallels the
 6 male/female distinction in 1 Timothy 3 where the office of overseer is limited to the male. The
 7 development of how we ought to conduct ourselves in the household of God is highly gender
 8 specific in 1 Timothy 2-3 where we see a repetitive alternation of genders.¹³⁶

9	1 Tim 2:8	men
10	1 Tim 2:9-15	women (who in contrast to man can bear children—v. 15)
11	1 Tim 3:1-10	men (elders and deacons)
12	1 Tim 3:11	women
13	1 Tim 3:12-13	men (deacons)

14
 15 In addition, when Paul uses the phrase, “This is a faithful saying,” it is apparent he is
 16 linking the qualifications for elder in 1 Timothy 3:1-2 (man of one wife, able to teach) with the
 17 substance of 1 Timothy 2, especially 2:12, (not permitting a woman to teach or have authority
 18 over a man). Moreover, gender neutrality is contrary to the qualification that an
 19 overseer/elder must be able to rule one’s own house well, a role reserved for men. The idea of
 20 male gender distinction in family government is plainly present in several other New Testament
 21 passages, as previously noted. Finally, Ellen White is explicit when discussing the qualifications
 22 for elders—they must be men.

23 In the work of setting things in order in all the churches, and ordaining suitable *men* to act
 24 as officers, the apostles held to the high standards of leadership outlined in the Old
 25 Testament Scriptures.¹³⁷

26 There is a decided work to be done in our churches. Those chosen as elders of the churches
 27 are to be *men* of experience, who have a knowledge of the truth and are sound in the
 28 faith.¹³⁸
 29

¹³⁵ Teresa Reeve, “Shall the Church Ordain Women as Pastors: Thoughts Toward an Integrated New Testament Perspective,” Theology of Ordination Study Committee, July, 2013, 8-9. In a remarkable effort to deconstruct the plain reading of the text in 1 Tim 3:1-7, Teresa Reeve asserts that all the qualifications for elder are gender neutral.

¹³⁶ Sorke, 32.

¹³⁷ White, *The Acts of the Apostles*, 95, emphasis added.

¹³⁸ White, *Manuscript Releases*, Vol. 5, 449, emphasis added.

1 The qualifications of an elder are plainly stated by the apostle Paul: "If any be blameless,
2 the husband of one wife" . . . If a *man* does not show wisdom in the management of the
3 church in his own house, how can he show wisdom in the management of the larger church
4 outside?¹³⁹

5
6 Those who are thus appointed as overseers of the flock should be *men* of good repute;
7 men who give evidence that they have not only a knowledge of the Scriptures, but an
8 experience in faith, in patience, that in meekness they may instruct those who oppose the
9 truth.¹⁴⁰

10
11 **Qualifications and Headship.** Just as the camp of Israel was organized with officers and
12 elders to function effectively, in a similar manner Paul instructed both Timothy and Titus to
13 appoint as elders in the church men who met certain qualifications (1 Tim 3:1-7; Titus 1:5-9).
14 First and foremost an elder/overseer (these two terms are used interchangeably in Titus 1:5, 7)
15 must be a man (*anēr*). This qualification is in harmony with the creation-headship principle. The
16 text does not offer the flexibility of reading this phrase generically, "the spouse of one spouse."
17 The 59 occurrences of *anēr* ("man, husband") in the writings of Paul consistently refer to male
18 subjects.¹⁴¹ Generally speaking, such men would be married, demonstrating corresponding
19 faithfulness to their spouse; however, men in a polygamous relationship (even though unlikely
20 in Roman culture) or involved in unscriptural divorces and remarriage would be disqualified.¹⁴²
21 Paul is certainly appealing to the Edenic ideal of the unity of husband and wife as "one flesh."
22 Therefore, the elder (as well the deacon, 1 Tim 3:12) must be a man of one wife and able to
23 rule his own house well. Here Paul sees the church as an extension of the family, just as he
24 does in 1 Timothy 3:15 (see also 5:1-2).

25 The elder must exhibit headship responsibilities in the home and the church with the
26 ability to teach, namely, teaching in a headship role, being able to refute false teachers (1 Tim
27 3:2, 4-5; Titus 1:9). Since women are prohibited from teaching and exercising authority over a
28 man in the church (1 Tim 2:12), this would exclude women from serving as elders in the church.
29 Scripture clearly reveals that women such as Priscilla (Acts 18:26) were permitted to teach
30 under a variety of circumstances. "What then is the true meaning of 1 Timothy 2:12, 'I do not

¹³⁹ Ibid., emphasis added.

¹⁴⁰ White, *Gospel Workers*, 413, emphasis added.

¹⁴¹ Sorke, 34.

¹⁴² Grudem, *Evangelical Feminism and Biblical Truth*, 80.

1 permit a woman to teach or to have authority over a man? We see in the immediate context
2 (1 Tim 3:2) that a bishop/overseer must be 'able to teach.' There is evidently a kind of teaching
3 that women are not to do, but which elders must do. The teaching restricted to men must be
4 the teaching associated with leadership and full ecclesiastical authority."¹⁴³

5 "In light of the positive connotation of teaching per se in Timothy's direct context (1 Tim
6 4:11; 6:2; 2 Tim 2:2), Paul is prohibiting women from the authoritative teaching ministry of
7 elders in the church, along with exercising eldership authority over men (as evident in the
8 context of 1 Tim 3). Of course, the wider data of the NT includes women praying, prophesying,
9 caring for the church and generally spreading the good news. It would be a monumental
10 misunderstanding to conclude that women are excluded from ministry or public speaking. The
11 issue at stake is therefore not just the ordination of women per se, but the ordination of
12 women *to what position in ministry*."¹⁴⁴

13 Were women refused the position of elder because of cultural norms? If this were the
14 case, Paul had opportunity to argue this way. But how did he found his argument? He founded
15 it on the order of creation (1 Tim 2:13), the origin of sin (v. 14), the teaching of nature regarding
16 gender (1 Cor 11:3-16), and the model of ancient holy persons (1 Peter 3:1-6). And never once
17 did Paul or Peter found it on the custom of the Jews or of the Romans or the varied peoples
18 among whom they established churches.

19 **D. The Mystery of Godliness**

20 The creation headship principle, documented and confirmed in Genesis 2-3 with the
21 previous twenty-six points of identification, is the basis for Paul's instruction for the conduct of
22 men and women in the church (1 Tim 2) and the appointment of officers (1 Tim 3). Thus, he
23 concludes, "I write so that you may know how you ought to conduct yourself in the house of
24 God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and ground of truth. And without
25 controversy great is the mystery of godliness: God was manifested in the flesh, justified in the
26 Spirit, seen by angels, preached among the Gentiles, believed on in the world, received up in
27 glory" (vv. 15-16). The key that unlocks the principle undergirding Paul's instruction in 1
28 Timothy 2-3 is found in chapter 3 and verse 16.

¹⁴³ Moon, 30.

¹⁴⁴ Sorke, 20.

1 Although thousands of pages have been published in articles and books on Paul's
2 instruction in 1 Timothy 2-3 on the relationship of men and women in the church, relatively few
3 have explained why Paul concludes in 1 Timothy 3:16 with a statement on the mystery of
4 godliness. More often than not, the text is simply ignored when dealing with the roles of men
5 and women in the church by those both for and those against the ordination of women as
6 elders/ministers. William Mounce has assembled a number of explanations from a variety of
7 expositors for the relationship of 3:16 with the instructions chaps. 2-3.¹⁴⁵

8 But the question persists, Why does Paul conclude his instruction specifically about the
9 roles of men and women in the church with a statement about the mystery of godliness? What
10 bearing does the mystery of godliness have on the conduct of men and women in the church
11 and the appointment of church officers? The answer: The principle of creation headship and
12 submission we documented in Gen 2-3 underlies Paul's argumentation in 1 Timothy 2-3, and
13 this principle is a manifestation of the mystery of godliness.

14 **Pillar and Ground of Truth.** The church is the pillar and ground of the truth (1 Tim 3:15).
15 The "truth" is to be found in God's church. And God is the embodiment of truth (Deut 32:4).
16 The "truth" is who God is. And Jesus said, "I am the way, the truth, and the life" (John 14:6).
17 The truth that is to be found in God's church and exhibited by the conduct of his people (the
18 church) is the nature and character of God. The truth of who God is may be summarized: "God
19 is love" (1 John 4:8). That same love (the truth) *was supremely demonstrated* in the gift of
20 God's Son, Jesus Christ, to the world (the incarnation) and was epitomized at the cross of
21 Calvary where the Son "became obedient [to the Father] to the point of death, even the death
22 of the cross." The incarnation of the Son and His death on the cross is a visible manifestation
23 of the principle of headship and submission between the Father and the Son. Thus, the
24 principle of headship and submission is *inherent* in the nature of divine love, the very character
25 and nature of God who changes not. This principle was not a new or temporary expression of
26 divine love springing up at the incarnation, but it has been eternally existent.

27

¹⁴⁵ Mounce, *Pastoral Epistles* (Word Biblical Commentary) 224-232. Mounce suggests several possibilities, one being: The "hymn of 1 Tim 3:16" "looks back to the instruction of chaps. 2-3 by giving the reason those rules must be followed, because the church must support and protect the gospel" which is condensed in 3:16 (see p. 224).

1 **A. Authority and Submission among Angels**

2 Angels are sent forth as ministering spirits to minister to those who will inherit salvation
3 (Heb 1:4). They are charged with authority to help human beings (Ps 91:11). Ellen White makes
4 five pertinent observations regarding authority relationships among angels. First, they are
5 organized in ranks of authority, some higher, some lower. Commenting on Revelation 7:1-3, she
6 observed that the “*highest angel had authority to command the four angels to keep in check*
7 *the four winds until this work was performed, and until he should give the summons to let*
8 *them loose*” (TM 444). “*The very highest angels in the heavenly courts are appointed to work*
9 *out the prayers which ascend to God . . .*” (4BC 1173.5).

10 Second, she describes the roles of the commanding angels. After Lucifer’s rebellion,
11 before the creation of the world, “The angels were marshaled in companies with a commanding
12 angel at their head” (1SG 17). The “commanding angels” were sometimes presented to her as
13 taller than the other angels (EW 68, 272). It is interesting to note that “Eve was not quite as tall
14 as Adam. Her head reached a little above his shoulders.”¹⁴⁸ Third, she saw that each angel was
15 given a specific assignment. “Each angel has his own mission and is at his post, ready to
16 cooperate with you . . .” (*Southern Review* Oct 24, 1899). Fourth, angelic assignments could not
17 be altered by personal choice. “*Each angel has his particular post of duty, which he is not*
18 *permitted to leave for any other place*” (4BC 1173.5). Fifth, she notes that the angels’
19 motivation for obedience is purely that of love. The angels’ love for God,¹⁴⁹ their love for each
20 other,¹⁵⁰ for their commanding angels, and for the humans they minister to,¹⁵¹ are the
21 constraints that subdue powerful emotions¹⁵² and keep the angels in willing, joyful, freely
22 chosen *submission* to the divine *authority*.

23 “Meanings of authority and submission are radically different from their meaning in this
24 world. In a sinful world society, authority is often an opportunity to indulge selfishness and

¹⁴⁸ White, *The Spirit of Prophecy*, Vol. 1, 25.

¹⁴⁹ “The angels love to bow before God; they love to be near Him.” SC 94.

¹⁵⁰ “The same love that animates the angels, the same purity and holiness that reign in heaven, should, as far as possible, be reproduced upon earth.” FLB 65.

¹⁵¹ “On account of disease, or surrounding discouragements, some drift into despair,” but “the thought that Jesus loves them, *pure angels love them*, and our gracious Heavenly Father loves, pities and wants to save them, should inspire them with faith and confidence in God.” RH, May 4, 1876 par. 66, emphasis added.

¹⁵² See White, *Early Writings*, 150-151.

1 disregard for the rights of others—the very opposite of love.” In God’s kingdom “voluntary,
2 loving submission to loving authority often does not look like earthly authority/submission at
3 all. Rather it takes the form of gentle, thoughtful, unselfish leadership and eager
4 cooperation.”¹⁵³

6 **B. Authority and Submission at Creation**

7 Just as there is authority structure among the angels, so there was an authority
8 structure implicit in the original creation of the human race. In the NT we find inspired
9 commentary on Genesis 2. In two places, the apostle Paul makes explicit what is implicit in
10 Genesis 2. In 1 Timothy 2:13 he writes: “For Adam was formed first, then Eve.” In 1 Corinthians
11 11:8 he writes: “For man is not from the woman, but woman from the man. Nor was man
12 created for the woman, but the woman for man. For this reason the woman ought to have a
13 symbol of authority on her head, because of the angels.”¹⁵⁴ In these two NT passages, Paul
14 makes explicit what is implicit in in Genesis 2—the man was created first, and afterward the
15 woman; and this sequence signified a difference in their roles. There was no coercion, no
16 “ruling” on Adam’s part before the Fall, but he was the first created, the head of the woman,
17 and he held primacy of position and authority. The Scriptures affirm: the head of man is Christ,
18 the head of the woman is man, and the head of Christ is God (see 1 Cor 11:3). The headship of
19 man is based on the headship in the Trinity.

21 **VI. Eternal Headship/Submission in the Trinity**

23 An examination of systematic theologies and historical records will show that the
24 concept of equality of being and functional role differentiation within the Trinity has been the
25 orthodox view of the Godhead since the doctrine was first formulated in the Nicene Creed and
26 other ancient creeds. It has been the standard formulation of the Trinitarian dogma
27 throughout the church’s history, though it has been attacked on both sides. The eternal

¹⁵³ Moon, 6.

¹⁵⁴ Since the principle of authority and submission exists among angels in heaven, angels would expect to see the principle reflected in beings on earth. Alternatively, since man was created in the image of God and angels recognize the headship principle among members of the Trinity, the angels expect to see the principle manifested in “male and female” created in the image of God.

1 submission of the Son should not be confused with the heresy of the doctrine of
2 Subordinationism (non-equality of being).¹⁵⁵ Some in history have attacked the doctrine of the
3 deity of Christ, His essential equality with the Father (such as the doctrine of Subordinationism
4 which careless scholars have confused with the orthodox view – Eternal Submission). Others
5 have questioned how the Son can “proceed from” the Father and be eternally begotten of God
6 and yet still be equal. But the orthodox formulations of the doctrine of the Trinity have always
7 included both the equality of essence of the persons of the Trinity and differentiation of roles
8 within their existence.¹⁵⁶ Eternal Submission is encapsulated by this phrase, “ontological
9 equality [equality of being] but economic submission,” or “equal in being but subordinate in
10 role.”¹⁵⁷ Stephen Kovach and Peter Schemm have authored a comprehensive, but concise and
11 readable, historical summary of the eternal submission of the Son.¹⁵⁸ A condensed historical
12 summary of Functional Differentiation in the Trinity appears in the Appendix of this paper.

13 14 **A. God is the Head of Christ—Incarnation**

15 “But I want you to know that the head of every man is Christ, the head of woman is man,
16 and the head of Christ is God” (1 Cor 11:3). The author of Hebrews alludes to the submission of
17 the Son in the incarnation, coming to do the will of God, as he quotes the prophecy in Psalm 40.

¹⁵⁵ See “Subordinationism” in Karl Rahner and Herbert Vorgrimler, eds., *Dictionary of Theology*, 2d ed. (New York: Crossroad, 1981); Millard Erickson, *Concise Dictionary of Christian Theology* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1986); Frances Young, *The Westminster Dictionary of Christian Theology* (Philadelphia: Westminster, 1983); Joseph A. Komonchak, Mary Collins, Dermot A. Lane, eds., *The New Dictionary of Theology* (Wilmington, Delaware: Michael Glazier, 1987); see also Michael E. Bauman, “Milton, Subordinationism, and the Two-Stage Logos,” *Westminster Theological Journal* 48 (1986), 177-182.

¹⁵⁶ Peter Schemm, “Kevin Giles’s *The Trinity and Subordinationism*: A Review Article,” *JBMW* 7/2 (Fall 2002): 67-78; see also David Miller, <http://sbcvoices.com/the-eternal-subordination-of-the-son-is-the-historic-doctrine-of-the-church/> accessed 11-25-2013.

¹⁵⁷ Wayne Grudem’s *Systematic Theology* provides the following definition of eternal submission of the Son: “This truth about the Trinity has sometimes been summarized in the phrase “ontological equality but economic subordination,” where the word ontological means “being.” Another way of expressing this more simply would be to say “equal in being but subordinate in role.” Both parts of this phrase are necessary to the true doctrine of the Trinity. If we do not have ontological equality, not all the persons are fully God. But if we do not have economic subordination, then there is no inherent difference in the way the three persons relate to one another, and consequently we do not have the three distinct persons existing as Father, Son, and Holy Spirit for all eternity. For example, if the Son is not eternally subordinate to the Father in role, then the Father is not eternally “Father” and the Son is not eternally “Son.” This would mean that the Trinity has not eternally existed. Grudem, *Systematic Theology*, (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1998), 251.

¹⁵⁸ Stephen D. Kovach and Peter R. Schemm, Jr., “A Defense of the Doctrine of Eternal Subordination of the Son,” *Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society*, 42/3 (September 1999) 461–476.

1 Therefore, when He came into the world, He said: “Sacrifice and offering You did not
2 desire, But a body You have prepared for Me. In burnt offerings and *sacrifices* for sin You
3 had no pleasure. Then I said, ‘Behold, I have come—In the volume of the book it is written
4 of Me—To do Your will, O God.’” (Heb 10:5-7).

5
6 Following the incarnation, it is self-evident to even the casual reader of the Gospels that
7 Christ was subject to the Father’s authority. “I can of Myself do nothing. . . . I do not seek My
8 own will, but the will of the Father who sent Me” (John 5:30, 19); “I always do those things that
9 please Him” (8:29); God sends His Son into world (3:17). Christ was subject to the authority of
10 the Father and kept His commandments (15:10). The submission necessary to secure our
11 salvation is further illustrated by His struggle in the Garden leading to Calvary: “O My Father, if
12 it is possible, let this cup pass from Me; nevertheless, not as I will, but as You *will*” (Mt 26:39);
13 “[He] became obedient to the point of death, even the death of the cross” (Phil 2:8). The
14 equality of being of the Son with the Father is apparent in John 1:1-3 as well as Philippians 2:5-
15 8, where we see the equality as well as the willing submission of the Son to the Father. The role
16 of directing, sending, and commanding the Son belongs to the Father only.¹⁵⁹ Evangelical
17 feminists limit the submission of the Son to the Father strictly to the incarnation in relation to
18 solving the sin problem—sometimes referred to as *economic subordination*.¹⁶⁰ However, the
19 evidence is clear that an eternal economic relationship of authority and submission between
20 the Father and Son has existed in parallel with their equality of being throughout eternity.

21 **B. God is the Head of Christ—Eternity Past**

22 The Father-Son relationship of headship/submission existed before the creation—the
23 Sovereign of the universe had a Co-worker. Describing equality of being and
24 headship/submission in the Trinity existing in eternity past, Ellen White says, “The Sovereign of
25 the universe was not alone in His work of beneficence. He had an associate—a co-worker who
26 could appreciate His purposes, and could share His joy in giving happiness to created beings. . . .

¹⁵⁹ Grudem, *Evangelical Feminism and Biblical Truth*, 46.

¹⁶⁰ Rebecca Groothuis writes concerning economic subordination: “If Christ’s subordination is not limited to a specific project or function but characterizes His eternal relationship with God, then Christ is not merely functionally subordinate; he is by nature subordinate. . . . It is by no means clear from Scripture that the members of the Godhead are related to one another in terms of an eternal structure of rule and submission. This is a debatable point of theology on which conservative scholars disagree.” Quoted by Wayne Grudem, *Evangelical Feminism and Biblical Truth*, 406.

¹⁶⁰ Ellen G. White, *Selected Messages*, Vol. 1, 226.

1 Christ, the Word, the only begotten of God, was one with the eternal Father--one in nature, in
2 character, in purpose--the only being that could enter into all the counsels and purposes of
3 God.”¹⁶¹ The Sovereign of the universe—the One who has supreme rank, authority, and
4 power—had an associate, a co-worker. Although His Co-worker was invested with equal power
5 and authority, the Son of God willingly submitted to the Supreme Sovereign of the universe in
6 His role within the Godhead. Thus, we have inspired evidence for differentiation of roles in the
7 Godhead.

8 Although it might be assumed that the Son took on the “role of Son” at the incarnation
9 or at some point in eternity past, the inspired record suggests otherwise. The distinction in
10 names, “Father” and “Son,” has always existed, implying role differentiation. Christ has always
11 been the eternal, self-existent Son.

12 In His incarnation He gained in a new sense the title of the Son of God. . . . While the
13 Son of a human being, He became the Son of God in a new sense.¹⁶²

14
15 He was equal with God, infinite and omnipotent. . . . He is the eternal, self-existent
16 Son.¹⁶³

17
18 The Word existed as a divine being, even as the eternal Son of God, in union and
19 oneness with His Father. From everlasting He was the Mediator of the covenant.¹⁶⁴

20
21 The terms of this oneness between God and man in the great covenant of redemption
22 were arranged with Christ **from all eternity**. The covenant of grace was revealed to the
23 patriarchs. . . . Paul speaks of the gospel, the preaching of Jesus Christ, as "the
24 revelation of the mystery, which hath been kept in silence through **times eternal**, but
25 now is manifested . . ." (Romans 16:25, 26, R.V.).¹⁶⁵

26
27 The eternal submission of the Son to the Father is adamantly denied by evangelical
28 feminists. For example, one author, citing Kevin Giles and Paul Petersen, contends that “the
29 idea of eternal subordination is not biblical and ultimately undermines the doctrine of the

¹⁶¹ White, *Patriarchs and Prophets*, 34.

¹⁶² White, *Selected Messages*, Bk. 1, 226.

¹⁶³ White, *Evangelism*, 615.

¹⁶⁴ *Ibid.*

¹⁶⁵ White, *God’s Amazing Grace*, 129, emphasis added. See also *Signs of the Times*, August 24, 1891 par. 10.

1 Trinity.”¹⁶⁶ Petersen suggests that “Per definition a role cannot be permanent or eternal.”¹⁶⁷
2 This same author proceeds to expend considerable energy denigrating the term “role,” likening
3 it to “caste.”¹⁶⁸ However, the inspired evidence suggests that Christ has functioned in His role
4 as the “eternal Son of God,” in His role as “the Word” and in His role as “Mediator” from “times
5 eternal,” as revealed in the citations above. “Before men or angels were created, the Word was
6 with God, and was God.”¹⁶⁹

7 Commenting on Proverbs 8 (“I have been established [*nasak*] from everlasting,” v. 23),
8 this same author has previously asserted that the passage “refers to the time of Christ’s
9 installment [*nasak*] into a new office at the commencement of creation, and the particular role
10 to which He is installed is as the ‘Mediator’ between an infinite God and finite creatures.”
11 According to the same author, this installation into the office of Mediator includes the
12 installation into “His office of Sonship” as well as His role as the Word in “facilitating
13 communication between the Godhead and created beings.”¹⁷⁰ Although recently denigrating
14 the term “role” when discussing women and ordination,¹⁷¹ in commenting on Proverbs 8, the
15 author repeatedly refers to Christ as assuming the “role” of Mediator at the commencement of
16 creation. But it is virtually impossible to deny functional role differentiation in the Godhead, if
17 Christ assumed a *new* role of Mediator (between God and created beings) prior to creation.
18 Nevertheless, in spite of the obvious evidence, he categorically denies that Christ’s assuming
19 the role of Mediator or the “office of Sonship” implies any eternal or economic subordination

¹⁶⁶ Davidson, “Should Women Be Ordained as Pastors? Old Testament Considerations,” 14-16 and citations therein.

¹⁶⁷ *Ibid.*, 14.

¹⁶⁸ *Ibid.*, 13-14. Davidson quotes Kevin Giles extensively (*Trinity and Subordinationism*, 2002), who asserts that the term “role” is derived from the theater and humanistic sociology and is therefore not biblical. However, the term “position” is a standard synonym for role. Ellen White uses the term to describe the positions (roles) of husbands and wives (AH 87, 116, etc.), and Eve’s position at creation. “Eve had been perfectly happy by her husband’s side in her Eden home; but, like restless modern Eves, she was flattered with the hope of entering a higher sphere than that which God had assigned her. In attempting to rise above her original **position**, she fell far below it” (PP 59). Furthermore, role (position) differentiation is limited to husbands and wives, and the headship role of the elder in the church over both men and women. For a devastating review of Giles book, see Peter Schemm, “Kevin Giles’s *The Trinity and Subordinationism: A Review Article*,” *JBMW* 7/2 (Fall 2002): 67-78; see also Wayne Grudem, *Evangelical Feminism and Biblical Truth*, pp. 425-427 and references cited therein.

¹⁶⁹ Ellen G. White, *Evangelism*, 614.

¹⁷⁰ Richard M. Davidson, “Proverbs 8: A Christocentric Interpretation,” (Paper available from the author). See also Davidson, “Proverbs 8 and the Place of Christ in the Trinity,” *Journal of the Adventist Theological Society* 17, no. 1 (Spring 2006): 33-54.

¹⁷¹ Davidson, “Should Women Be Ordained as Pastors? Old Testament Considerations,” 14.

1 within the Godhead. In addition, based on the inspired record, we must remember that “Jesus
2 Christ is the same yesterday, today, and forever”; Christ has eternally existed in His office as the
3 Son, Mediator, and the Word by inherent voluntary submission to the Father. “*The Word*
4 *existed as a divine being, even as the eternal Son of God, in union and oneness with His Father.*
5 *From everlasting He was the Mediator of the covenant.*”¹⁷² Christ never has changed His
6 position, or role, or office in relation to the Father. The term “role” underscores the fact that it
7 is a relationship willingly entered into by the Son from eternity with respect to the Father, and
8 in this sense it is not permanent in the sense of somehow being inherent in the Son's being.

9 There had been no change in the position or authority of Christ. Lucifer's envy and
10 misrepresentation and his claims to equality with Christ had made necessary a statement
11 of the true position of the Son of God; but this had been the same from the beginning.
12 Many of the angels were, however, blinded by Lucifer's deceptions.¹⁷³

13
14 Christ was appointed to the office of Mediator from the creation of God, **set up from**
15 **everlasting** to be our substitute and surety.¹⁷⁴

16
17 Further evidence of the Father-Son relationship of headship/submission in eternity past
18 follows. The Father created all things through His Son and for His Son's benefit (John 1:3; 1 Cor
19 8:6; Heb 1:2, 10; Eph 3:9; Col 1:16); nevertheless, the Father who sits on the throne is
20 ultimately credited with the creation (Rev 4:11), though He accomplishes it through His Son
21 (Heb 1:2). The Father-Son relationship of headship/submission has always existed. The Father
22 “chose us in Christ before the foundation of the world” and “predestined us to be conformed to
23 the image of His Son” (Eph 1:4; Rom 8:29). The Father did the “choosing” and the
24 “predestinating” *in Christ*. The Son never “chose” or “predestined” us in the Father. The
25 relationship of roles is fixed. The authority-obedience relationship of the Father and the Son in
26 the Trinity has existed throughout eternity and is mandatory if we are to account for the
27 Father's eternal purpose to elect and save His people through His beloved Son, in Christ.¹⁷⁵

28 Furthermore, being obedient to the Father, the Son condescended to become the
29 Commander of the angels, known also as the Angel (Messenger) of the LORD, and Michael the

¹⁷² Ellen White, *Evangelism*, 615.

¹⁷³ White, *Patriarchs and Prophets*, 38.

¹⁷⁴ White, *Selected Messages*, Bk. 1, 74 emphasis added.

¹⁷⁵ Grudem, *Evangelical Feminism and Biblical Truth*, cited on 407.

1 Archangel, Commander of angels. (See Joshua 5:13-15; Ex 3:3-6, 13-14; Jude 9; 1 Thes 4:16;
2 John 5:28-29).

3 The authority-obedience relationship between the Father and the Son had always
4 existed simultaneously with their equality of being. This apparent paradox was misunderstood
5 by Lucifer, requiring the Father to declare to the host of heaven that He had invested His Son
6 with authority, endowed Him with unlimited power, and that the Son would carry out His will
7 and His purposes, but would do nothing of Himself alone. The one who invests authority in the
8 other possesses supreme authority. The writings of Ellen G. White confirm this eternal
9 headship/submission principle in the Godhead.

10 Satan in Heaven, before his rebellion, was a high and exalted angel, next in honor to
11 God's dear Son. . . . A special light beamed in his countenance, and shone around him
12 brighter and more beautiful than around the other angels; yet Jesus, God's dear Son, had
13 the preeminence over all the angelic host. He was one with the Father before the angels
14 were created. Satan was envious of Christ, and gradually assumed command which
15 devolved on Christ alone. The great Creator assembled the heavenly host, that he might in
16 the presence of all the angels confer special honor upon his Son. The Son was seated on
17 the throne with the Father, and the heavenly throng of holy angels was gathered around
18 them. The Father then made known that it was ordained by himself that Christ, his Son,
19 should be **equal with himself**; so that wherever was the presence of his Son, it was as his
20 own presence. The word of the Son was to be obeyed as readily as the word of the Father.
21 **His Son he had invested with authority** to command the heavenly host. Especially was his
22 Son to work in union with himself in the anticipated creation of the earth and every living
23 thing that should exist upon the earth. His Son would carry out his will and his purposes,
24 but would do nothing of himself alone. . . . There was contention among the angels. Satan
25 and his sympathizers were striving to reform the government of God. They were
26 discontented and unhappy because they could not look into his unsearchable wisdom and
27 ascertain his purposes in exalting his Son Jesus, and **endowing him with such unlimited**
28 **power and command**. They rebelled against the authority of the Son."¹⁷⁶
29

30 From eternity past the Father and the Son entered into a covenant with clasped hands,
31 that if the human race should be overcome by Satan's deceptions, the Son would become their
32 surety. And when Adam transgressed, the Son received permission from the Father to give His
33 own life as a ransom for the race. Ellen White confirms the submission of the Son to the
34 authority of the Father, who grants permission to His Son to carry out our redemption:

¹⁷⁶ Ellen White, *The Spirit of Prophecy*, Vol. 1, 17-22, emphasis added.

1 Christ was not alone in making His great sacrifice. It was the fulfillment of the
2 covenant made between Him and His Father before the foundation of the world was laid.
3 With clasped hands they had entered into the solemn pledge that Christ would become the
4 surety for the human race if they were overcome by Satan's sophistry.¹⁷⁷
5

6 Soon I saw Him approach the exceeding bright light which enshrouded the Father.
7 Said my accompanying angel, "He is in close converse with His Father." The anxiety of the
8 angels seemed to be intense while Jesus was communing with His Father. Three times He
9 was shut in by the glorious light about the Father, and the third time He came from the
10 Father we could see His person. His countenance was calm, free from all perplexity and
11 trouble, and shone with a loveliness which words cannot describe. He then made known to
12 the angelic choir that a way of escape had been made for lost man; that He had been
13 pleading with His Father, and had **obtained permission** to give His own life as a ransom for
14 the race.¹⁷⁸
15

16 One obtains permission only from another who has supreme authority. The role of the
17 submission of the Son to the Father was clearly understood by Lucifer and the angels to the
18 extent that the Son was perceived as being nearly equivalent to themselves. The full extent of
19 the equality of being and power of the Son to the Father had heretofore been misunderstood,
20 requiring a full declaration by the Father.
21

22 **C. God is the Head of Christ—Eternity Future**

23 After the ascension, Christ was exalted at the Father's right hand (Acts 2:33). To be
24 seated at the right hand of a king in the ancient world indicated that that one was second in
25 authority. Such was the aspiration of James and John in Matt 20:21-23. The Messianic promise
26 in Psalm 110, "Sit at My right hand until I make your enemies My footstool" (v. 1), points to the
27 authority of the Father. That Christ would be exalted to the right hand of God after His
28 ascension is found in numerous other passages (Acts 5:31; 7:55-56; Rom 8:34; Eph 1:20; Col 3:1;
29 Heb 1:13; 8:1; 10:12-13; 12:2; 1 Peter 3:22). The supreme authority always belongs to the
30 Father. "*The Son of God was next in authority to the great Lawgiver.*"¹⁷⁹ Thus we have
31 evidence that one can be subordinate in authority and still be equal in being, equal in

¹⁷⁷ White, *Manuscript Releases*, Vol. 12, 408.

¹⁷⁸ White, *Early Writings*, 126, emphasis added.

¹⁷⁹ White, *The Spirit of Prophecy*, Vol. 2, 9.

1 importance, and equal in personhood. If this is true of the Godhead, then the husband and
2 wife created in the image of God can be equal and different, too.¹⁸⁰

3 After His ascension Christ, functioning as our High Priest, intercedes in our behalf before
4 the Father, providing further evidence that the Father possesses supreme authority, since the
5 Son does not command the Father, but brings requests (Rom 8:34; Heb 7:25).

6 Throughout eternity the submission of the Son of God to the authority of the Father will
7 be manifested to the universe of unfallen beings. Forever to retain His human nature, uniquely
8 perpetuating the results of His incarnation, Christ will be one with His brethren, our Elder
9 Brother.

10 To assure us of His immutable counsel of peace, God gave His only-begotten Son to
11 become one of the human family, forever to retain His human nature. . . . God has adopted
12 human nature in the person of His Son, and has carried the same into the highest heaven. .
13 . . The I AM is the Daysman between God and humanity, laying His hand upon both. He
14 who is "holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners," is not ashamed to call us
15 brethren. Hebrews 7:26; 2:11. In Christ the family of earth and the family of heaven are
16 bound together. Christ glorified is our brother. Heaven is enshrined in humanity, and
17 humanity is enfolded in the bosom of Infinite Love.¹⁸¹

18
19 The Son will forever be subject to the authority of the Father. Paul says that after the
20 last enemy, death, is destroyed, "the Son Himself will also be subject¹⁸² to Him [the Father] who
21 put all things under Him [the Son], that God may be all in all" (1 Cor 15:28). Here we find
22 further confirmation of the eternal, willing submission of the Son to the authority of the Father
23 from eternity past to eternity future. In eternity past, prior to the foundation of the world, the
24 Son was subject to the Father; in the Creation the Son was subject to the Father; following the
25 incarnation the Son was subject to the Father; from His ascension, the Son has been subject to
26 the Father, sitting at His right hand; today, as He intercedes for us, the Son is subject to the
27 Father; and when death is destroyed, the Son will be eternally subject to the Father.

28 The confirming evidence that Christ will be subject to the Father throughout eternity is
29 the reality that the Son willingly condescended to encumber himself with a human nature,

¹⁸⁰ Grudem, *Evangelical Feminism and Biblical Truth*, 411.

¹⁸¹ White, *The Desire of Ages*, 25-26.

¹⁸² Greek, *hupotassō*: "to subject, to subordinate, put in subjection, be subject to, submit to." See the standard Greek Lexicon BDAG (2nd Edition), *hupotassō*, 848.

1 never to be the same, having become our Elder Brother. The entire Treasury of Heaven was
2 given to the human race. Christ has become the Second Adam, the new head of the human
3 race. Nevertheless, the Son is not eternally inferior to the Father; He is equal to the Father in
4 His being or essence, for He is fully God. This means that along with equality in attributes and
5 deity and value and honor, there is also a subordination in role, and the Son is subject to the
6 Father in authority.¹⁸³ The principle of headship, submission, and equality, inherent in divine
7 love and the nature of the Trinity, was ordained of God to be inherent in the creation of
8 mankind, male and female, “made in Our image.”

9 **D. Eternal Submission of the Holy Spirit**

10 The principle of headship/submission is manifested also in the relation of the Holy Spirit
11 with the Son and the Father. The Son is subject to the Father and the Holy Spirit is subject to
12 the Son. The Father sends the Son into world, and the Son sends the Holy Spirit into world from
13 the Father (John 15:26). Just as the Son’s mission was to reveal and glorify the Father (14:9;
14 17:4), the Holy Spirit will reveal and glorify the Son; and He will declare and testify of Christ
15 (15:26; 16:14). The Holy Spirit listens to and is submissive to the authority of the Father and the
16 Son. He never “speaks on His own authority,” but speaks only that which “He hears” from the
17 Father or the Son (John 16:13). The Holy Spirit, being subject to the Father, makes intercession
18 for the saints according to the will of God (Rom 8:27). “The heavenly trio”—the Father, Son,
19 and Holy Spirit—are inherently equal in being, yet the Son is submissive to Father and the Holy
20 Spirit is submissive to the Father and the Son in their respective functional roles.

21 Since God never changes, “Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today, and forever” (Heb
22 13:8; also Mal 3:6; James 1:17), the equality, headship, and submission, inherent in divine love
23 and the nature of the Trinity has always existed and will continue to exist in the ceaseless ages.
24 And likewise in the years of eternity, as they roll, these principled characteristics will be fully
25 reproduced in the nature of redeemed mankind. The restoration of the image of God will have
26 been completed in the church of the living God.

27

28

¹⁸³ Grudem, *Evangelical Feminism and Biblical Truth*, 411, 414

1 VII. Restoration of the Image of God

2 With the creation of mankind, God brought about a new and distinct order of living
3 beings, made in the image of God. *“All heaven took a deep and joyful interest in the creation of*
4 *the world and of man. Human beings were a new and distinct order. They were made ‘in the*
5 *image of God,’ and it was the Creator’s design that they should populate the earth.”*¹⁸⁴ The
6 myriad of angels were not created in the image of God, nor were any other unfallen beings.
7 This distinct privilege was given to humanity. Speaking generically, Ellen White wrote, *“God*
8 *created man a superior being; he alone is formed in the image of God, and is capable of*
9 *partaking of the divine nature, of cooperating with his Creator and executing His plans.”*¹⁸⁵

10 Not only the moral image of God but the principle of headship/submission, inherent in
11 divine love, was instilled in the creation of man, male and female. But this image was nearly
12 obliterated with the inception of sin. The overarching purpose of the gospel is to restore the
13 image of God—including the principle of headship/submission—in mankind, namely in the
14 church, the pillar and ground of truth. *“The central theme of the Bible, the theme about which*
15 *every other in the whole book clusters, is the redemption plan, the restoration in the human soul*
16 *of the image of God.”*¹⁸⁶

17 VIII. Fallacious Objections to the Biblical Principle of Headship/Submission

18 A. Mutual Submission

19
20
21 Ephesians 5:21 says, “submitting yourselves one to another in the fear of God.” Those in
22 favor of the ordination of women as elders/ministers say that this verse teaches “mutual
23 submission,” meaning that just as wives have to submit their husbands, so husbands have to
24 submit to their wives. Doesn’t the text say that we have to submit “one to another”? And this
25 presumably means that there is no unique submission that a wife owes to her husband, and no
26 unique authority that a husband has over his wife.¹⁸⁷

¹⁸⁴ White, *Review and Herald*, February 11, 1902.

¹⁸⁵ Idem, *Review and Herald*, April 21, 1885, emphasis added.

¹⁸⁶ White, *Education*, 125.

¹⁸⁷ Portions of the ensuing discussion are taken from Grudem, *Evangelical Feminism and Biblical Truth*, 188-200; Idem, “The Myth of ‘Mutual Submission,’” <http://www.rockvalleybiblechurch.org/ResourcesAndLinks/MythOfMutualSubmission.htm> accessed 11-26-2013.

1 The Bible clearly states that believers (male and female) are to be considerate of one
2 another’s needs, and they are to esteem others better than themselves (Phil 2:3-4). Peter
3 admonishes the saints “to be submissive to one another,” “clothed with humility” (1 Peter 5:5).
4 Thus, there is a sense in which the members of the body of Christ must be willing to receive
5 counsel from one another. “God's people must be subject to one another, counsel and advise
6 with each other, and the lack of one must be supplied by the sufficiency of the other. There is a
7 lack of humility.”¹⁸⁸ In this context there is a mutuality that Scripture does require: “husbands,
8 love your wives as Christ loved the church and gave Himself for her”; “fathers, do not provoke
9 your children to wrath”; “masters, do good to your servants, giving up threatening”, etc. This is
10 where we find mutuality, not in a shared authority, but in consideration of one another.

11 However, in a strict sense, the context of Ephesians 5-6 makes clear what Paul means by
12 “submitting one to another.” Wives are to be subject to¹⁸⁹ their husbands (5:22-24), children
13 are to be subject to their parents (6:1-3), and servants are to be subject to their masters (6:5-8).
14 Paul does not tell husbands to be subject to their wives, or parents to be subject to their
15 children (nullifying all parental authority), or masters to be subject to their servants. The idea
16 of mutual submission is absent in the overall context of Eph 5-6. Paul is defining a specific kind
17 of submission to an authority: wife to the authority of her husband; children to parents;
18 servants to masters. Moreover, wives are to submit to their husbands as the church is to submit
19 to Christ (5:24). Here mutual submission is clearly excluded where Christ would submit to the
20 church. Wives are repeatedly told to be subject to their husbands in the NT (Eph 5:22-24; Col
21 3:18; Titus 2:5; 1 Peter 3:1-6). In *not one* case is it stated that husbands are to be subject to
22 their wives; however, husbands are admonished to love their wives as Christ loved the
23 church—a sense of mutuality between husbands and wives. We may also note a unique
24 concept of mutuality in the marital relationship where the “wife does not have authority
25 [*exousiazo*] over her own body, but the husband does. And likewise the husband does not have

See also Stephen Bohr, “A Study of 1 Peter 2:9,10 and Gal 3:28,” Theology of Ordination Study Committee, July, 2013, 32-35.

¹⁸⁸ White, *Manuscript Releases*, Vol. 15, 336.

¹⁸⁹ Some NT manuscripts lack the verb “submit to” (*hupotassō*) in Eph 5:22. But many more manuscripts contain the verb as many popular translations attest. Moreover, the verb exists in 5:21 and 5:24 which makes the context clear that 5:22 demands the idea of submission.

1 authority over his own body, the wife does" (1 Cor 7:3-4). However, within the context of
2 Ephesians 5-6 and the use of Greek word *hupotassō* (to submit) , no author saw mutual
3 submission as Paul's motif until the evangelical feminist movement began to gain prominence
4 in the late 1960s and early '70s.

5 In the NT, the Greek word *hupotassō* (to submit), carries the basic meaning of
6 submission to an authority. Although some have claimed that the word can mean "be
7 thoughtful and considerate, act in love" (toward another), there is little evidence to show that
8 any first-century Greek speaker would have understood it that way, for the term always implies
9 a relationship of submission to an authority. Examples of how this word is used elsewhere in
10 the New Testament are illustrated below:

- 11 • Jesus is subject to the authority of his parents (Luke 2:51)
- 12 • demons are subject to the disciples (Luke 10:17: clearly the meaning "act in love, be considerate"
- 13 cannot fit here!)
- 14 • citizens are to be subject to government authorities (Rom 13:1, 5; Tit 3:1, 1 Pet 2:13)
- 15 • the universe is subject to Christ (1 Cor 15:27; Eph 1:22)
- 16 • unseen spiritual powers are subject to Christ (1 Pet 3:22)
- 17 • Christ is subject to God the Father (1 Cor 15:28)
- 18 • church members are to be subject to church leaders (1 Cor 16:15-16 [cf. 1 Clement 42:4]; 1 Pet.
- 19 5:5)
- 20 • wives are to be subject to their husbands (Col 3:18; Tit 2:5; 1 Pet 3:5; compare Eph 5:22, 24)
- 21 • the church is subject to Christ (Eph 5:24)
- 22 • servants are to be subject to their masters (Tit 2:9; 1 Pet 2:18)
- 23 • Christians are subject to God (Heb 12:9; Jas 4:7)

24 None of these relationships are ever reversed. Husbands are never told to be subject
25 (*hupotassō*) to wives, nor the government to citizens, nor masters to servants, nor the disciples
26 to demons. Clearly parents are never told to be subject to their children! In fact, the term
27 *hupotassō* is used outside the NT to describe the submission and obedience of soldiers in an
28 army to those of superior rank.¹⁹⁰ The Greek word, *hupotassō*, is never "mutual" in its force; it
29 is always one-directional in its reference to submission to an authority.

30 What then does "one another" mean in Ephesians 5:21? It means "some to others," not
31 "everyone to everyone." The meaning of *hupotassō*, which always indicates one-directional
32 submission to an authority, prevents the sense "everyone to everyone" in this verse. And the

¹⁹⁰ See, for example, Josephus, *War* 2.566, 578; 5.309; compare the adverb in 1 Clement 37:2). The *Liddell-Scott-Jones Lexicon* even defines *hupotassō* [passive] to mean "be obedient" (p. 1897).

1 following context (wives to husbands, children to parents, servants to masters) shows this
2 understanding to be true. Therefore, it is not "mutual submission," but submission to
3 appropriate authorities, which Paul is commanding in Ephesians 5:21.

4 **B. Neither Male and Female: Galatians 3:28**

5 Rebecca Groothuis is an evangelical feminist and is representative of those who claim
6 that Galatians 3:28 teaches that there is full gender equality in the kingdom of God with the
7 leadership role of elder/minister open to all. "Of all texts that support biblical equality,
8 Galatians 3:26-28 is probably the most important. . . [I]t is a broadly applicable statement of the
9 inclusive nature of the New Covenant, whereby all groups of people, regardless of their
10 previous religious status under the law, have now become one in Christ."¹⁹¹

11 "Many evangelical egalitarians [those in favor of women's ordination] have attempted
12 to frame the women's ordination issue along the lines of slavery. It is contended that the
13 submission of wives to their husbands in the home and women to male leadership in the
14 church is akin to slaves being subject to their masters. It is argued that as slaves have been
15 emancipated from their masters so women must be emancipated from being subject to the
16 husband in the home and to men in the church. But is the comparison valid?

17 "[T]he distinction between male and female was part of God's original pre-fall plan at
18 creation while slavery was a human institution established by sinful man. If read carefully, the
19 Bible provides the principles that would eventually lead to the eradication of slavery. But there
20 is no evidence in Scripture that it is God's plan to eradicate the functional differences between
21 male and female.

22 "Some have sought to make the struggle for women's ordination a matter comparable
23 to the civil rights struggle for racial equality in the decade of the 60's. They argue that the
24 subjection of women to male headship in the home and in the church is a deprivation of their
25 equal rights with men and thus is tantamount to discrimination. But upon careful scrutiny this
26 comparison falls on its face. . . . But ordination to pastoral leadership is *not an inalienable right*
27 but rather a *calling* that is *not* given by God to all His creatures."¹⁹²

¹⁹¹ Rebecca Merrill Groothuis, *Good News for Women: A Biblical Picture of Gender Equality* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Book House, 1995), 25-26.

¹⁹² Bohr, 13

1 The text of Galatians 3:28 does not say that the distinction between Jews and Greeks is
2 abolished, and the distinction between slaves and free is abolished, and the distinction
3 between male and female is abolished. To say that we are “one” means we are *united* based on
4 our redemption in Christ Jesus. There should be no factions or divisions among those who have
5 embraced Christ as Savior and Lord. The context of the passage in Galatians 3 is redemption,
6 justification in Christ, and baptism into Christ, not full gender equality without gender
7 distinctions in the home and the church. The members of the body of Christ do not all have the
8 same function, although we are one body. “For as we have many members in one body, but all
9 the members do not have the same function, so we, *being* many, are one body in Christ, and
10 individually members of one another (Rom 12:4-5; see also 1 Cor 12:4-31). “The context of
11 [Galatians 3:28] shows that Paul is dealing with eligibility for baptism, not ministry. . . . Paul is
12 not talking about roles of the sexes here [and] therefore this passage is quite irrelevant”¹⁹³ to
13 Paul’s teaching concerning functional roles of men and women in the church in 1 Corinthians 11
14 and 1 Timothy 2-3.

15 In quick succession Paul cements a vertical articulation of human-divine relationships.
16 The particular context and content of Gal 3:28 is salvation, not gender-specific service
17 (let alone its abrogation). In short, Gal 3:28 epitomizes relations between humans and
18 God (vertical), not human-to-human relations (horizontal). Every single verse
19 establishes this vertical dynamic:

- 20
- | | | |
|----|----------|--|
| 21 | Gal 3:26 | “For you are all sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus.” |
| 22 | Gal 3:27 | “For as many of you as were baptized into Christ have put on Christ.” |
| 23 | Gal 3:28 | “There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave or free, there is
24 neither male nor female; for you are all one in Christ Jesus.” |
| 25 | | |
| 26 | Gal 3:29 | “And if you are Christ’s, then you are Abraham’s seed, and heirs
27 according to the promise.” |
| 28 | | |

29 After all, conversion does not change one’s ethnicity, status, or gender; the male
30 remains male, the slave was still a slave post-conversion. In view is the status of *any*
31 human before God, not before other humans. The message of Gal 3:28 is precisely
32 that human perceptions of cultural, economic, or gender advantage/disadvantage do
33 not correlate to ontological value and salvation status with God. This statement makes
34 even more sense if functional differentiations are maintained, not abrogated. Paul’s

¹⁹³ Gordon Wenham, “The Ordination of Women: Why is it so Diverse?” *Churchman* 92 (1978), 312.

1 point is clear: neither ethnicity, economics, nor gender grant one person privileged
2 soteriological status before God over another person. This text does not cancel
3 gender-specific ontology. Finally, NT scholarship schedules 1 Timothy *after* Galatians –
4 in other words, Gal 3:28 does not prevent Paul from defining certain ministry roles in
5 gender-specific terms.¹⁹⁴
6

7 What is perhaps most significant about the categories listed in Gal. 3:28 is that all the
8 distinctions beside those between male and female are man-made. Race, nationality, social
9 status, and economic station are all human constructs, products of the age of sin. The Bible
10 doesn't say, Black and white created He them, nor does it say, Patrician, plutocrat, plebeian,
11 and peasant created He them. And certainly the Bible doesn't say, Slave and free created He
12 them. Here we see the best reason for rejecting the analogy between slavery and Biblical
13 gender-role distribution. Slavery came after the Fall. By contrast, the evidence we have seen
14 from Scripture is conclusive that gender-role distinctions began at creation. Put simply,
15 Galatians. 3:28 is about the universal availability of salvation opportunities. It does not deny
16 the universal Biblical affirmation of spiritual male headship.

17 If gender distinctions are abolished in Galatians 3:28, then marriage between two men
18 or two women becomes a new liberty in Christ, as some evangelical feminists are advocating.¹⁹⁵
19 But the Bible forbids this aberrant behavior (Lev 18:22; 20:13; Rom 1:26-27; 1 Co 6:9; 1 Tim
20 1:10). Although Galatians 3:28 endorses the abolition of social injustice (including slavery and
21 caste systems) and rivalry and pride among believers, nevertheless gender distinction between
22 male and female in marriage, in the home, and in the church have timeless application.¹⁹⁶ If we
23 take the entire New Testament as the inspired word of God in the New Covenant today, then
24 any claim that Galatians 3:28 should overrule other texts such as Ephesians 5 and 1 Timothy 2
25 would be a claim that the apostle Paul contradicts himself, and therefore that the Word of God
26 contradicts itself. We allow the Bible to interpret itself.¹⁹⁷

¹⁹⁴ Sorke, 53-54.

¹⁹⁵ *Spectrum Magazine* promotes "Seventh-Gay Adventists" film.

<http://spectrummagazine.org/blog/2013/11/24/seventh-gay-adventists-film-now-available-online> accessed 11-27-2013.

¹⁹⁶ See Grudem, *Evangelical Feminism*, 183-187; Sorke, 48-53; Bohr, 13-47 for further insights on Gal 3:28.

¹⁹⁷ The method of interpretation (hermeneutics) often seen in feminists expositions of Gal 3:28 derives from a form of literary criticism called "destruction" (see above, note 3). Ingo Sorke perceptively observes "Galatians 3:28 represents a hermeneutic, catalyzed by Krister Stendahl's 'progressive hermeneutic.' . . . With astounding

1 “Some egalitarians have used the following quotation from the pen of Ellen White¹⁹⁸ to
2 bolster their case in favor of ordinations to pastoral leadership without regard to gender:

3 “No distinction on account of nationality, race, or caste, is recognized by God. He is the
4 Maker of all mankind. All men are of *one family* by creation, and all are one through
5 redemption. Christ came to demolish every wall of partition, to throw open every
6 compartment of the temple, that every soul may have free access to God. His love is so
7 broad, so deep, so full, that it penetrates everywhere. It lifts out of Satan's circle the
8 poor souls who have been deluded by his deceptions. It places them within reach of the
9 throne of God, the throne encircled by the rainbow of promise. In Christ there is neither
10 Jew nor Greek, bond nor free. All are *brought nigh* by His precious blood. (Galatians
11 3:28; Ephesians 2:13)

12
13 “Are those who use this quotation in this manner respecting its legitimate context? First
14 of all, it is important to underline that although Ellen White is clearly alluding to Galatians 3:28
15 she did not include the phrase ‘male or female’ in this quotation. Not only did she stop short of
16 quoting the last phrase of the verse, but at the beginning of the quotation she refers only to a
17 distinction of nationality, race and caste. Gender is totally absent from the quotation!”¹⁹⁹

18 “Galatians 3:28 argues that Christ’s death created an opportunity for humans to change
19 their status from slaves to sons, thus rendering them heirs and therefore receiving adoption
20 status regardless of ethnicity, status, or gender. The text cannot be used to annihilate all gender
21 distinctions or functional differentiations in church practice as profiled by the same author.
22 Social and ecclesiastical implications fall outside the context of Gal 3:28.”²⁰⁰

23 Galatians 3:28 articulates the vertical dimension of human-divine relationships; it does
24 not erase all gender roles or functional distinctions.

25

transparency he concedes that ‘the ideology or dogma which underlies both the movements of emancipation and the demand for the ordination of women is a secularized philosophy of equality with roots in the Enlightenment or in Hellas or in the cult of Baal—in any case alien to the Bible.’ Stendahl’s hermeneutical bedfellow F. F. Bruce does not hide his bias either when he establishes his exegetical criterion: ‘Whatever in Paul’s teaching promotes true freedom is of universal and permanent validity; whatever seems to impose restrictions on true freedom has regard to local and temporary conditions.’ In the estimation of Allen, this defines a hermeneutic that has descended into unsustainable relativism: . . . ‘Every domain of inquiry and every value is relative to a culture and even to subcultures.’” See Sorke, 48-49 and citations therein. On-line edition: <http://www.adventistarchives.org/adam,-where-are-you.pdf>, 51-52.

¹⁹⁸ Ellen White, *Christ Object Lessons*, 386.

¹⁹⁹ Bohr, 43.

²⁰⁰ Sorke, 53.

1 **C. Priesthood of All Believers: 1 Peter 2:9, 10**

2 Does the NT doctrine of the “priesthood of all believers mean that both men and
3 women are qualified to fill positions of leadership in the church as elders/ministers? Although
4 the exact expression, “priesthood of all believers” does not exist in Scripture or the Writings of
5 Ellen G. White, the concept of a “priesthood” of believers is quite apparent. “But you are a
6 chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, His own special people, *that* you may
7 proclaim the praises of Him who called you out of darkness into His marvelous light; who once
8 were not a people but are now the people of God, who had not obtained mercy but now have
9 obtained mercy” (1 Pet 2:2-10). God’s people are to be a “holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual
10 sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ” (v. 5). The apostle Peter extracts the “royal
11 priesthood” concept from Exodus 19:6, where at Sinai God declares that Israel was to be “a
12 kingdom of priests and holy nation.” But it must be noted that Moses distinguishes between
13 the people of Israel as a “kingdom of priests” in Exodus 19:6 and the appointed ministerial
14 priests in 19:22, 24 (a precursor to the Levitical priesthood). The concept of a priesthood of all
15 believers already existed in the Old Testament period, and therefore it should be not
16 understood as a revolutionary concept introduced in the NT. So in what way is the NT “royal
17 priesthood” similar to the OT “kingdom of priests?”

18 Peter is echoing the covenant language of Exodus 19 in 1 Peter 2, indicating that “This
19 covenant is of *just as much force today* as it was when the Lord made it with ancient Israel.”²⁰¹
20 White continues the linkage of Exodus 19 with the “royal priesthood” of the NT:

21 The Lord made a special covenant with his *ancient Israel* if they would prove faithful, “Now,
22 therefore, if ye will obey my voice indeed, and keep my covenant, then ye shall be a peculiar
23 treasure unto me above all people: for all the earth is mine. And ye shall be unto me a
24 kingdom of priests, and an holy nation.” He addresses his commandment-keeping people in
25 *these last days*, “But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a
26 peculiar people; that ye should show forth the praises of Him who hath called you out of
27 darkness into his marvelous light.”²⁰²

28 So it is clear that the Scripture is calling both OT and NT Israel, both dispensations, to be
29 a royal priesthood. But is this an indication that both genders were being called by God to be
30 “priests” or spiritual leaders? The answer is “no” for both the OT royal priesthood and in the NT

²⁰¹ White, *God’s Amazing Grace*, 142, emphasis added.

²⁰² Idem, PH011, 16, emphasis added.

1 royal priesthood. In the OT God appointed men from the tribe of Levi to the priesthood, and in
2 the NT God appoints men who rule their own house well (1 Tim 3:1-7; Titus 1:5-9).

3 The people of Israel had God-given responsibilities as a kingdom of priests. Likewise,
4 what is our function as members of the royal priesthood? Jesus Christ as our heavenly High
5 Priest functions as our Mediator with God, the Father. “There is one God and one Mediator
6 between God and men, the Man Christ Jesus” (1 Tim 2:5). As part of the royal priesthood, we
7 too have a function as a “mediator.”

8 “Every member of Israel belonged to the covenant community and therefore was
9 responsible to mediate the gospel *to the world* in order to draw out those who were in
10 darkness unto Christ’s marvelous light. That is to say, every Israelite who became a member of
11 God’s church at Mt. Sinai was called by God to be a missionary with the specific purpose of
12 preparing the world for the arrival of the Messiah. The fact that all Israel was called to mediate
13 Christ to the world did not mean that the office of the priesthood was unnecessary. This role of
14 Israel as God’s mediator of the gospel to the nations was beautifully portrayed by the Gospel
15 Prophet Isaiah:

16 “‘It is too small a thing that You should be My Servant to raise up the tribes of Jacob,
17 and to restore the preserved ones of Israel; I will also give You as a light to the Gentiles, that
18 You should be My salvation to the ends of the earth.’” (Isaiah 49:6)²⁰³

19 God calls His royal priesthood today, without gender distinction, to “offer up spiritual
20 sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ” (1 Peter 2:5). This, however, is not a
21 universal call to the office of elder/minister. “So what are the spiritual sacrifices that *all*
22 *Christians* must now offer without regard to gender? David, who was *not a priest*, offered such
23 sacrifices already in the Old Testament. In his penitential Psalm of repentance David prayed to
24 God: ‘For You do not desire sacrifice, or else I would give it; You do not delight in burnt offering.
25 The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit, a broken and a contrite heart—these, O God, You will
26 not despise’ [Psalm 51:16-17].”²⁰⁴ In a similar manner the apostle Paul exhorts the people of
27 God, “by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to

²⁰³ Bohr, 9.

²⁰⁴ Ibid., 9-10. In other texts sacrifices are identified with praise (Psalm 116:17; Hebrews 13:15, 16), joy (Psalm 27:6), thanksgiving (Psalm 107:22; Hebrews 13:15, 16) and mercy (Hosea 6:6).

1 God, which is your reasonable service. And do not be conformed to this world, but be
2 transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what is that good and
3 acceptable and perfect will of God” (Romans 12:1-2). Christians are a royal priesthood chosen
4 with the specific purpose of declaring to the world the praises of Him who called them out of
5 darkness into His marvelous light (1 Peter 2:9).

6 From the beginning it has been God's plan that *through His church* shall be reflected to
7 *the world* His fullness and His sufficiency. The members of the church, those whom He
8 has called out of darkness into His marvelous light, are to show forth His glory.²⁰⁵
9

10 In both the OT and NT dispensations, the entire people was called as a royal priesthood
11 was called to mediate God’s truth to the nations, but neither in the OT or the NT dispensation
12 does this qualify all to officiate as priests or elders/ministers/pastors without regard to gender
13 in the narrow sense of the word. Even of the men, only a relatively few served in this way.

14 One truth of Scripture (the priesthood of all believers) does not override or deny other
15 passages of Scripture specifying the appointment of elders/ministers (1 Timothy 2:12; 3:2; Titus
16 1:6 along with passages that establish a pattern of male leadership in the church). The Bible is
17 internally consistent, and its parts will not contradict each other. Thus, Psalm 119 confirms this
18 principle when it says, “The *sum* of your word is truth, and every one of your righteous rules
19 endures forever” (v. 160).

20 “The ‘priesthood of believers’ was Luther’s slogan asserting that every believer had the
21 right (authority) to read the Bible for themselves, every believer had received the illumination
22 of the Holy Spirit to interpret Scripture for themselves, and every believer had the standing
23 with God to approach Him directly in Jesus’ name. In the 16th century, all of these were
24 thought to be exclusive prerogatives of priests. So the slogan ‘priesthood of believers’ spoke a
25 powerful truth to the members of the medieval church, which had taught that only the priests
26 had direct access to God, Christ, the Holy Spirit, and Scripture.

27 “In the 21st century, however, the social and political context is so different that the
28 term ‘priesthood of every believer’ acquires some actually unbiblical connotations. In the
29 context of modern democracies, ‘every member a minister’ has a subtle but pervasive

²⁰⁵ White, *The Acts of the Apostles*, 9, emphasis added.

1 democratizing influence on the concept of church, which results in a great diminution of the
2 'specialness' of the ordained ministry. . . .

3 "To reassert the special responsibilities of ordained ministers, and restore the biblical
4 difference between ordained men and unordained men and women would do much to restore
5 the rightful authority of the ministers."²⁰⁶

6

7 **D. The Case of Deborah**

8 Does Deborah's role as a prophet and judge in Israel show that women can assume
9 leadership over men in the church? The period of the judges following the death of Joshua and
10 his contemporary elders was a time when the order established by Moses had degenerated and
11 disorder ensued, in which "everyone did what was right in his own eyes." Over a period of 200
12 years, apostasy was followed by repentance numerous times, and God called specific men to
13 judge Israel. Deborah was called of God to be a prophetess, but there is no scriptural evidence
14 that God called Deborah to be a judge. God specifically called willing and courageous men, such
15 as Gideon (Jud 6:12-14), to be judges when the people cried out for deliverance (see also 3:9,
16 15; 11:29; 13:24-25). At the time when Deborah was called to be a prophet (not a judge), there
17 was a dearth of willing and courageous men. God used Deborah's prophetic office to call a
18 reticent Barak to function in the capacity of military leader of Israel to fend off the advances of
19 Jabin, king of Canaan, and his commander, Sisera. The abnormal nature of the situation with no
20 men to function as judge is confirmed by Barak's timidity²⁰⁷ and the rebuke implied in his
21 subsequent loss of glory, "there will be no glory for you" (Jud 4:9); Deborah expresses surprise
22 in her "Song" that no man had stepped forward to initiate Israel's rescue from the oppressor,
23 but that a *mother* had to prophetically call a military leader (5:7).

24 Without exception, all the men who were called to judge Israel were military leaders.
25 With the lack of a man called of God to be a judge and military leader in Israel, the people
26 sought the services of Deborah, the prophet, not as a military leader, but for counsel and

²⁰⁶ Moon, 19-20.

²⁰⁷ "Although *he had been designated* by the Lord Himself as the one chosen to deliver Israel, and had received the assurance that God would go with him and subdue their enemies, yet he was timid and distrustful." White, *Sons and Daughters of God*, 37, emphasis added.

1 justice, and she judged under her palm tree (Jud 4:4-5). It was highly unusual for a woman to
2 serve as a civil magistrate, as White explains: “She [Deborah] was known as a prophetess, and
3 in the *absence of the usual magistrates*, the people had sought to her for counsel and
4 justice.”²⁰⁸ The text does not say that Deborah ruled over or taught God’s people. Teaching was
5 the responsibility of the priesthood (Lev 10:11; Mal 2:6-7).

6 “When the text says that ‘Deborah . . . was *judging* Israel at that time’ (Jud 4:4), the
7 Hebrew verb *shāpat*, ‘to judge,’ in this context does not mean ‘to rule or govern,’ but rather has
8 the sense of ‘*decide controversy*,’ discriminate between persons in civil, political, domestic and
9 religious questions.”²⁰⁹ This is not a picture of Deborah ruling as queen in a leadership role, but
10 she is simply settling private disputes. Additionally, there is no evidence that she taught the
11 people in any assembled group. Furthermore, Deborah refused to lead the people in military
12 battle, but insisted that a man do this (Jud 4:6-7, 14). Schreiner points out that Deborah is the
13 only judge in the book of Judges who has no military function.²¹⁰ Her prophetic function was to
14 issue a command to Barak that God had called him to take up arms and lead the people into
15 battle. Her function as with many women of God was to encourage and exhort a man to take
16 the leadership role to which God has called him, as she did with Barak. “Deborah delivers the
17 ‘divine declaration or decision’ (4:6) regarding the people’s ‘call for help’ (4:3). The divine
18 response is indicated by her issuing the call to Barak to lead Israel into battle (4:6), designating
19 him as the next individual to lead Israel.”²¹¹

20 It is Barak’s, not Deborah’s, leadership that is later cited by Samuel and again in the
21 book of Hebrews. Samuel tells the people, “And the Lord sent Jerubbaal and *Barak* . . . and
22 delivered you out of the hand of your enemies on every side” (1 Sam 12:11). And the author of
23 Hebrews says, “And what more shall I say? For time would fail me to tell of Gideon, *Barak*,
24 Samson . . . and the prophets” (Heb 11:32).

25
26
27

²⁰⁸ White, *Sons and Daughters of God*, 37, emphasis added.

²⁰⁹ Grudem, *Evangelical Feminism*, 133.

²¹⁰ Cited by Grudem, *Evangelical Feminism*, 133.

²¹¹ *Ibid.*, 135; see also note 11 therein.

1 **E. The Case of Huldah**

2 The Book of the Law was discovered in the temple during the reign of Josiah following
3 his order to repair the temple. When Josiah learned of the discovery and that the Book of the
4 Law contained the covenant blessings and curses that would hinge upon Judah’s faith and
5 obedience, he tore his clothes in repentance for the history of apostasy in Israel. Josiah was
6 anxious to know what pending action God would take with Judah in view of the curses foretold
7 (2 Kings 22:8-13). At his request for some inspired counsel, one of God’s prophets, Huldah the
8 prophetess, was summoned with the inquiry from Josiah. She faithfully delivered the message
9 of fate to come upon Judah, “this what the Lord says,” (v. 15) which would occur after Josiah’s
10 reign. He and his contemporaries would be spared because of his faithful leadership of Judah
11 (22:16-20).

12 Huldah was never anointed and was never an elder or a priest.²¹² She did not take the
13 reins of leadership in Judah; she did not take the throne; she did not take over the priesthood
14 to clean up the temple. She was merely a messenger of God to encourage Josiah to move
15 forward in faithful obedience. It was the king who led Judah to repentance, reformation, and
16 revival. Huldah gave the king the inspired message, and the king implemented the counsel
17 given to him.

18 “There is clear Biblical evidence that prophets served as inspired *advisors and*
19 *counselors* to rulers and yet the rulers had the governing authority to accept or reject the
20 counsel. That the *rulers had executive power* over the prophets is made clear by what the rulers
21 frequently did to prophets who delivered politically incorrect messages. Among others, Isaiah
22 was sawn asunder, Elijah had to flee, Jeremiah was committed to the dungeon (2 Chronicles
23 36:11-15), John the Baptist was beheaded, and Stephen was stoned.”²¹³

24

25 **F. The Case of Miriam and Others**

26 Miriam, the sister of Moses, was a prophetess who “was richly endowed with gifts of
27 poetry and music and ‘in the affections of the people and the honor heaven she stood second

²¹² Laurel Damsteegt, “Women of the Old Testament: Women of Influence,” Theology of Ordination Study Committee, July, 2013, 20. See the entire article for full a discussion of influential women of the OT.

²¹³ Bohr, 73

1 only to Moses and Aaron.”²¹⁴ She prophesied specifically to women of Israel: “And Miriam sang
2 to them [the women]” (see Exodus 15:20-21). In the OT women prophets always prophesied
3 privately or to women. And the prophecy was always a message from God to His people. It was
4 different from teaching God’s people and different than ruling God’s people, neither of which
5 women did with God’s blessing in the Old or New Testament.²¹⁵

6 The Old Testament frequently honors women who are faithful to God and portrays
7 them very favorably. Examples include: Miriam, Deborah, Huldah, Sarah, Rebekah, Ruth,
8 Naomi, Abigail, Esther, and the godly wife of Proverbs 31. They are always seen as submissive
9 either to the leadership of their husbands (1 Pet. 3:5-6) or to some other person in authority.

10 Instances where women seized ruling authority over God’s people in the OT are always
11 viewed negatively. Queens such as Jezebel (1 Kings 16:31; 18:4, 13; 19:1-2; 21:5-25) and
12 Athaliah (2 Kings 11) led the people into evil when they gained power. Jezebel, strong-willed,
13 evil, manipulative, and unrepentant, becomes the ultimate symbol of treachery, idolatry, and
14 immorality in Revelation (2:20ff). Athaliah, Jezebel’s daughter, was worse, having become the
15 ruling monarch of Judah through murderous treachery (2 Chron 22:10-12; 23:12-15).
16 Discovering the somewhat secret coronation of Joash, Athaliah screamed, “Treason! Treason!”
17 but she herself was slain outside the temple. So ended the ruthless rule of the sole female
18 monarch recorded in Scripture.²¹⁶

19 “There were wise queens such as Esther, but she did she did not rule as a monarch,
20 since the authority rested with Ahasuerus the king, and she was not queen over Israel, but over
21 Persia. The Queen of Sheba (1Kings 10:1-13) is also viewed positively, but as a foreign queen
22 she did not rule over God’s people.”²¹⁷

23 “Women were highly influential and important in the history of God’s people. Some had
24 godly influences on their children to the third and fourth generation. Some faithfully
25 transmitted the Word of God to those inquiring. Some were strong to do righteousness when
26 all the men around were cowardly. Some women were so evil the nation of Israel never really

²¹⁴ Ibid., 11 quotes PP 382.

²¹⁵ Grudem, *Evangelical Feminism*, 138.

²¹⁶ Laurel Damsteegt, 20.

²¹⁷ Grudem, *Evangelical Feminism*, 146.

1 recovered. The stories of these women are instructive examples of faith and unfaith. These
2 were women of influence, all. Not priests, not elders, but yes, they were women of influence
3 for good or evil.”²¹⁸
4

5 **G. Phoebe**

6 The apostle Paul highly commended her for her ministry to the congregations in Rome.
7 “I commend to you Phoebe our sister, who is a *servant* [*diakonon*] of the church in Cenchrea,
8 that you may receive her in the Lord in a manner worthy of the saints, and assist her in
9 whatever business she has need of you; for indeed she has been a *helper* of many and of myself
10 also” (Romans 16:1, 2). Those in favor of the ordination of women as elder/minister assert that
11 Phoebe was *not* simply a self-sacrificing servant (*diakonon*) of the church, but she was
12 appointed to the office of deacon.

13 First, it must be recognized that the office of deacon in the NT does not include the
14 governing and teaching authority that is reserved for elders. The Greek word *diakonos* has two
15 basic meanings in the NT, *servant* and *deacon*. The vast majority of occurrences describe a
16 servant fulfilling his master’s wishes; only two occurrences clearly employ *diakonos* in the sense
17 of a defined office (1 Tim 3:8, 12). Was Paul honoring Phoebe as a deacon or as a servant to
18 the church? Within the context of Paul’s writings, Phoebe would naturally fall under the
19 category of servant.²¹⁹ From the standpoint of the principle of headship, it makes little
20 difference in the case of Phoebe. In neither case does this passage show that she had any
21 teaching or governing authority in the church. Teaching and governing authority is granted only
22 to the elder/minister (1 Tim 3:2, 5; 5:17; Titus 1:9; also Acts 20:17, 28).

23 Some evangelical feminists interpret the word Greek word *prostatis*, “helper,” as
24 “leader or “ruler” (“she has been a helper [leader] of many and of myself”).²²⁰ Was Phoebe a
25 leader or ruler over Paul? Paul did not think that even the Jerusalem apostles ruled over him
26 (Gal 1:1, 11-12). Those who “seemed to be influential” in Jerusalem did not rule over Paul (2:6);
27 and he rebuked Peter publicly (2:11-14). Paul did not consider himself to be subject to any
28 human leader but to Jesus Christ alone. In addition, Paul employs a play on words in Romans

²¹⁸ Laurel Damsteegt, 23.

²¹⁹ Sorke, 40.

²²⁰ Grudem, *Evangelical Feminism*, 220-221. See also citations therein.

1 16:2 with the word “helper” (*prostatis*) and the verb “assist [help her],” both of which are
2 derived from the Greek root *histēmi*. Thus Paul says that the church should “help (*paristēmi*)
3 her in whatever she may require from you for she has been a “helper” (*prostatis*) of many and
4 of myself as well” (16:2).

5 In view of the fact that Phoebe was a helper to Paul, it seems more likely she functioned
6 as a self-sacrificing servant in behalf of Christ to Paul and others rather than in the office of
7 deacon. During His ministry, Jesus admonished *each and every one* of His followers to be a
8 *diakonon* or servant in the general sense of service or ministering, but this does not mean that
9 all have been called to be elders/overseers. Jesus said: “But he who is greatest among you shall
10 be your *servant* [*diakonos*]” (Matthew 23:11). “And He sat down, called the twelve, and said to
11 them, ‘If anyone desires to be first, he shall be last of all and *servant* [*diakonos*] of all” (Mark
12 9:35). “If anyone *serves* [*diakonē*] Me, let him follow Me; and where I am, there My *servant*
13 [*diakonos*] will be also. If anyone *serves* [*diakonē*] Me, him My Father will honor” (John 12:26).

14 Ellen White clearly explained that Phoebe had the spiritual gift of *hospitality* and was
15 foremost in providing lodging and food to those who visited the church of Cenchrea. In this
16 sense she ministered to the needs of the saints and encouraged the church today to do the
17 same: “Phoebe *entertained* the apostle, and she was in a marked manner an *entertainer* of
18 strangers who *needed care*. Her example should be followed by the churches of today.”²²¹

19

20 H. Junia(s)

21 Those in favor of the ordination of women claim that if Junia was an apostle, a woman
22 can hold any other church office as well. The apostle Paul closes the book of Romans with
23 greetings to many of his co-laborers in the ministry, including Andronicus and Junia(s). “Salute
24 Andronicus and Junia, my kinsmen, and my fellow-prisoners, who are of note [well-known]
25 among the apostles, who also were in Christ before me” (Rom 16:7). A number of questions
26 revolve around this text: first, concerning the name Junia(s), was this person a man or woman?
27 Second, the Greek syntax is debatable. Was this person “well-known *among* the apostles” or
28 “well-known *to* the apostles?” Finally, was this person an apostle, like the original twelve, or
29 was did this person function as a messenger (*apostolos*)?

²²¹ White, *Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 6, 343, emphasis added.

1 Regarding the gender of this person, there is no uniformity among twenty common
2 translations of the text—some specify a man, Junias (NIV, NASB, RSV, ASV), while others specify
3 a woman, Junia (KJV, NKJV, NRSV, NLT, ESV), usually indicating the alternative in the margin.
4 Evidence from the early church (patristic) fathers and Latin is also non-uniform concerning the
5 gender question.²²²

6 What about the Greek syntax (grammatical sentence structure)? Was Junia well-known
7 *among* or *to* the apostles? In light of recent research in Greek syntax,²²³ the more suitable
8 translation seems to be, **“Greet Andronicus and Junia(s) . . . well-known to the apostles.”**
9 Therefore it does not make much difference if this is a man’s or a woman’s name, because it
10 does not say that Junia(s) was an apostle. This person was well-known *to* the apostles.

11 Finally, the word translated “apostles” could just as well mean “church messengers” in
12 this text as it does elsewhere in Paul’s writings. The Greek word *apostolos* can mean either
13 ‘apostle’ or ‘messenger’ in the NT. A number of examples of *apostolos* meaning messenger are
14 found in the NT (John 13:16; 2 Cor 8:23; Phil 2:25). Since Andronicus and Junia(s) are otherwise
15 unknown as apostles, even if someone wanted to translate “well known *among*,” the sense
16 “well known among the messengers” would be more appropriate.”²²⁴

17 Ellen White assumed that apostles were exclusively male: “The apostles and elders,
18 *men of influence and judgment*, framed and issued the decree, which was thereupon generally
19 accepted by the Christian churches.”²²⁵

20 “In conclusion there is not a single unambiguous instance in the NT where the word
21 ‘apostle’ is applied to a woman. The feminist claim that there was an apostle named Junia is
22 built upon on one uncertainty (gender of the name) on top of another uncertainty (the meaning
23 of ‘apostle’ [or ‘messenger’] in this verse) on top of an improbable meaning of a phrase (‘well-
24 known among’ rather than ‘well-known to’). This is a highly speculative and flimsy foundation

²²² Grudem, *Evangelical Feminism*, 225-226 and citations therein.

²²³ M. H. Burer and D. B. Wallace, “Was Junia Really an Apostle? A Reexamination of Romans 16:7,” *New Testament Studies* 47 (2001): 76-91. Cited by Grudem, *Evangelical Feminism*, 224-225.

²²⁴ Grudem, *Evangelical Feminism*, 227.

²²⁵ White. *The Acts of the Apostles*, 196, emphasis added.

1 upon which to base any argument. It carries little weight against the clear teaching of the
2 exclusive male eldership and male apostleship in the rest of the New Testament.”²²⁶

3

4 I. Priscilla

5 “When Priscilla and Aquila [the sequence: “Aquila and Priscilla” follows the *Textus*
6 *Receptus* (KJV)] heard him, they took him aside and explained to him the way of God more
7 accurately” (18:26). Evangelical feminists uniformly cite evidence that Priscilla and Aquila both
8 “explained” to Apollos “the way of God more accurately” (Acts 18:26), and therefore women
9 can exercise the teaching role of an elder and serve in the same capacity.

10 It should be noted that Priscilla and Aquila were not teaching Apollos in a public setting.
11 They “took him aside”²²⁷ *privately* to explain the way salvation more fully. The context indicates
12 that they waited to speak to Apollos until he finished speaking *publicly* in the synagogue
13 (18:26), so they could take him aside, out of public view. When he was instructed concerning
14 the gospel, Apollos was given written endorsement by the brethren to function as a *public*
15 teacher (v. 27). He then crossed into Achaia and “refuted the Jews *publicly*” (18:28). There is a
16 clear contrast between the public teaching of Apollos and the private teaching of Priscilla. In
17 situations where the whole church is assembled, Paul restricts the governing and teaching
18 activities to men (see 1Cor 14:33-36; 1 Tim 2:11-15; see qualifications for elders in 1 Tim 3 and
19 Titus 1). The example of Priscilla and Aquila in instructing Apollos privately does not contradict
20 this.

21 In a number of Greek manuscripts Priscilla’s name is put before Aquila’s name,
22 especially when they are in ministry situations. Those advocating ordination of women suggest
23 this indicates that Priscilla was the leader in their ministry team. There is much speculation
24 about what might be meant by the order of the names Priscilla and Aquila, but very little hard
25 evidence to go on. Various expositors have various suggestions regarding the order of the
26 names.²²⁸ The claim that the order is always “Priscilla and Aquila” in the context of ministry is
27 not correct, since Paul “reverses the order of names in connection with ‘the church in their

²²⁶ Grudem, *Evangelical Feminism*, 227.

²²⁷ BDAG understands *proslambanō* in this verse to mean, “to take or lead off to oneself, *take aside*” (883).

²²⁸ Grudem, *Evangelical Feminism*, 180 and citations therein.

1 house' (1 Cor 16:19), which is surely a ministry connection: 'Aquila and Prisca [Priscilla],
2 together with the church in their house, send you hearty greetings in the Lord.'"²²⁹

3 The example of Priscilla and Aquila provides excellent encouragement for women and
4 men to talk with each other about the meanings of Bible passages in private discussions and in
5 small group studies, as Christians everywhere have done for centuries.²³⁰

6

7

IX. Summary

8 As we follow the guidelines of the Methods of Bible Study Document (MBSD), allowing
9 Scripture to interpret itself, we discover that the principle of headship and submission
10 permeates the pages of Scripture. Genesis 1-3 reveals the development of the creation
11 headship principle. Twenty-six identifying points of creation headship in Genesis 2-3 have been
12 documented in this paper. The leadership role of Adam and the complementary submissive role
13 of Eve are highlighted by this partial summary of evidence from Genesis 2: Adam was created
14 first; Adam was given primary responsibility for the Garden; Adam was given primary
15 responsibility for avoiding the tree of knowledge of good and evil; Adam was given the task of
16 naming the animals (Gen 2:19-20); Eve was created out of Adam; Eve was created as a helper
17 for Adam; and Adam spoke first upon the creation of Eve and named Eve (Gen 2:23). In Genesis
18 3, Eve, seeks a higher sphere than her original position by her husband's side, attempts to usurp
19 Adam's headship, reversing the creation headship role. Adam relinquishes his headship role by
20 submissively yielding to his wife's initiative and grasping the fruit from her and eating of it.
21 Instantly they both became naked, and the reversal of the headship role of Adam was
22 consummated, resulting in the fall of mankind. Genesis 3 is a commentary on the reversal of
23 the divinely ordained male headship of Genesis 2, for in Genesis 3, God holds Adam responsible
24 for relinquishing his headship responsibilities—"Because you have heeded the voice of your
25 wife . . ." (v. 17). Restoration of male headship is imposed by God in the curse of 3:16. Just as
26 Adam was place in the Garden first, followed by Eve, likewise, Adam is expelled from the
27 Garden first, followed by Eve. Male headship in Genesis 2-3 may be briefly summarized and
28 confirmed by Adam's priority associated with: 1) Creation and Establishment in the Garden, 2)

²²⁹ Ibid.

²³⁰ Ibid., 178; see also 75.

1 The Forbidden Tree Test, 3) Communication, 4) Naming, 5) Marriage 6) Nakedness, 7)
2 Apprehension 8) Indictment and Interrogation, 9) Accountability (heeding his wife), 10) Death
3 Sentence — Romans 5:12, and 11) Expulsion from Garden.

4 When God says, “Let Us make man in our image,” it is clear that the One speaking is
5 giving permission to the others to unite for the commencement of the creation of mankind.
6 Headship in the Godhead is implied in Genesis 1:26 and “headship” is a metaphor for
7 designated authority. Man was made in the image of God, male and female. Male and female
8 created in the image of God reflects, at a minimum, the principle of headship and submission.
9 Paul concludes his instruction concerning male headship in the church in 1 Timothy 2-3, where
10 he says the “mystery of godliness” is to be manifested in the church, and “the mystery of
11 godliness: God manifested in the flesh” embraces the headship/submission principle inherent
12 in the Trinity.

13 The apostle Paul uses the creation headship principle of Genesis 2 to affirm male
14 headship in the home and the church (1 Cor 11:8-9; 1 Tim 2:13-14). In 1 Corinthians 11:3 he
15 establishes the principle of headship/submission and correlates headship in the Trinity with
16 male headship in the church (11:3-16). The headship of Christ and the headship of God the
17 Father form the pattern for the headship of the husband-wife (in the home) and man-woman
18 (in the church). Just as there is no reciprocity in headship relations in the Trinity, there is no
19 reciprocity for headship relations in the home and the church. Mutual submission with respect
20 to authority is outside of the headship relation. *Headship is a metaphor for designated*
21 *authority*. Paul provides preliminary justification for male headship with his declaration that
22 “man was for the glory of God” and “woman for the glory of man.” His concluding justification
23 is based on the Genesis 2 record—the priority of the creation of Adam (“from man,” 11:8), and
24 Eve was created “for man” (11:9). Man was created for God; woman was created for man.

25 In 1 Timothy 2-3, the priority of the creation of Adam is the basis for the teaching and
26 governing authority of certain men in the church and for men to serve as elders in the church.
27 Paul concludes his teaching on the proper conduct of men and women in the church with the
28 enigmatic statement that the mystery of godliness should be manifested in the church. What is
29 the mystery of godliness? *God was manifested in the flesh*. The incarnation of the Son of God

1 was not a temporary display of the principle of headship and submission in the Godhead but an
2 eternal principle. For Paul, creation headship and male headship in the home and church are
3 integrally related to the mystery of godliness, which describes the very nature and character of
4 the Godhead and the relationship among the persons of the Trinity.

5 The order of the whole universe is essentially a fabric of loving relationships, structured
6 by authority and voluntary submission. This is evident not only in the nature of the Godhead,
7 but also in the nature of created beings. More could have been said in terms of how evil
8 originated through the attempt to thwart the structure of authority established by God. We
9 have demonstrated evidence for both order and headship and submission among the angels.
10 Moreover, the biblical evidence clearly supports the eternal principle of headship and
11 submission within the Godhead which includes not only Christ’s incarnate earthly redemptive
12 act, but includes also eternity past before the foundation of the world, and also eternity future
13 where Christ will be subject to the Father (1 Cor 15:28).

14 Eternal equality of being and a functional relation of headship and submission exist
15 among the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Equality of being and functional role differentiation
16 constitute the image of God in which man was created—male and female.

17 Finally, objections to the biblical principle of headship and submission have been shown
18 to be without biblical foundation. Mutual submission is excluded since non-reciprocal
19 relationships are demanded by the headship principle. There is no headship reciprocity among
20 the Trinity. Galatians 3:28 does not qualify as a “canon within the canon” to support the
21 appointment of women in the office of elders/ministers with governing and teaching authority
22 in the church. The same argument applies to the “priesthood of all believers” (1 Peter 2:9, 10),
23 where the appointment of all believers includes ministering praise to God and good news to the
24 world, “offer[ing] up spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God.” Although Deborah, Huldah, Miriam,
25 Phoebe, Junia(s), and Priscilla functioned as faithful servants of God, performing extremely
26 valuable service, none of them possessed any teaching or governing authority in the church.
27 Teaching and governing authority is granted only to the elder/minister (1 Tim 3:2, 5; 5:17; Titus
28 1:9; also Acts 20:17, 28).

29

X. Conclusion

The principle of headship and submission, equivalently called authority and submission, is firmly rooted in Scripture and runs as unifying golden thread from Genesis to Revelation. The headship of the 12 Patriarchs and 12 Apostles is self-evident in the Old and New Testaments respectively, and the male headship principle is confirmed in Revelation 21 with the names of the 12 Patriarchs on the gates and the names of the 12 Apostles on the foundations of New Jerusalem. The biblical principle of headship and submission among angels and within the Godhead is the foundational basis that undergirds the teaching of male headship in the home and in the church and is the basis for the appointment (ordination) of men in *biblical headship roles* as local elders or the conference-employed elders/ministers²³¹ with governing and teaching authority in the church. With the exception of the roles of elder/minister and local elder, women may be appointed to other ministry roles in the church.

A. Fatal Implications of Rejecting the Headship Principle

Jesus states the paradox of equality of being and functional submission: “My Father and I are one” (John 10:30) and “My Father is greater than I” (John 14: 28). In addition to equality of being in the Trinity, we also see evidence for authority/submission roles with the Godhead. Consequently, if male and female are made in the image of God, we can be certain they would reflect the authority and submission roles operative within the Godhead. “*Human beings were a new and distinct order. They were made ‘in the image of God.’*”²³² “*God created man a superior being; he alone is formed in the image of God.*”²³³ Inherent in the image of God is the principle of headship and submission. And “God created man in His own image; in the image of God He created him.”

The fundamental assumption of those advocating the ordination of women in the role of elder/minister is that the principle of headship and submission was not divinely ordained at creation and was non-existent until after the Fall. This assumption has been shown to be without biblical foundation. Therefore, moving forward with the ordination of women both as

²³¹ See above, note 8.

²³² White, *Review and Herald*, February 11, 1902, emphasis added.

²³³ *Ibid.*, April 21, 1885, emphasis added.

1 local elders and as elders/ministers²³⁴ would be a rejection of the creation headship principle
2 which in turn would be equivalent to the rejection of the restoration of the image of God in
3 man.

4 Since the purpose of the plan of redemption is to restore the image of God in fallen
5 human beings, any rejection of the restoration of the image of God, which includes the creation
6 headship principle and its restoration in the home and the church, would be unthinkable. First,
7 it is tantamount to the rejection of the very nature of God, and second, it is a virtual
8 repudiation and rejection of the gospel itself, the purpose of which is to restore the image of
9 God in man. Continuing down this path will only lead to a misrepresentation of the character of
10 God to the world by the Seventh-day Adventist Church and the consequential hindering of the
11 ultimate purpose of the gospel and the delaying of the coming of Christ.

12 Moving forward with the ordination of women as elders/ministers and local elders
13 would constitute a reversal of divinely ordained roles of men and women in the home and the
14 church. This in turn would constitute a rejection of the mystery of godliness, the very nature of
15 God and the image of God. Since the purpose of the gospel is the restoration of the image of
16 God, all attempts at reversing the roles of men and women in the church would result in a
17 rejection of the gospel itself. The consequences are serious and demand a decision to return to
18 the Bible as our only authority and a decision at the 2015 General Conference Session not to
19 ordain women as pastors/elders and reversing the unauthorized decision of the 1975 Spring
20 Council to ordain women as local elders. That decision belongs solely to the General Conference
21 in session.

22 **B. Hermeneutics—the Pivotal Issue**

23 Hermeneutics (methods of interpreting the Bible) lie at the heart of the theology of
24 ordination issue. This paper has followed the historical-grammatical method of interpreting
25 Scripture which relies on “the plain meaning of Scripture,” accepting the Bible “just as it
26 reads.”²³⁵ This approach is endorsed by the “Methods of Bible Study” Document (MBSD),²³⁶

²³⁴ See above, note 8.

²³⁵ “Let the Bible explain its own statements. Accept it **just as it reads**, without twisting the words to suit human ideas.” *Loma Linda Messages*, 55. “All who exalt their own opinions above divine revelation, all who would change **the plain meaning of Scripture** to suit their own convenience, or for the sake of conforming to the world, are taking upon themselves a fearful responsibility.” GC 268. “When those who profess to believe present truth come

1 which has been taken as the fundamental exposition of Seventh-day Adventist hermeneutical
2 method to be used in the study of the theology of ordination.

3 Adventist Bible scholars who favor the ordination of women have adopted a two-
4 pronged hermeneutical approach—the MBSD approach to many portions of Scripture, but for
5 troublesome or uncomfortable texts dealing with women in ministry they employ a special,
6 flexible hermeneutic they call a “principle-based, contextual, linguistic and historical-cultural”
7 reading strategy which is at the heart of their biblical approach for certain texts.²³⁷

8 “Fundamental to this approach is its recognition that the text is semantically independent of
9 the intention of its author. The text is primarily seen as a construct, insofar as meaning is taken
10 to reside in the encounter or interchange between text and reader. Meaning thus emerges as
11 an outcome of interplay between text and reader, both of which are culturally and historically
12 conditioned.”²³⁸ The principle for Adventist feminists is found in the key message of Galatians
13 3:28, “a canon within the canon,” which says that in Christ there is “neither male and female.”
14 “The key principle for them is restoration in Christ which needs to be taken into account when
15 handling the specific texts regarding church organization.”²³⁹

16 For Adventist feminists, the text determines which hermeneutic to employ—a plain
17 reading of Scripture or the “principle-based” method. Adventist feminists, who selectively
18 choose when to employ the “principle-based hermeneutic,” see “biblical inspiration as a
19 mediated process in which God imparts information that is then ‘contaminated’ by the social,
20 cultural, historical and language context of the human author. In its nature, Scripture, while

to their senses, when they accept the Word of the living God **just as it reads** and do not try to wrest the Scriptures, then they will build their house upon the eternal Rock, even Christ Jesus.” 21 MR 346. Emphasis added.

²³⁶ “Methods of Bible Study” [MBSD], a statement voted by the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists Executive Committee at the Annual Council in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, 12 October 1986, available from <http://www.adventist.org/fileadmin/adventist.org/files/articles/official-statements/Statements-2010-english.pdf> pages 241ff, accessed 12-1-2013. The preamble to the MBSD makes very clear that the use of the historical-critical method of Bible study, which “de-emphasizes the divine element in the Bible as an inspired book (including its resultant unity)” and “minimizes the need for faith in God and obedience to His commandments,” is to be rejected.

²³⁷ Kyoshin Ahn, “NAD Theology of Ordination Study Committee Report” Theology of Ordination Study Committee, January, 2014, 22-31. http://www.adventistchurchconnect.com/site/1/docs/NAD_Ordination_Report_2013.pdf accessed 12-2 -2013.

²³⁸ Ibid., 28.

²³⁹ Jan Barna, “Ordination of Women and the Two Ways to Unity: Ecclesiastical and Biblical,” Adventist Society for Religious Studies, Baltimore, MD, 21 November 2013, 4. http://sdaordinationbook.com/book/ASRS_Paper_files/Jan%20Barna%20ASRS%202013%20Paper.pdf accessed 12-18-2013.

1 containing the divine message, also contains human baggage. For this reason, a plain reading of
2 Scripture could potentially be misleading.”²⁴⁰ This method of interpretation could just as easily
3 be employed to justify new interpretations regarding gender-orientation issues, Sunday
4 sacredness, and the immortality of the soul and should be soundly rejected by the world church
5 in General Conference Session.

6 There is sufficient evidence to suggest that the flexible, “principle-based” hermeneutic is
7 derived from a modified form of literary criticism (a hermeneutic) called “deconstruction”²⁴¹
8 fathered by German philosopher Martin Heidegger²⁴² and fully developed by Jacques Derrida in
9 his classic 1967 work, *Of Grammatology*. Deconstruction espouses multiple meanings to a text
10 or passage with no true meaning possible,²⁴³ recontextualization of the text, and rejection of all
11 authority and hierarchy. Literary criticism as found in *Deconstruction* gives the reader the
12 authority over the text. The Bible no longer has authority over the interpreter; the interpreter
13 has authority over the text.

14 Heidegger’s and Derrida’s philosophy of “deconstruction” infiltrated the feminist
15 movement²⁴⁴ and has been adopted by feminist theologians.²⁴⁵ The hermeneutic of
16 deconstruction for Bible interpretation has also been embraced and adopted by leaders of the
17 Emergent Church Movement,²⁴⁶ Brian McLaren and Leonard Sweet.

²⁴⁰ Ibid.

²⁴¹ See above, note 3.

²⁴² Heidegger’s affiliation with Nazism which he adamantly embraced even after WWII is an example of what can happen when culture drives theology. See http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Martin_Heidegger. accessed 12-23-2013; http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Martin_Heidegger_and_Nazism. accessed 12-23-2013.

²⁴³ A definition of “deconstruction” is found in the American Heritage Dictionary: “A philosophical movement and theory of literary criticism that questions traditional assumptions about certainty, identity, and truth; asserts that words can only refer to other words; and attempts to demonstrate how statements about any text subvert their own meanings: ‘In deconstruction, the critic claims there is no meaning to be found in the actual text, but only in the various, often mutually irreconcilable, ‘virtual texts’ constructed by readers in their search for meaning’” (Rebecca Goldstein). <http://www.answers.com/topic/deconstruction#ixzz2mXGvsxSn>. accessed 12-4-2013.

²⁴⁴ See <http://bibliotecavirtualut.suagm.edu/Glossa2/Journal/march2010/Winking%20at%20derrida.pdf>, and <http://www.answers.com/topic/deconstruction-and-feminism> and also <http://www.nla.gov.au/openpublish/index.php/ras/article/viewFile/2156/2550>. accessed 12-4-2013.

²⁴⁵ For “deconstruction” in the feminist theology see: http://books.google.com/books/about/Deconstruction_Feminist_Theology_and_the.html?id=nhfJHq_RHZkC. accessed 12-4-2013.

²⁴⁶ For “deconstruction” in the Emergent Church Movement see: http://www.holybibleprophecy.org/2013/07/02/emergent-deconstruction-train-tracks-auschwitz/?doing_wp_cron=1386186032.1362679004669189453125. accessed 12-4-2013.

1 hierarchy, order or ranking” that would pertain to the eternal state of the Trinity. Bilezikian
2 concludes his article with several recommendations, one of which is, “*Don’t mess with the*
3 *Trinity.*”

4 In their article in the *Evangelical Dictionary of Theology*, R. C. and C. C. Kroeger claim
5 that the heresy of subordinationism “assigns an inferiority of being, status *or* role to the Son or
6 Holy Spirit within the Trinity.”²⁵¹ The assumption made by these leading evangelical feminists is
7 that subordination of any type (including role) within the Trinity is automatically heresy.
8 However, in fact, subordination as seen within the context of the early Church councils and
9 creeds can be potentially orthodox or heretical. It depends on who or what is being
10 subordinated and to what extent.

11 In an article in the *Westminster Theological Journal*, Michael Bauman discusses the
12 different kinds of subordinationism present during the Arian controversy.²⁵² He draws a
13 distinction between what he calls emphatic and economic subordination. The Arian heresy
14 taught emphatic subordination, which entails inequality of nature and being. Arians asserted
15 that “a natural inequality existed between the Persons of the Trinity by virtue of their essential
16 differentiation and the temporal derivative character of the Second and Third.” This is heretical
17 because it is a subordination of essence or nature. Economic subordination, adopted by the
18 Council of Nicea, means that while all three divine Persons are identical in essence, the Son is
19 economically subordinate to the Father with respect to his eternal mission and function. The
20 Son is no less than the Father, but has voluntarily submitted himself to the will of the Father.
21 Subordination simply refers to a relationship in which one person, the subordinate, depends
22 upon another for direction.

23 In summary, then, the idea of subordination does not necessarily entail inferiority. As
24 applied to the Trinity, the term subordination does not always amount to a heretical distinction
25 of worth and dignity between the Father and the Son. While evangelical feminists may believe
26 that an eternal difference in role between the Father and Son is heretical, the plain meaning of

²⁵¹ R. C. and C. C. Kroeger, “Subordinationism,” in *Evangelical Dictionary of Theology*, ed. Walter Elwell (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1984), 1058. The Kroegers further state that anyone who held this view of the Trinity (including role subordination) was condemned as a heretic by the Second Helvetic Confession.

²⁵² Michael E. Bauman, “Milton, Subordinationism, and the Two-Stage Logos,” *WTJ* 48 (1986), 177–182.

1 the word and its use in church history shows that the Son can be voluntarily subordinate for the
2 purpose of a higher cause without being inferior in being or essence.

3 It cannot be legitimately denied that the eternal subordination of the Son is an orthodox
4 doctrine and has been believed from the early church to the present day. The following
5 statement by a twentieth century theologian expresses well the meaning of the doctrine and its
6 pervasiveness in church history: “From the second century onward a concept of the Son’s
7 subordination to the Father has been combined with a concept of the full equality among the
8 Three. Each is seen to be fully, equally and eternally divine, although in their relationship to one
9 another, the Father assumes supremacy and the others a subordinate role.”²⁵³

10

11 **A. Patristic Fathers and Trinitarian Headship**

12 A survey of the early church period²⁵⁴ clearly affirms the teaching of the eternal
13 subordination of the Son. The main sources are the Nicene Creed and four classical exegetes.
14 Both the Creed and the exegetes account for the early ecumenical consensus on an order and
15 ranking in the Godhead. Three of the exegetes represent “the great ecumenical ‘Doctors of the
16 Church’” (Athanasius [c. 296–373], Gregory of Nazianzus [c. 330–390], and Augustine [c. 354–
17 430]), and the other one is “widely and perennially valued for accurately stating points of
18 ecumenical consensus,” Hilary of Poitiers [c. 291–371]).

19 Although Augustine emphasized the equality within the Trinity, it is clear from the
20 overall context that Augustine, in affirming the Nicene Creed and the eternal begottenness of
21 the Son, is offering the doctrine of eternal subordination which was held as orthodoxy at that
22 time and has been ever since.²⁵⁵ The evidence for eternal subordination of roles is explicit and
23 unmistakable in the Nicene Creed, and in the writings of Athanasius, Gregory, and Hilary.

24 Hilary of Poitiers (c. 291–371) is widely known as the Athanasius of the Western
25 tradition. In *De Trinitate* there is clear evidence of the notion of order and ranking in the
26 Godhead. After an introduction to his subject in Book 1, Book 2 starts his detailed discussion on

²⁵³ Jack Cottrell, *What the Bible Says About God the Redeemer* (Joplin, MO:College, 1987) 146.

²⁵⁴ See historical survey by Stephen D. Kovach and Peter R. Schemm, JR., “A Defense of the Doctrine of Eternal Subordination of the Son,” *Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society*, 42/3 (September 1999) 464–470.

²⁵⁵ Kovach and Schemm, 468-470.

1 the Trinity. For his “basic statement about the Trinity Hilary uses the baptismal formula from
2 Matthew 28:19,” which appears at the very beginning of Book 2.²⁵⁶

3 The order of the baptismal formula implies an order in the Godhead: For God the Father is
4 One, from Whom are all things; and our Lord Jesus Christ the Only-begotten, through
5 Whom are all things, is One; and the Spirit, God’s Gift to us, Who pervades all things, is also
6 One *Thus all are ranged according to powers possessed and benefits conferred*; the One
7 Power from Whom all, the One offspring through whom all, the one Gift who gives us
8 perfect hope.²⁵⁷

9
10 Hilary ends the chapter with a pithy statement on the relations within the Godhead. The Father,
11 Son, and Spirit are identified respectively as “infinity in the Eternal, His Likeness in His express
12 Image, our enjoyment of Him in the Gift.”²⁵⁸ Thus, there is an order in the Trinity.

13 In Book III, Chapter 12, there is more proof that Hilary sees at least some sort of order
14 and ranking. He says,

15 Who indeed would deny that the Father is the greater; the Unbegotten greater than the
16 Begotten, the Father than the Son, the Sender than the Sent, He that wills than He that
17 obeys? He Himself shall be His own witness: *The Father is greater than I*. It is a fact which
18 we must recognize, but we must take heed lest with unskilled thinkers the majesty of the
19 Father should obscure the glory of the Son.²⁵⁹

20 Speaking of the above passage, Schaff claims that a subordination of order is “plainly
21 expressed . . . by the champion of the Nicene doctrine in the West.”²⁶⁰ Schaff underscores the
22 significance of this passage in a footnote when he says, “In the same way Hilary derives all the
23 attributes of the Son from the Father.”²⁶¹

24 Gregory was “called by the Ecumenical Council of Ephesus ‘The Great,’ and universally
25 known as ‘The Theologian.’”²⁶² Gregory of Nazianzus (c. 330–390) earned the lofty title
26 because of his signal contribution on the Trinity, *The Five Theological Orations*.²⁶³

²⁵⁶ Geoffrey W. Bromiley, *Historical Theology: An Introduction* (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1994), 83.

²⁵⁷ Hilary, *De Trinitate*, in W. Sanday, ed., *St. Hilary of Poitiers: Select Works* (ed. Philip Schaff and Henry Wace; NPNF; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1955), 9:52.

²⁵⁸ *Ibid.*

²⁵⁹ *Ibid.*, 65.

²⁶⁰ Philip Schaff, *History of the Christian Church*, Vol. III (311–600) (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1950), 682.

²⁶¹ *Ibid.*

²⁶² Charles Gordon Browne and James Edward Swallow, trans. and eds., *Select Orations of Saint Gregory Nazianzen* (ed. Philip Schaff and Henry Wace; NPNF; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1955), 7:187.

²⁶³ *Ibid.*, 200.

1 In his *The Oration on Holy Baptism*,²⁶⁴ Gregory formed the foundational notion behind
2 the modern terminology “ontological equality [equality of being] but economic subordination.”
3 He wants to call the Father “greater” but not greater “in *all* senses.” If he allows for greater “in
4 *all* senses” then he loses consubstantiality. But, there must be some sort of relational order or
5 ranking, or else why call the Father “greater”? Thus, he ends up at least laying some of the
6 groundwork for a Trinitarian tension between equality of being and economic subordination.

7 Gregory speaks of an order or ranking in the Godhead in *The Fifth Theological Oration:*
8 *On the Holy Spirit*.²⁶⁵ He makes clear that the distinctions in the Godhead are not due to
9 “deficiency or subjection of Essence.” Rather, they are given the names they have because they
10 have different roles. He says, “The very fact of being Unbegotten or Begotten, or Proceeding
11 has given the name of Father to the First, of the Son to the Second, and of the Third, Him of
12 Whom we are speaking, of the Holy Ghost that the distinction of the Three Persons may be
13 preserved in the one nature and dignity of the Godhead.”²⁶⁶

14 The Nicene Creed is explicit regarding eternal subordination of the Son. Whereas the
15 Apostles’ Creed declared only that Jesus Christ is God’s only Son, and our Lord, the Nicene
16 Creed added the following declaration dealing with eternal subordination: “and in one Lord
17 Jesus Christ, the Son of God, begotten from the Father, God from God, Light from Light, true
18 God from true God, begotten, not made, of one substance with the Father, through whom all
19 things came into being. . . .” As Schaff makes clear, these statements reflected a belief in the
20 eternal subordination of the Son. The Nicene Fathers believed that the Father, Son, and Spirit
21 have the same divine dignity, but in an order of subordination. The idea that the Son is
22 begotten and the Father unbegotten means that the Father is primary and Sonship secondary.
23 The dependence of the Son on the Father is reflected in the statements of the Creed which call
24 the Son “God from God, light from light, true God from true God.” Schaff declares that “all
25 important scholars since Petavius admit subordination in the Nicene doctrine of the Trinity.”²⁶⁷

26

27 **B. Contemporary Theologians and Trinitarian Headship**

²⁶⁴ Gregory of Nazianzus, *The Oration on Holy Baptism*, NPNF 360–377. Cited by Kovach and Schemm, 466-467.

²⁶⁵ Gregory of Nazianzus, *The Fifth Theological Oration*, NPNF IX: 320.

²⁶⁶ Cited by Kovach and Schemm, 468.

²⁶⁷ *Ibid.*, 465.

1 Among theologians prior to the feminist movement of the 1960-70s, a few will be cited
2 who taught the eternal submission of the Son. Louis Berkhof (1873 – 1957) was a Reformed
3 systematic theologian whose written works have been influential in seminaries and Bible
4 Colleges in the United States and Canada and with individual Christians in general throughout
5 the 20th century.

6 The subsistence and operation of the three persons in the divine Being is marked by a
7 certain definite order. There is a certain order in the ontological [equality of being within
8 the] Trinity. In personal subsistence, the Father is first, the Son second, and the Holy Spirit
9 third. It need hard be said that this order does not pertain to any priority of time or of
10 essential dignity, but only to the logical order of derivation. . . .Generation and procession
11 take place within the Divine Being and imply a certain subordination as to the manner of
12 personal subsistence but no subordination as far as the possession of the divine essence is
13 concerned.²⁶⁸

14
15 Augustus Hopkins Strong (3 August 1836 – 29 November 1921) was a Baptist minister
16 and theologian who lived in the United States during the late 19th and early 20th centuries. His
17 most influential book, *Systematic Theology*, was a mainstay of Reformed Baptist theological
18 education for several generations.

19 *Father, Son and Holy Spirit, while equal in essence and dignity, stand to each other in an*
20 *order of personality, office and operation. . . . The subordination of the person of the Son to*
21 *the person of the Father, or in other words an order of personality, office and operation*
22 *which permits the Father to be officially first, the Son second and the Spirit third, is perfectly*
23 *consistent with equality. Priority is not necessarily superiority. . . .We frankly recognize an*
24 *eternal subordination of Christ to the Father, but we maintain at the same time that this*
25 *subordination is a subordination of order, office and operation, not a subordination of*
26 *essence.*²⁶⁹

27
28 Charles Hodge (December 27, 1797 – June 19, 1878) was principal of Princeton
29 Theological Seminary between 1851 and 1878. He was a leading exponent of the Princeton
30 Theology during the 19th century. He argued strongly for the authority of the Bible as the Word
31 of God. Many of his ideas were adopted in the 20th century by Fundamentalists and
32 Evangelicals. In Volume 1, pages 460-465 of Hodge's *Systematic Theology*, a lengthy discussion
33 of this doctrine includes the following.

34 On this subject the Nicene doctrine includes—

²⁶⁸ Louis Berkhof, *Systematic Theology*, Eerdmans (Grand Rapids, MI, 1938), 89-90.

²⁶⁹ Augustus H. Strong, *Systematic Theology*, (1907) 342, with reference to other writers.

1 1. The principle of the subordination of the Son to the Father, and of the Spirit to the
2 Father and the Son. But this subordination does not imply inferiority. For as the same
3 divine essence with all its infinite perfections is common to the Father, Son, and Spirit,
4 there can be no inferiority of one person to the other in the Trinity. Neither does it imply
5 posteriority; for the divine essence common to the several persons is self-existent and
6 eternal. The subordination intended is only that which concerns the mode of subsistence
7 and operation, implied in the Scriptural facts that the Son is of the Father, and the Spirit is
8 of the Father and the Son, and that the Father operates through the Son, and the Father
9 and the Son through the Spirit.²⁷⁰

10
11 He claims that the Nicene doctrine of the Trinity includes the subordination of the Son
12 to the Father and of the Spirit to the Father and the Son. He affirms the paradox that the
13 persons are of equal essence but that subordinate roles exist.

14 On pages 462 and 463 he discusses the Nicene Fathers and their perspectives on this
15 doctrine. Then, in pages 463-465 he discusses historical perspectives. The discussion
16 devastates the argument that the eternal subordination of the Son is a recent innovation.

17 *They [the Nicene and Constantinople creeds] assert the distinct personality of the Father,*
18 *Son, and Spirit; their mutual relation as expressed by those terms; their absolute unity as to*
19 *substance or essence, and their consequent perfect equality; and the subordination of the*
20 *Son to the Father, and of the Spirit to the Father and the Son, as to the mode of subsistence*
21 *and operation. These are Scriptural facts, to which the creeds in question add nothing; and*
22 *it is in this sense they have been accepted by the Church universal.*²⁷¹

23
24 He was dealing with the orthodox and historical formulation of the doctrine of the
25 Trinity and affirmed again the unity of essence and perfect equality as well as the subordination
26 of the Son to the Father and the Spirit to the Father and Son. Note that he claims that these are
27 not only “Scriptural facts” but also that “they have been accepted by the Church universal.”

28 Hodge continues his exposition of the inter-Trinitarian relationship in unmistakably clear
29 language.

30 Notwithstanding that the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit are the same in substance, and
31 equal in power and glory, it is no less true, according to Scripture, (a) That the Father is
32 first, the Son is second, and the Spirit is third. b) The Son is of the Father (*ek theou*, the
33 *logos, eikōn, apaugasma tou theou*); and the Spirit is of the Father and of the Son. (c) The
34 Father sends the Son, and the Father and the Son send the Spirit. (d) The Father operates
35 through the Son, and the Father and the Son operate through the Spirit. *The converse of*

²⁷⁰ Charles Hodge, *Systematic Theology*, Vol. 1, (New York, NY: Scribner, 1878), 460.

²⁷¹ *Ibid.*, 462.

1 *these statements is never found. The Son is never said to send the Father, nor to operate*
2 *through Him; nor is the Spirit ever said to send the Father, or the Son, or to operate through*
3 *them. The facts contained in this paragraph are summed up in the proposition: In the Holy*
4 *Trinity there is a subordination of the Persons as to the mode of subsistence and operation.*

5 . . .

6 There are some acts which are predominately referred to the Father, others to the Son,
7 and others to the Spirit. The Father creates, elects, and calls; the Son redeems; and the
8 Spirit sanctifies. And on the other hand, there are certain acts, or conditions, predicated of
9 one person of the Trinity, which are never predicated of the either of the others. Thus,
10 generation belongs exclusively to the Father, filiation to the Son, and procession to the
11 Spirit. This is the form in which the doctrine of the Trinity lies in the Bible. The above
12 statement involves no philosophical element. It is simply an arrangement of the clearly
13 revealed facts bearing on this subject. *This is the form in which the doctrine has always*
14 *entered into the faith of the Church, as part of its religious convictions and experience.*²⁷²

15
16 Church historian Philip Schaff (1819-1893) writes:

17 The Nicene fathers still teach, like their predecessors, a certain subordinationism²⁷³ which
18 seems to conflict with the doctrine of consubstantiality. But we must distinguish between a
19 subordinationism of essence (*ousia*) and a *subordinationism of hypostasis, of order and*
20 *dignity*. The former is denied, the latter affirmed.²⁷⁴

21
22 Historian J. N. D. Kelley, speaking of the Cappadocian father Gregory of Nyssa, says:

23 It is clearly Gregory's doctrine that the Son acts as an agent, no doubt in subordination to
24 the Father Who is the fountainhead of the Trinity, in the production of the Spirit. . . .As
25 stated by the Cappadocians, however, the idea of the twofold procession from the Father
26 through the Son lacks all trace of subordinationism, for its setting is a wholehearted
27 recognition of the homoousion of the Spirit.²⁷⁵

28
29 Concluding this brief historical summary, Geoffrey Bromiley writes:

30 Eternal generation. . . is the phrase used to denote the inter-Trinitarian relationship
31 between the Father and the Son as is taught by the Bible. "Generation" makes it plain that
32 there is a divine sonship prior to the incarnation (cf. John 1:18; 1 John 4:9), that there is
33 thus a distinction of the persons within the Godhead (John 5:26), and that between these
34 persons *there is a superiority and subordination of order* (cf. John 5:19; 8:28). "Eternal"
35 reinforces the fact that the generation is not merely economic (i.e. for the purpose of
36 human salvation as in the incarnation, cf. Luke 1:35), but essential, and that as such it

²⁷² Ibid., 444-445.

²⁷³ Schaff uses *subordinationism* to refer not to the heresy by which the Son is thought to have an inferior *being* to the Father, but to the orthodox teaching that the Son has a subordinate *role* to the Father (cited in Grudem, *Evangelical Feminism and Biblical Truth*, note 30, 421).

²⁷⁴ Philip Schaff, *History of the Christian Church* (1971), 3:681.

²⁷⁵ J. N. D. Kelley, *Early Christian Doctrines* (1960), 263.

1 cannot be construed in the categories of natural or human generation. Thus it does not
2 imply a time when the Son was not, as Arianism argued. . . . Nor does his subordination
3 imply inferiority. . . . The phrase . . . corresponds to what God has shown us of himself in his
4 own eternal being. . . . It finds creedal expression in the phrases “begotten of his Father
5 before all worlds” (Nicene) and “begotten before the worlds” (Athanasian).²⁷⁶
6

7 **C. Mutual Submission and the Trinity**

8 The egalitarian commitment to “mutual submission” in marriage is so strong that they
9 have devised a new doctrine of “mutual submission” in the Trinity. Among evangelical feminists
10 who support the case for mutual submission in the Trinity, Stanley Grenz says the following:

11 The argument from Christ’s example often overlooks the deeper dynamic of mutual
12 dependence within the Trinity. . . . The Father is dependent on the Son for his deity. In
13 sending his Son into the world, the Father entrusted his own reign—indeed his own deity—
14 to the Son (for example Lk. 10:22). Likewise the Father is dependent on the Son for his title
15 as the Father. As Irenaeus pointed out in the second century, without the Son the Father is
16 not the Father of the Son. Hence the subordination of the Son to the Father must be
17 balanced by *the subordination of the Father to the Son*.²⁷⁷
18

19 The Scriptures never show the Father submitting to the authority of the Son. The
20 Scriptures “show the Father planning, initiating, directing, sending, and commanding, and they
21 show the Son responding, obeying the Father, and carrying out the Father’s plans. In order to
22 show ‘mutual submission’ in the Trinity or ‘the subordination of the Father to the Son’ in a way
23 that is parallel, Grenz would have to find some passages that show the Son commanding the
24 Father, or the Son sending the Father, or the Son directing the activities of the Father, or the
25 Father saying that He is obedient to the Son. . . .

26 “So how does Grenz argue for the ‘subordination of the Father to the Son’? He changes
27 the topic under discussion and confuses the categories. He says nothing about any submission
28 of the Father to the Son’s authority. He rather says, ‘without the Son the Father is not the
29 Father of the Son.’ But this does not address the topic at hand. It is a linguistic sleight-of-hand
30 argument that shifts the discussion to whether the Father would be the Father without the Son

²⁷⁶ Geoffrey Bromiley, “Eternal Generation” (1984), in *Evangelical Dictionary of Theology*, ed. Walter Elwell, 368, emphasis added.

²⁷⁷ Stanley J. Grenz, *Women in the Church: A Biblical Theology of Women in Ministry* (Downers Grove, IL, 1995), 153-54. Statements affirming “mutual submission” in the Trinity by Bilezikian are found in “Hermeneutical Bungee-Jumping,” *JETS* 40 (1997), 57-68.

1 (the answer is, of course not, but all that tells us is that if God were not a Trinity, He would not
2 be a Trinity, or if God were different, He would be different). This statement tells us nothing
3 about who the true God is or about the relationships that *actually* exist among the persons of
4 the Trinity. And it says nothing to show that the Father submits to the authority of the Son—
5 which He never does.”²⁷⁸

6 **D. Interchangeable Roles and the Trinity**

7 From another perspective, Bruce Ware has extensively examined the issue of the
8 functional differentiation in the Trinity. The following discussion is taken in part from an article
9 by Ware in *Biblical Foundations of Manhood and Womanhood*²⁷⁹ where he states, “What does it
10 mean that the Father is the eternal *Father* of the Son, and that the Son is the eternal *Son* of the
11 Father? Is not the Father-Son relationship within the immanent Trinity indicative of some
12 eternal relationship of authority *within* the Trinity itself?”²⁸⁰ Those in favor of the ordination of
13 women as elders/ministers reject these implications. They see clearly that if an eternal
14 relationship of authority and obedience is grounded in the eternal, immanent, inner-Trinitarian
15 relations of Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, then this gives at least *prima facie* justification to the
16 notion of creational human relations in which authority and submission inhere.

17 The early church clearly embraced the full essential equality of the three Trinitarian
18 persons (because each of the three divine persons possesses fully and simultaneously the
19 identically same infinite divine nature), nonetheless the church has always affirmed likewise the
20 priority of the Father over the Son and Spirit. Since this priority cannot rightly be understood in
21 terms of essence or nature (lest one fall into Arian subordinationism), it must exist in terms of
22 relationship. As Augustine affirmed, the distinction of persons is constituted precisely by the
23 differing relations among them, in part manifest by the inherent authority of the Father and the
24 inherent submission of the Son. This is most clearly seen in the eternal Father-Son relationship,
25 in which the Father is eternally the Father of the Son, and the Son is eternally the Son of the
26 Father.²⁸¹

²⁷⁸ Grudem, *Evangelical Feminism and Biblical Truth*, 429-31.

²⁷⁹ Bruce Ware, “Tampering with the Trinity: Does the Son Submit to the Father?” *Biblical Foundations of Manhood and Womanhood* (Wheaton, IL, 2002), 233-253.

²⁸⁰ *Ibid.*, 242.

²⁸¹ *Ibid.*, 245-246.

1 The egalitarian denial of any eternal submission of the Son to the Father makes it
2 impossible to answer the question why it was the “Son” and not the “Father” or “Spirit” who
3 was sent to become incarnate. It has been both stated and assumed that any one of the three
4 Persons could become incarnate.²⁸² The egalitarian view would permit “any one of the three
5 Persons” to become incarnate. And yet we have scriptural revelation that clearly says the Son
6 came down out of heaven to do the will of His Father. This sending is not *ad hoc*. In eternity, the
7 Father commissioned the Son who then willingly laid aside the glory He had with the Father to
8 come and purchase our pardon and renewal. Ellen White refers to the possibility of the Father
9 stepping down from heaven and veiling His glory so that humanity might look upon Him. But
10 that humiliation would not replace the redemptive act of Christ in the incarnation and His death
11 at the cross. In other words, the roles of the Father and Son are not interchangeable.

12 Had God the Father come to our world and dwelt among us, veiling His glory and humbling
13 Himself, that humanity might look upon Him, the history that we have of the life of Christ
14 would not have been changed in unfolding its record of His own condescending grace. In
15 every act of Jesus, in every lesson of His instruction, we are to see and hear and recognize
16 God.²⁸³

17
18 A running theme in the history of this doctrine is that the Son was commissioned by the
19 Father in *eternity past* to come as the incarnate Son. As Jesus declares on well over thirty
20 occasions in John’s Gospel, He was *sent to the earth* by the Father to do the Father’s will.
21 Scripture reveals that this sending, or commissioning, took place in *eternity past*, a
22 commissioning that then is fulfilled in time. Peter confirms the eternal commissioning of the
23 Son. “He [Christ] was chosen before the creation of the world, but was revealed in these last
24 times for your sake” (1 Pet 1:20, NIV). If we wonder how far back this commissioning of the Son
25 took place, this verse settles the question. Before the world was made, the Father chose
26 (literally, “foreknew”) the Son to come as the Redeemer. The Son’s coming in time to shed His
27 blood reflects not an *ad hoc* decision nor a toss of the Trinitarian coin but the eternal purpose
28 of the *Father* to send and offer His *Son*. Ephesians 1:3-5 and Revelation 13:8 confirm this
29 understanding. In Ephesians 1, Paul gives praise to God the *Father* for choosing His own *in*

²⁸² John Thompson, *Modern Trinitarian Perspectives* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1994), 22.

²⁸³ White, *Manuscript Releases*, Vol. 21, 393.

1 *Christ before the foundation of the world, and for predestining them to adoption as sons*
2 *through Jesus Christ to Himself.*²⁸⁴

3 The plan of salvation was designed to redeem the fallen race, to give them another trial.
4 Christ was appointed to the office of Mediator from the creation of God, **set up from**
5 **everlasting** to be our substitute and surety. Before the world was made, it was arranged
6 that the divinity of Christ should be enshrouded in humanity. "A body," said Christ, "hast
7 thou prepared me." But He did not come in human form until the fullness of time had
8 expired. Then He came to our world, a babe in Bethlehem (Review and Herald, Apr. 5,
9 1906).²⁸⁵

10

11 It is thus clear that the Father's commissioning of the Son is based in eternity past, and
12 that the Son's submission to the Father is rooted in their eternal relationship within the
13 Godhead. The authority-obedience relation of Father and Son in the immanent Trinity is
14 mandatory if we are to account for God the Father's eternal purpose to elect and save fallen
15 man through His beloved Son.

16 Because Christ was commissioned in eternity past to come, in time and history, to carry
17 out the will of His Father, when this work is completed, Christ will place Himself in the very
18 position He had with the Father previously. While possessing again the full glory of the Father
19 (John 17:5), He will put Himself in subjection to the Father (1 Cor 15:28). The relation of the
20 Father and Son in eternity past, in Christ's historic and incarnate life, and in eternity future,
21 then, is the same. Christ is fully equal in essence with the Father, yet subordinate in role.
22 Scripture clearly upholds these truths.²⁸⁶

23 Finally, all of this scriptural evidence provides a backdrop for 1 Corinthians 11:3 which
24 states that God is the head of Christ. While there have been many disagreements about the
25 meaning of the word "head," its meaning of authority is not only based on the natural meaning
26 of the word *kephalē* but also the scriptural claim that God is the eternal origin of all things and
27 Christ is the eternal agent (1 Cor 8:6).²⁸⁷ In summary, then, the Son is eternally subordinate to
28 God the Father both in relation and role.

²⁸⁴ Ware, 249-250.

²⁸⁵ Ellen Whit, *Lift Him Up*, 74.

²⁸⁶ Ware, 250.

²⁸⁷ Kovach and Schemm, 472.