

Male and Female He Created Them

An Exegetical Paper in Response to a Book Entitled:

Different Voices/Shared Vision

Presented to the Pastors of Circuit 10
The Northwest District of
The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod

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Male and Female, He Created Them¹

Introduction

In the winter of 1992, the pastors of Circuit 10 of the Northwest District of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod decided to study a book entitled Different Voices/Shared Vision: Male and Female In the Trinitarian Community. Such a study would prove to be beneficial in becoming aware of some of the current themes and theological discussions taking place within Lutheran circles. The circuit pastors' conferences of March 10 and April 21 scheduled time to examine this book. The subjects and authors of this book are:

“Our Trinitarian Identity”	Dot Leuchterlein
“Has the Gospel Free Course?”	Richard T. Hinz
“Hermeneutical Considerations For Biblical Texts” “Obscure Texts: 1 Timothy 2:8-15”	Marva J. Dawn
“Obscure Texts: 1 Corinthians 14:34-36”	Elizabeth A. Yates
“God’s Order” “Christ As Head of The Church”	Marie Meyer
Afterword: “Why Women May Be Ordained”	Paul R. Hinlicky
Appendix: “An Appeal To Missouri For The Ordination of Women”	George L. Murphy

General comments noted during the discussions on those two dates fell into the following areas of concern:

1. The book contains false doctrine. [Consider the false doctrine of “tritheism” - “And then think about this: we with our own names are baptized *into* the names of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit” (page 6).]
2. There are sociological premises which are used to establish theological principles. [“Jesus does not leave His followers without authority. The authority He gives His followers is not the awareness, freedom, and ability to establish, maintain, and nurture relationships through mutual service. This authority becomes the key to the endeavor of moving out in Christ’s mission.” (page 10)]

¹ Genesis 1:27. All Scripture references made are from the New King James Version of the Holy Bible.

3. The book attempts to allow the end to justify the means, and to do so by a most malicious method. In asking, “How do humans called, touched, and claimed by the Gospel of Christ relate to each other so that the hearing of the Gospel is not obstructed in the world?” (page 9), the end results of the Gospel doing its work justifies the means for eliminating any obstruction to it. Predictably, such necessary doctrines of the Law, the order of creation, and the qualifications of those occupying the office of the public ministry are cast aside, especially because they “obstruct the Gospel.” Such words and ideas are all too familiar. This “obstructing of the Gospel” is the different voice echoing from the early 1970s — a time when many claimed that there was a “silencing of the Gospel” when the Church insisted that all doctrines of the inspired and inerrant scriptures were to be believed, taught, and confessed.

4. The book attempts to do theology from an anthropocentric (and especially a modern, secular feminist) point of view rather than from the theocentric perspective. [Consider the following presupposition: “Certain passages in the Scriptures were written so that the life of women in the Church would not be offensive to the surrounding culture and prevent unbelievers from appreciating the freedom of the Gospel. It must be noticed that those same passages are presently being used in a way that does exactly the opposite — causing unbelievers to view the Gospel as a source of bondage.” (page 16)]

5. The book establishes and uses hermeneutical principles according to the presuppositions which the authors carried into their work. [They violate the hermeneutical principle that one must assume that the author used a word in its most common meaning unless it can be proven otherwise. For example, “Contemporary studies of linguistics make it clear that we cannot properly interpret a biblical word simply by deriving its meaning from its etymology. The fallacy of that is blatantly revealed if we should declare that we can define ‘pineapple’ by stating that its root words are *pine* and *apple*.” (page 18) Having declared this contemporary hermeneutic, the assertion is made that the common meaning of the word ὑποτάσσω is not “to place or arrange under, to subordinate, to render obedience, to be submission.”²]

Direction

Having only started the study of this book and having found that it was fraught with false doctrine, that it was based upon faulty hermeneutics, and that it began and operated with improper presuppositions, the pastors of Circuit 10 decided to prepare a response to the book. This response would be presented to the congregations of Circuit 10 through the pastors of the circuit. The intention was that the congregations would have an opportunity to study the issues and the Circuit Forum would consider a resolution which would be presented as an overture either to the next district and/or to the next synodical convention.

² The Analytical Greek Lexicon, Zondervan Publishing House, Grand Rapids, Michigan, 1969, page 419.

The Essence of the Issues at Hand

In order to facilitate congregational study, there was a need to identify the major thesis of the collection of essays, locate the basis for the thesis, and determine whether the thesis was valid. *The major thesis of the collection of essays would seem to be that the Sacrament of Baptism gives an inherent right to every Christian to occupy the Office of the Public Ministry.* [“In the sacrament everyone is treated the same; the officiant does not say, ‘Well, of course, there’s a catch here. If you happen to be a little girl there are limitations placed on your service that do not apply to those who happen to be little boys.’” (page 7)] With such a thesis established, the logical conclusion would be the ordination of women into the Office of the Public Ministry of the Word.

What are the Biblical bases from which this thesis is derived and from which the remaining essays are built? From Different Voices/Shared Vision, the reader is confronted with the following:

The norm throughout the Scriptures is that all God’s people are gifted and that they are to use their gifts for the upbuilding of the whole (Rom. 12:3-8, I Cor. 12:4-31, Eph. 4:7-16, I Peter 4:10-11). The Church is not to be hierarchical or authoritarian (Mt. 20:25-28 and parallels), and there is no difference between old and young or men and women or slave and free or Jew and Gentile (Acts 2:17-18 and Joel 2:28-29, I Cor. 7:4, Gal. 3:28). Even as with Jesus, the authority for everything in the Church comes from the Word itself, from our relationship with the Father through the empowering of the Holy Spirit.

Secondly, there are numerous instances in the Scriptures of women singing, praying, or prophesying in worship. (See, for example, Ex. 14:20-21 {sic}, I Cor. 11:5 and 13). Women were deacons (Rom. 16:1), apostles (Junia in Rom. 16:7), hosts for house churches (Acts 12:12, Rom. 16:3-5, Col. 4:15), prophets (Ex. 15:20, Jg. 4:4, II Ki. 22:14, II Ch. 24:32{sic}, Is. 8:3, Lk. 2:36, Acts 21:9), and fellow-workers (Rom. 16:3, Phil. 4:2-3).³

The authors of the book, operating from the premise that the two paragraphs above (henceforth referred to as “the two paragraphs” in this paper) are based upon the Biblical references cited, declare that 1 Timothy 2:8-15 and 1 Corinthians 14:34-36⁴ are obscure texts.

³ Meyer, Marie; Dawn, Marva; Neuchterlein, Dot; Yates, Elizabeth; Hinz, Richard; Different Voices/Shared Vision: Male and Female In the Trinitarian Community, American Lutheran Publicity Bureau, Delhi, New York, 1992, page 17.

⁴ 1 Timothy 2:8-15 — *I desire therefore that the men pray everywhere, lifting up holy hands, without wrath and doubting; in like manner also, that the women adorn themselves in modest apparel, with propriety and moderation, not with braided hair or gold or pearls or costly clothing, but, which is proper for women professing godliness, with good works. Let a woman learn in silence with all submission. And I do not permit a woman to teach or to have authority over a man, but to be in silence. For Adam was formed first, then Eve. And Adam was not deceived, but the woman being deceived, fell into transgression. Nevertheless she will be saved in childbearing if they continue in faith, love, and holiness, with self-control. 1 Corinthians 14:34-36 Let your women keep silent in the churches, for they are not permitted to speak; but they are to be submissive, as the law also says. And if they want to learn something, let them ask their own husbands at home; for it is shameful for women to speak in church. Or did the word of God come originally from you? Or was it you only that it reached?*

obscure texts. This is maintained because the specific examples cited in the two paragraphs have, according Different Voices/Shared Vision, established the Scriptural norms. This being the case, the authors assert that 1 Timothy 2:8-15 and 1 Corinthians 14:34-36 contradict the general norms.⁵ Consequently, they are declared to be considered obscure, corrective texts which deal with particular problems in localized areas within particular cultures at one particular time in history. As such, they would not be applicable to the Church today. Thus, the thesis that the Sacrament of Baptism gives an inherent right to the Office of the Public Ministry would be true.

However, if the assertions made in the two paragraphs are not true because the Scripture passages used do not support them, then 1 Timothy 2:8-15 and 1 Corinthians 14:34-36 may not be as obscure and culturally bound as is claimed in Different Voices/Shared Vision. Then the possibility must remain that these texts apply to the One, Holy, Christian, Apostolic Church wherever and whenever she is manifested. In stating this possibility, the thesis would have to be maintained that the Sacrament of Baptism places an individual into the Priesthood of all Believers which possess the Office of the keys, but does not give an inherent right to the Office of the Public Ministry to each Christian. In effect, every Christian is a priest, but not every Christian is a pastor.

In order to determine which is correct, this study was undertaken. The remaining portion of this paper consists of four sections and two appendices. The four sections include:

1. an exegetical examination of the texts used to support the assertions in the two paragraphs;
2. exegetical examinations of 1 Corinthians 14:33b-36 and 1 Timothy 2:8-15;
3. a summary of conclusions; and,
4. a declaration of theses and antitheses.

This document is prepared and presented with the understanding that the Holy Scriptures, in entirety, is the inspired and inerrant Word of God and is the norm and only source-for doctrine, faith, and life. As a result, no authority, be it human reason, cultural practices, societal agendas, science, or scholarship, will either take priority over or stand in judgment of the Bible. This document has been prepared, reviewed, and revised following the traditional, confessional, Lutheran hermeneutical principles of Biblical interpretation.⁶

⁵ Different Voices/Shared Vision, pages 16, 21, 28.

⁶ See Appendix #1 for these principles of interpretation (Not included in this revision. See scholia.net.).

Section 1:

Exegetical Examinations of the Texts Used to Support The Assertions in The Two Paragraphs

Paragraph #1 — “The norm throughout the Scriptures is that all God’s people are gifted and that they are to use their gifts for the upbuilding of the whole (Rom. 12:3-8, I Cor. 12:4-31, Eph. 4:7-16, I Peter 4:10-11). The Church is not to be hierarchical or authoritarian (Mt. 20:25-28 and parallels), and there is no difference between old and young or men and women or slave and free or Jew and Gentile (Acts 2:17-18 and Joel 2:28-29, I Cor. 7:4, Gal. 3:28). Even as with Jesus, the authority for everything in the Church comes from the Word itself, from our relationship with the Father through the empowering of the Holy Spirit.”

Each one of these sentences above was examined. Many parts of this paragraph appear, on first glance, to be acceptable. Further study, however, revealed that the paragraph contains inaccuracies, untruths, and texts which have been applied incorrectly.

“The norm throughout the Scriptures is that all God’s people are gifted and that they are to use their gifts for the upbuilding of the whole.” It is agreed that throughout the Scriptures that all of God’s people are gifted. When God works faith in the heart of the individual through the Word of the Gospel there are great and wonderful gifts given — forgiveness of sin, eternal life, salvation. Every Christian has been the recipient of these gifts as we confess:

I believe that I cannot by my own reason or strength believe in Jesus Christ, my Lord, or come to Him; but the Holy Ghost has called me by the Gospel, enlightened me with His gifts, sanctified and kept me in the true faith; even as He calls, gathers, enlightens, and sanctifies the whole Christian Church on earth, and keeps it with Jesus Christ in the one true faith; in which Christian Church He daily and richly forgives all sins to me and all believers, and will at the Last Day raise up me and all the dead, and give unto me and all believers in Christ eternal life.⁷

It is most certainly true that all of God’s people have been blessed with the gifts that the Son of God earned in His Life, Death, and Resurrection. In addition to this, Christ our

⁷ Luther, Martin, The Small Catechism, Concordia Publishing House, St. Louis, Missouri, 1943, page 11.

Lord also gives special gifts of certain people (apostles, prophets, evangelists, and pastors and teachers -- Ephesians 4:11). He gave the Church the apostles and prophets by calling them directly.⁸ The gifts of pastors and teachers are given to the Church along with the Scriptural qualifications for identifying such gifts (1 Timothy 3, Titus 1) and the authority of calling these men according to His will. There are others who had or who have God-given abilities and talents (Romans 12, 1 Corinthians 12) which are intended to be used in God-pleasing ways in His Church. Whether it is the proclamation of the Word and the administration of the Sacraments within the Church, or the men who are gifts to the Church and called by the congregations to be pastors, or the various talents and abilities given according to the Lord's will, all are to be received, proclaimed, and administered according to His Word, to the glory of God, and for the upbuilding of His Church (1 Corinthians 10:31, 1 Peter 4:10-11, Ephesians 4:7-16).

Next, we consider the statement that "The Church is not to be hierarchical or authoritarian (Mt. 20:25-28 and parallels)." This is an agreeable statement IF the intent of its inclusion is to agree with Jesus in Matthew 20, namely that what takes place in the structure of the secular world is not to be the pattern within the church. The secular world has organizational structures and chains of command based upon the Law. Because this is so and because our sinful human nature hates the Law, the words "hierarchical" and "authoritarian" cause negative thoughts and reactions.

If the writers of Different Voices/Shared Vision are implying that there are no structures in the church, or that there is no authority in the church, then this is false. Our Lord, in Matthew 28:19-20 declares that all authority in heaven and on earth was given to Him. Then He gives the authority to proclaim the Word to the Church. Jesus, in Matthew 20:25-28, was not declaring that there was no authority or that there were no positions within the church given to exercise authority. Rather, our Lord was stating that the secular world based upon the Law was not to be the pattern for the church. The pattern for the church's "hierarchy" and the basis for her authority is the Gospel as manifested in the Person and the Work of the, Christ. The pattern is, therefore, to be Gospel-oriented.

But Jesus called them to Himself and said, 'You know that the rulers of the Gentiles lord it over them, and those who are great exercise authority over them. Yet it shall not be so among you; but whoever desires to become great among you, let him be your servant. And whoever desires to be first among you, let him be your slave — just as the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life a ransom for many. ' (Matthew 20.25-28)

⁸The exception of Matthias is noted in Acts 1:26. The Church had not only been given the authority to select an apostle, but respectfully followed and carefully abided by the qualifications given by God in filling the office of apostle vacated by Judas: *Therefore, of these men who have accompanied us all the time that the Lord Jesus went in and out among us, beginning from the baptism of John to that day when He was taken up from us, one of these must become a witness with us of His resurrection (Acts 1:21-22).* Since the Church on earth no longer has a Word from God to call apostles (and since no one would be qualified) the Church calls no more apostles.

Instead of the Law-based, secular world schematic (shown below) being imposed on the Lord's Church ...

**Jesus
Prophets/Apostles
Pastors and Teachers
Elders, Deacons, Leaders
The Men of the Church
The Women of the Church
The Children of the Church**

..... the Lord turns the picture upside-down and bases the pattern of the Church upon the Gospel which rests on Him ...

**The Children of the Church
The Women of the Church
The Men of the Church
Elders, Deacons, Leaders
Pastors and Teachers
Prophets/Apostles
Jesus**

The Church is built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ Himself being the chief cornerstone (Ephesians 2:20). Any service within the Church is patterned after the Son of God and remains within the station of life in which the Christian finds himself or herself. Just as a true pastor would not seek to be declared one of the apostles, so also a woman who desires to remain apostolic would not seek to be a pastor. Just as Jesus stated that the sons of Zebedee were out of line in their pursuit of a position which they could not occupy (Luke 9:54-55), so also those women who seek the pastoral office (and those others who support such activities) are declaring their departure from the Word of God.

Thirdly, we consider the oft-heard statement used in defense of women's ordination, namely, that "there is no difference between old and young or men and women or slave and free or Jew and Gentile (Acts 2:17-18 and Joel 2:28-29, 1 Cor. 7:4, Gal. 3:28). " These texts are marvelous passages from God's Word. However, they do not deal with the issue of service in the Church or the Office of the Public Ministry of the Word. For example, the Joel passage is a prophecy of a particular event which was fulfilled at Pentecost (Acts 2). Likewise the reference in I Corinthians 7 deals with a different context -- it is not the context of public worship services, but rather, the context of marriage. Paul is speaking of the relationship between husband and wife. The Galatians passage does not set the standard for a denial of God's order and creation (Order of Creation).⁹ Rather, it speaks

⁹This paper will be using the terms "Order of Creation" and "Order of Redemption." Since it is important to know how each of these terms is used, the definitions are given below. The source is "Women in the Church - Scriptural Principles and Ecelesial Practice," A Report of the Commission on Theology and Church Relations of The Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod, September, 1985, page 21.

1. *The Order of Creation.* This refers to the particular position which, by the will of God, any created object occupies in relation to others. God has given to that which has been created a certain definite order which, because it has been created by Him, is the expression of His immutable will. These relationships belong to the very structure of created existence.

2. *The Order of Redemption.* This refers to the new relationship of the redeemed to God and to each other in the new creation established by Him in Jesus Christ (Gal. 6:15; 2 Cor. 5:17). This new creation constitutes participation in a new existence, in the new world that has come in Christ. It is a relationship determined by grace.

of the truth that the blessings of redemption earned by Christ are for all (Order of Redemption). Consequently, the church does not ration these spiritual blessings based upon race, age, sex, or station in life. Forgiveness of sin, eternal life, and salvation are intended for all.

In terms of God's creation there are differences. Men and women are different as the Scriptures declare, both before and after the Fall (Genesis 2 & 3). As the Bible states, there are differences due to age (Ephesians 6:1-4, 1 Timothy 5:1-16, Titus 2:1-8). The Word informs us that the master-servant stations in life do not necessarily change when both master and slave come to faith (Philemon, Ephesians 6:5-9). The office of deacon began because of real differences between Hellenist believers and Hebrew believers (Acts 6). Jews should not attempt to become Gentiles, nor should Gentiles try to become Jews (I Corinthians 7:18). *Let each one remain in the same calling in which he was called (I Corinthians 7:20).* The Order of Creation remains valid.

Perhaps an analogy would be helpful in demonstrating the truth that in the order of God's creation there are differences. Consider the good angels. They all enjoy the same blessings of being in God's presence and serving Him. As far as the Word has been revealed to us, there are no differences in their blessings. However, there are differences in what the Lord has assigned them to do. Gabriel is the angel who is sent from heaven above to bring Good News to Mary. Michael is the warrior angel (Jude 9, Revelation 12:7). The Cherubim guard the way to the tree of life (Genesis 3:24) while Seraphim (Isaiah 6) who carry out their service in the presence of the Almighty. These are among the angels and archangels and all the company of heaven.

Just as in heaven there are differences in Christians who enjoy the bliss of paradise (the elders in Revelation 5:5 and the martyrs in Revelation 6:11), so also there are differences in the believers in the Church on earth. To declare that the blessings of Christ are for all regardless of age, sex, nationality, or station in life is the great privilege and message of the Church. To deny that there are differences between old and young, or men and women, or slave and free, or nationality is to deny both God's Word and world.

The last sentence in Paragraph #1 is unclear. "Even as with Jesus, the authority for everything in the Church comes from the Word itself, from our relationship with the Father through the empowering of the Holy Spirit." Does this mean that just as the Church is under the authority of the Word, so is Jesus? Or, does this mean that just as Jesus means for the Church to have no authority outside the Word, so the Church acknowledges this truth? Is the last half of the assertion ("from our relationship ...") synonymous with the first half. The reader is not able to know what the intent of the statement is.

Let it be sufficient to state that the authority for everything in the Church comes from the Word itself. This is most certainly true.

Paragraph #2 — “Secondly, there are numerous instances in the Scriptures of women singing, praying or prophesying in worship. (See, for example, Ex. 14:20-21{sic}, I Cor 11:5 and 13). Women were deacons (Rom. 16:1), apostles (Junia in Rom. 16:7), hosts for house churches (Acts 12:12, Rom. 16:3-5, Col. 4:15), prophets (Ex. 15:20, Jg. 4:4, II Ki. 22:14, II Ch. 24:32{sic}, Is. 8:3, Lk. 2:36, Acts 21:9) and fellow-workers (Rom. 16:3, Phil. 4:2-3).”

Each one of these passages referenced above needs to be examined to determine if each one supports the claim that there are numerous instances in the Scriptures of women singing, praying, or prophesying in worship, or that women were deacons, apostles, hosts for house churches, prophets, and fellow-workers with the apostles.

The Question of Women Singing, Praying, & Prophesying in Worship

Question: Were there women involved in singing, praying, and prophesying during the worship services of the Church? According to Different Voices/Shared Vision, the answer is “yes.” This assertion is based upon Exodus 15:20-21 and I Corinthians 11:5, 13. (Since the Exodus 15 passage is discussed under the question of prophetesses it will be omitted in the discussion of this question.)

1 Corinthians 11:5, 13¹⁰

⁵ πᾶσα δὲ γυνὴ προσευχομένη ἢ
προφητεύουσα ἀκατακαλύπτω τῇ κεφαλῇ
καταισχύνει τὴν κεφαλὴν αὐτῆς· ἔν γάρ
ἐστὶν καὶ τὸ αὐτὸ τῇ ἐξυρημένῃ. Ἐν
ὑμῖν αὐτοῖς κρίνατε· πρέπον ἐστὶν γυναῖκα
ἀκατακάλυπτον τῷ θεῷ προσεύχεσθαι;

*But every woman who prays or prophesies
with her head uncovered dishonors her
head, for that is one and the same as if her
head were shaved. Judge among
yourselves. Is it proper for a woman to
pray to God with her head uncovered?*

That women were involved in praying and prophesying is without question. The Scriptures declare this to be most certainly true. That women were involved in praying and prophesying during the public worship services is another matter. Again the context of 1 Corinthians 11:5, 13 needs to be considered. Verses 1-16 are not within the setting of a worship service. They address the individual Christian — the man in verse 4 and the woman in verse 5. The praying and prophesying by women are appropriate, but not in the worship services. Paul, beginning in verse 17, deals with topics relating to the worship services. *Now, in giving these instructions I do not praise you, since you come together not for the better but for the worse. For first of all, when you come together as a church, I hear that there are divisions among you, and in part I believe it (I Cor. 11:17-18).* As a result, Paul does not contradict himself when he declares that women should not publicly speak

¹⁰ The Greek text used throughout this paper is Nestle-Aland: Eberhard Nestle, Erwin Nestle, Kurt Aland, et al., editors, Novum Testamentum Graece, 26th edition, Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft, Stuttgart, Germany, 1979.

during the worship services.

Lenski states an accurate picture of not only the text and the context, but also of the application to the practice of the church:

.... Paul says this: "Wherever and whenever it is proper and right for a man or for a woman to pray or to prophesy, the difference of sex should be marked as I indicate." Whether men are present or absent when a woman prays or prophesies makes no difference; also vice versa. Each remains what he is or what she is apart from the other.

.... Paul is said to contradict himself when he forbids the women to prophesy in 14:34-36. The matter becomes clear when we observe that from 11:17 onward until the end of chapter 14 Paul deals with the gatherings of the congregation for public worship and with regulations pertaining to public assemblies. In these public assemblies Paul forbids the women, not only to prophesy, but to speak at all, 14:34-36 and assigns the reason for this prohibition just as he does in I Tim. 2:11 etc.

It is evident, then, that women, too, were granted the gift of prophecy even as some still have this gift, namely the ability to present and properly to apply the Word of God by teaching others. And they are to exercise this valuable gift in the ample opportunities that offer themselves. So Paul writes "praying and prophesying" with reference to the woman just as he does with reference to the man. The public assemblies of the congregation are, however, not among these opportunities At other places and at other times women are free to exercise their gift of prophecy. In the present connection Paul has no occasion whatever to specify regarding this point. We may, however, think of Lois and Eunice who instructed Timothy, II Tim. 1:5; 3:15; The teaching ability of Christian women today has a wide range of opportunity without in the least intruding itself into the public congregational assemblies.¹¹

To summarize, there is no evidence, based upon I Corinthians 11:5, 13, to demonstrate that women were praying and prophesying during the public worship services of the Apostolic Church. On the contrary, the Lord, through the Scriptures, declares that this ought not to be. Therefore, Different Voices/Shared Vision is in error when it attempts to use 1 Corinthians 11:5, 13 to support its claim that there were "there are numerous instances in the Scriptures of women singing, praying or prophesying in worship."

The Question of Women Deacons:

Question: Were there women deacons? According to Different Voices/Shared Vision, the

¹¹ Lenski, R.C.H., The Interpretation of St. Paul's First and Second Epistles to the Corinthians, Augsburg Publishing House, Minneapolis, Minnesota, 1963, pages 436-437.

answer is "yes." This is based upon Romans 16:1.

Phoebe in Romans 16:1

¹ Συνίστημι δὲ ὑμῖν Φοίβην τὴν ἀδελφὴν ἡμῶν, οὕσαν [καὶ] διάκονον τῆς ἐκκλησίας τῆς ἐν Κεγχρείας, ² ἵνα αὐτὴν προσδέξησθε ἐν κυρίῳ ἀξίως τῶν ἁγίων καὶ παραστήτε αὐτῇ ἐν ᾧ ἂν ὑμῶν χρήζη πράγματι· καὶ γὰρ αὐτὴ προσάτις πολλῶν ἐγενήθη καὶ ἐμοῦ αὐτοῦ.

I commend to you Phoebe our sister, who is a servant of the church in Cenchrea, that you may receive her in the Lord in a manner worthy of the saints, and assist her in whatever business she has need of you; for indeed she has been a helper of many and of myself also.

The most common meaning of the word διάκονον is "servant." Phoebe was a "servant of the Church in Cenchrea." What does this mean? Could Phoebe have been a servant as all Christians are called to be, and yet, specially mentioned by Paul as his helper? Certainly this is within the realm of possibility. Could Phoebe have occupied a special office needed in the Church in Cenchrea -- the office of deacon (deaconess)? This, too is possible. The first deacons were appointed to help solve the food distribution problems among the widows (as well as allowing the Apostles to continue up with the work of the public administration of the Word). There must have been occasions where such distributions to sick or to shut-in widows would not be appropriate for male deacons. Just as the office of deacon began in order to fill a need in the church and to allow the men in the public administration of the Word, so also the office of deaconess is established to fill a need in the church and to allow all pastors to continue in the ministry of the Word. The need for women to occupy this office for these special situations was, and is, evident.

Does this mean that Phoebe might have been involved in the leading of public worship services? No, there is no textual evidence which gives any indication that she was involved in either leading, or publicly reading the Word, or prophesying, or praying within worship services. To maintain that she was, is to argue from silence and speak where God has not spoken. To maintain that she was, is to contradict what the Scriptures declare concerning the worship services in the Church and the men who are called to lead them.

The Question of Women Apostles:

Question: Were there women apostles? According to Different Voices/Shared Vision, the answer is "yes." This assertion is based upon Romans 16:7.

Junia in Romans 16:7

ἀσπάσασθε Ἀνδρόνικον καὶ Ἰουνᾶν τοὺς συγγενεῖς μου καὶ συναιχμαλώτους μου οἵτινές εἰσιν ἐπίσημοι ἐν τοῖς ἀποστόλοις, οἳ καὶ πρὸ ἐμοῦ γέγοναν ἐν Χριστῷ.

Greet Andronicus and Junia, my kinsmen and my fellow prisoners, who are of note among the apostles, who also were in Christ before me.

From this verse are we able to state that Junia was a woman who was an apostle such that it is permissible to extrapolate that there were women apostles? From this statement are we able to declare that Junia was a woman who was praying, prophesying, or leading of the public worship services?

First, consider the word Junia (Ἰουνιᾶν), which is the name of a person. This proper noun is singular and in the accusative case. The gender of this particular person is unknown since the form could be either masculine or feminine. An argument could be put forth that the name is masculine since the words describing Andronicus and Junia (τοὺς συγγενεῖς μου καὶ συναιχμαλώτους μου) are plural and masculine. Such is not necessarily the case. Even using the principle of interpretation which states that the exposition of a word or a passage must agree with the context, it is unclear whether Junia is a man or a woman. One might attempt to make a case that since, in Romans 16:21, Paul describes three men (Lucius, Jason, and Sosipater) as his *kinsmen* (οἱ συγγενεῖς) with a masculine, plural form that this would be the situation in Romans 16:7. However, in Romans 16:3, Paul describes a man and a woman using a masculine, plural noun. The Apostle declares that Priscilla and Aquila are his fellow workers (τοὺς συνεργούς). To summarize this paragraph, we are not able to know for certain whether Junia was a man or a woman.¹²

Secondly, in Different Voices/Shared Vision, an assumption is made that not only was Junia a woman, but that she was one of the apostles. This is based upon translating ἐν τοῖς ἀποστόλοις in such a way that Junia is declared to be "one of the apostles" or "one in the apostles." However, using the hermeneutical principle that the interpretation of a word must accord with the grammar and syntax of the language in which it was originally written, the use of the word ἐν with the dative and applied to a group of people is best translated as "among."¹³ The meaning could not be that Junia was one of the apostles, any more than "the preaching of Christ" is a "Gentile," as is demonstrated with the following verse:

Galatians 1:16 — ἀποκαλύψαι τὸν υἱὸν αὐτοῦ ἐν ἐμοί, ἵνα εὐαγγελίζωμαι αὐτὸν ἐν τοῖς ἔθνεσιν, εὐθέως οὐ προσανεθέμην σαρκὶ καὶ αἵματι

... to reveal His Son in me, that I might preach Him among the Gentiles, I did not immediately confer with flesh and blood, ...

Finally, there is no mention in the Scriptures of an apostle named "Junia" (nor of

¹² Lenski states that "This is Junias, a man, not Junia (Julia), a woman, wife or sister of Andronicus" (Ref. Lenski, R. C. B., Interpretation of Romans, Augsburg Publishing House, Minneapolis, Minnesota, 1961, page 905). Bauer (A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature), referencing Blass-Debrunner and Robertson is probably a man (short form of the common name Junianus) and states that the possibility, from "a purely lexical point of view, that this is a woman's name is prob. ruled out by the context." (page 380).

¹³ Theological Dictionary of the New Testament, ed. by Gerhard Kittel, Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, Grand Rapids, Michigan, Vol. H, page 539. Also see, Voelz, James W., Fundamental Greek Grammar, Concordia Publishing House, St. Louis, Missouri, 1986, page 34.

Andronicus for that matter). In fact, there is no other mention of Junia's name in the rest of the New Testament. As a result, there would seem to be only two possibilities concerning the understanding of Junia in Romans 16:7 -- Junia is the name of a man who served in the company of the apostles, but was, himself, not an apostle; or, Junia is the name of a woman who served in the company of the apostles, but was, herself, not an apostle. Junia's service with those who were apostles was of such a positive and useful nature that Junia was known *among the apostles*. Thus, any attempt to demonstrate that there were women apostles, based upon Romans 16:7 (as Different Voices/Shared Vision maintains), is without substance and is, therefore, to be rejected.

The Question of Women Being Hosts for House Churches:

Question: Were there women who were hosts for house churches? According to Different Voices/Shared Vision, the answer is "yes." This assertion is based upon Acts 12:12, Romans 16:3-5, and Colossians 4:15. These Scripture verses need to be placed before us.

Acts 12:12 -- So, when he had considered this, he came to the house of Mary, the mother of John whose surname was Mark, where many were gathered together praying.

Romans 16.-3-5 -- Greet Priscilla and Aquila, my fellow workers in Christ Jesus, who risked their own necks for my life, to whom not only I give thanks, but also all the churches of the Gentiles. Likewise greet the church that is in their house. Greet my beloved Epaenetus, who is the firstfruits of Achaia to Christ.

Colossians 4.15 -- Greet the brethren who are in Laodicea, and Nymphas and the church that is in his house.

Since the early congregations which formed usually had no buildings, the houses of some of the members were used. In Acts 12:12, the people of God gathered at the house of Mary to pray as Peter was in prison. This believing woman opened her house for such an occasion. Priscilla and Aquila opened their house for the church to meet. Likewise the individual referred to in Colossians 4:15 opened his/her home for the meeting of the Church. This would be a natural and useful thing to do as congregations began in various places. No doubt many congregations in the United States began as house churches made available by Christian men and women.

However, there is no evidence to maintain that the women who opened their homes to the church (like Mary and Priscilla) would lead the church in worship. To maintain that they did is to go beyond what God has revealed.

The Question of Women Prophets:

Question: Were there women prophets (prophetesses)? According to Different Voices/Shared Vision the answer is "yes." This is based upon Exodus 15:20, Judges 4-4, II Kings 22:14, II Chronicles 34:22, Isaiah 8:3, Luke 2:36, and Acts 21:9.

Miriam in Exodus 15:20-21

Then Miriam the prophetess (מִרְיָם הַנְּבִיאָה - LXX: Μαριάμ ἡ προφήτις), the sister of Aaron, took the timbrel in her hand; and all the women went out after her with timbrels and with dances. And Miriam answered them: “Sing to the LORD, for He has triumphed gloriously! The horse and its rider He has thrown into the sea!”

Was Miriam a prophetess of the Lord God? Was she involved with the leading of the worship services of the congregation of Israel or in prophesying in those worship services as is claimed in Different Voices/Shared Vision? In order to determine these answers both the text and the context must be considered.

Immediately preceding the verses is the event of the LORD God saving Israel by the miraculous crossing of the Red Sea. The nation had been led by Moses, had walked on dry ground, arrived at the other side, turned around to look back, and saw that the waters had engulfed the Egyptians. *Thus Israel saw the great work which the LORD had done in Egypt: so the people feared the LORD, and believed the LORD and His servant Moses (Exodus 14:31).* The immediate response was one of relief and joy and praise and celebration. Moses and the children of Israel sang in celebration of the deliverance from Egypt and in confession that Yahweh (יהוה) was God of all gods. *Who is like You, O LORD, among the gods? (15:11)* The “Song of Moses” was sung as part of a victory celebration.¹⁴

As a response to the “Song of Moses” sung by the children of Israel, Miriam led the chorus of women in singing. Was this done in the presence of all the people or did Miriam go out and lead the women in song and dance apart from the general gathering? The latter seems to be implied since *all the women went out (יָצְאוּ - LXX: ἐξήλθοσαν) after her with timbrels and with dances.* The Hebrew word is most often translated as “go out, go forth”¹⁵ while the Greek word can be translated “go out of, come out of, proceed, go forth, go away.”¹⁶ From this text it is not clear whether Miriam led the women in song and dance within or outside of the nation gathered in a victory celebration. If it was within the group, then it

¹⁴ There were other such celebrations which followed the mighty manifestations of the Lord God. Some celebrations were small and others were quite large. For example, the Jephthah-led victory over the Ammonites when the judge’s daughter came out to meet him with timbrels and dancing (Judges 11:34); the David-led victory over the Philistines which prompted the women to come out of all the cities of Israel, singing and dancing to meet King Saul, with tambourines, with joy, and with musical instruments (1 Samuel 18:6).

¹⁵ The Analytical Hebrew and Chaldee Lexicon, compiled by Benjamin Davidson, Hendrickson Publishers, Inc. Peabody, Massachusetts, 01960, pages 336 and 772.

¹⁶ The Analytical Greek Lexicon, page 146.

would be as a woman leading a group of women in singing and dancing upon the occasion of a miraculous deliverance of the Church by her Lord. There is no sense that Miriam is exercising authority over the congregation in worship. In fact, in verse 20, Moses makes the effort to demonstrate that such was not the case.

What is clear is that Miriam could not be placed in such a position that she was leading a worship service. This would not be permitted and the assumption of such a woman into such a position of authority over a congregation would not be God-pleasing. The temptation to usurp such is great. Miriam and Aaron both fell to such a temptation when they put human reason above the Divine Call given to Moses. Both Aaron and Miriam were at fault, but the Divine reaction was focused on Miriam.

That Miriam was a prophetess is not the question. She was. However, she was a prophetess only when and where and how the LORD God willed according to His special purpose(s). When she actually attempted to put forth her own agenda and usurp Moses' authority as leader and prophet of the congregation of Israel, she was met with Divine disapproval. The reading of 15 verses in the 12th chapter of Numbers is instructive and sobering:

Then Miriam and Aaron spoke against Moses because of the Ethiopian woman whom he had married; for he had married an Ethiopian woman. And they said, "Has the LORD indeed spoken only through Moses? Has He not spoken through us also?" And the LORD heard it. (Now the man Moses was very humble, more than all men who were on the face of the earth.) Suddenly the LORD said to Moses, Aaron, and Miriam, "Come out, you three, to the tabernacle of meeting!" So the three came out. Then the LORD came down in the Pillar of cloud and stood in the door of the tabernacle, and called Aaron and Miriam. And they both went forward. men He said, "Hear now My words:

*If there is a prophet among you,
I, the LORD, make Myself known to him in a vision,
And I speak to him in a dream.
Not so with My servant Moses;
He is faithful in all My house.
I speak with him face to face,
Even plainly, and not in dark sayings,
And he sees the form of the LORD.
Why then were you not afraid
To speak against My servant Moses?"*

So the anger of the LORD was aroused against them, and He departed. And when the cloud departed from above the tabernacle, suddenly Miriam became leprous, as white as snow. Then Aaron turned toward Miriam, and there she was, a leper. So Aaron said to Moses, "Oh, my lord! Please do not lay this sin on us, in which we have done foolishly and in which we have sinned. Please do not let her be as one dead, whose flesh is half consumed when he comes out of his mother's womb!" So Moses cited out to the LORD, saying, "Please heal her, O God, I pray!" Then the LORD said to Moses, "If her father had but spit in her face, would she not be shamed seven days? Let her

be shut out of the camp seven days, and after that she may be received again.” So Miriam was shut out of the camp seven days, and the people did not journey on till Miriam was brought in again. And afterward the people moved from Hazeroth and camped in the Wilderness of Paran (Numbers 12:1-15).

Insofar as Miriam lived her life and served her Lord according to His will and purpose, she was to be praised. Even the Lord has said of her, *O My people, what have I done to you? And how have I wearied you? Testify against Me. For I brought you up from the land of Egypt, I redeemed you from the house of bondage; and I sent before you Moses, Aaron, and Miriam (Micah 6:3-4).* However, when Miriam and Aaron attempted to assume authority over the people of God which rightly belonged to the called man, she received Divine discipline.

Deborah in Judges 4:4

Now Deborah, a prophetess (נָבִיאָה), the wife of Lapidoth, was judging Israel at that time.

Was Deborah a prophetess of the LORD God? Yes. Was she involved with the leading of the worship services of the congregation of Israel or in prophesying in those worship service as is claimed in Different Voices/Shared Vision? In order to determine the answer to this last question, it is critical to understand the historical circumstances.

From the deliverance of the children of Israel at the Red Sea through the events described in the book of Joshua, the nation of Israel was a theocracy. Moses was God's representative and spokesman in the matters of what we would call church and state. The same could be maintained concerning Joshua, though not to the same degree. However, when the events written in the book of Judges took place, there was more of a distinction of those involved with the decisions concerning "church and state."

The book of Judges presents a picture of the people of God who continually turned from the Word of the LORD, and of the LORD calling them to repentance and giving them His promise. The recurring pattern of 1.) the nation of Israel going after false gods; 2.) God allowing oppressors to conquer the people; 3.) the repentance of the people and the petition for deliverance. In mercy and grace, Yahweh raised up individuals to announce His judgments. While God was the Judge, these raised up ones were involved in 'judging.' (The participle form is used to describe the work of these people. The noun is never used.) As ones judging they were involved in leading and guiding the nation. The ones judging were people whom God raised up to deliver the children of God from their oppressors. The purpose was to preserve the people from whom the Messiah would come.

One of the people whom God raised up to defeat Israel's earthly oppressors was Deborah. This woman is called a prophetess. Was she a prophetess because, during the times of her judging, she conveyed God's message of judgment to the people? It is possible, but we do

¹⁷ Hummel, Horace D., The Word Becoming Flesh, Concordia Publishing House, St. Louis, Missouri, 1979, page 114.

not know. In Judges 4:6-7 it is possible that she was delivering a message from Yahweh to Barak. If such is the case, then this is one example of her exercising her office as prophetess when the message was one concerning a military campaign. Is there an indication that Deborah was given divine authority apart from her position as one judging, or, that by virtue of her being a prophetess, she was involved in the leading of worship services? No.

With regard to the issues of men and women in authority in the church, are there any indications what the personal attitude of this God-fearing, pious woman was? Indeed, yes. Her own humble words speak well. The called man named Barak hesitated in carrying out God's will against the enemy. He said to Deborah, *If you will go with me, then I will go; but if you will not go with me, I will not go (Judges 4:8)*. Her response is quite informative, *I will surely go with you; nevertheless there will be no glory for you in the journey you are taking, for the LORD will sell Sisera into the hand of a woman (v. 9)*. Such a perspective reminds us also when the LORD declared to the people of Israel through the prophet:

Say to the righteous that it shall be well with them. For they shall eat the fruit of their doings. Woe to the wicked! It shall be ill with him, for the reward of his hands shall be given him. As for My people children are their oppressors. And women rule over them. O My people! Those who lead you cause you to err and destroy the way of your paths (Isaiah 3:10-12).

Different Voices/Shared Vision numbers Deborah among those women who were singing, praying, or prophesying in worship. A brief examination into the text does not support such an assertion.

Hulda in 2 Kings 22:14 & 2 Chronicles 34:22

2 Kings 22:14 — *So Hilkiah the priest, Ahikam, Achbor, Shaphan, and Asaiah went to Huldah the prophetess (הַנְּבִיאָה אֶלְחִלְדָּה), the wife of Shallum the son of Tikvah, the son of Harhas, keeper of the wardrobe. (She dwelt in Jerusalem in the Second Quarter.) And they spoke with her.*

2 Chronicles 34:22 — *So Hilkiah and those whom the king had appointed went to Huldah the prophetess (אֶלְחִלְדָּה הַנְּבִיאָה), the wife of Shallum the son of Tokhath, the son of Harhas, keeper of the wardrobe. (She dwelt in Jerusalem in the Second Quarter.) And they spoke with her.*

Was Huldah a prophetess of the LORD God? Was she involved with the leading of the worship services of the congregation of Israel or in prophesying in those worship services as is inferred in Different Voices/Shared Vision? In order to determine these answers the context must be considered.

These parallel passages in 2 Kings and 2 Chronicles inform the reader of the time when

Josiah was King of Judah. Immediately preceding the verses shown above, the holy author writes about the time when the temple of the LORD was being repaired (2 Kings 22:3-7). During this work, the Book of the Law was discovered by Hilkiah the high priest (vss. 8-9). The secretary, Shaphan reads it in the presence of King Josiah (vs. 10). Josiah's reaction, upon hearing how he and his people had departed from the will of the LORD God as revealed in His Word, tore his robes in contrition (vs. 11). The king gave orders to Hilkiah, Ahikam, Aebor, Shaphan, and Asaiah to inquire of the LORD concerning the king and the people because both had departed from the Word of the LORD (vss. 12-13). As the verses shown above indicate, the four men go to the prophetess named Huldah and speak with her (vs. 14). As a prophetess, she conveys the message of the LORD to these men -- a Word of law and condemnation to those who had forsaken the LORD, and a Word of promise and grace to the contrite king (vss. 15-20). Following verse 20, Huldah is not mentioned again. (The 2 Chronicles 34 account reveals the same events.)

Now comes the revealing events which are helpful for our discussion on whether this episode in Huldah's life could be one of the "numerous instances in the Scriptures of women singing, praying or prophesying in worship." Consider selected sections from 2 Kings 23:

Then the king sent them to gather all the elders of Judah and Jerusalem to him. And the king went up to the house of the LORD with all the men of Judah, and with him all the inhabitants of Jerusalem -- the priests and the prophets and all the people, both small and great; and he read in their hearing all the words of the Book of the Covenant) which had been found in the house of the LORD (vss. 1-2). Now before him there was no king like him, who turned to the LORD with all his heart, with all his soul, and with all his might, according to all the Law of Moses, nor after him did any arise like him (vs. 25).

There are two items of particular interest. First, only after consulting Huldah did the men go to the house of the LORD. Up to that time they had not been in the house of the LORD. Therefore, it has to be held that she was not leading a worship service or even involved in one when the events of 2 Kings 22:14-20 took place. Indeed, verse 14 indicates that the men went to the place where Huldah lived and not to the house of the LORD. It seems, however, that she was at the house of the LORD in 2 Kings 24. Her attendance on that particular occasion was not because she was a prophetess or that she was leading worship or that she was prophesying within the worship. Rather, she was there because the Scriptures declare that *all the men of Judah, and with him all the inhabitants of Jerusalem -- the priests and the prophets and all the people, both small and great* were there.

The second item of interest may have been overlooked. King Josiah's desire, in both word and deed, was to restore true worship in the house of the LORD. *Go, inquire of the LORD for me, for the people and for all Judah, concerning the words of this book that has been found; for great is the wrath of the LORD that is aroused against us, because our fathers have not obeyed the words of this book, to do according to all that is written concerning us (2 Kings 22:13).* To accomplish this, his resolution was that the Word was to be the only source, guide, and norm for such a reformation. Consequently, the directives of the LORD found in the Pentateuch, and especially in Leviticus, would be strictly followed. There would be no creative worship, no contemporary worship, and no novelties in the services at the

LORD's house as Josiah sought to lead God's people in repentance and reformation. Huldah did not lead and would not be leading worship services in the house of the LORD.

The Prophetess in Isaiah 8:3

Isaiah 8:1-3 -- Moreover the LORD said to me, "Take a large scroll, and write on it with a man's pen concerning Maher-Shalel-Hash-Baz. And I will take for Myself faithful witnesses to record, Uriah the priest and Zechariah the son of Jeberechiah. " Then I went to the prophetess, and she conceived and bore a son. Then the LORD said to me, "Call his name Maher-Shatel-Hash-Baz."

Not much can be stated about this unnamed prophetess since the LORD has not revealed any more than what we have above. The most likely understanding is that this woman is called a prophetess because her husband was the prophet Isaiah.¹⁸ It is similar to the not uncommon occurrence when the pastor's wife is called "Mrs. Pastor."

Anna in Luke 2:36-37

³⁶ Καὶ ἦν Ἄννα προφήτις, θυγάτηρ Φανουήλ, ἐκ φυλῆς Ἀσήρ· αὕτη προβεβηκυῖα ἐν ἡμέραις πολλαῖς, ζήσασα μετὰ ἀνδρὸς ἕτη ἑπτὰ ἀπὸ τῆς παρθενίας αὐτῆς ³⁷ καὶ αὕτη χήρα ἕως ἐτῶν ὀγδοήκοντα τεσσάρων, ἣ οὐκ ἀφίστατο τοῦ ἱεροῦ νηστεύσασα καὶ δεήσασιν λατρεύουσα νύκτα καὶ ἡμέραν. ³⁸ καὶ αὕτη τῇ ὥρᾳ ἐπιστᾶσα ἀνθωμολογεῖτο τῷ θεῷ καὶ ἐλάλει περὶ αὐτοῦ πᾶσιν τοῖς προσδεχομένοις λύτρωσιν Ἱερουσαλήμ.

Now there was one, Anna, a prophetess, the daughter of Phamuel, of the tribe of Asher. She was of a great age, and had lived with her husband seven years from her virginity; and this woman was a widow of about eighty-four years, who did not depart from the temple, but served God with fastings and prayers night and day. And coming in that instant she gave thanks to the Lord, and spoke of Him to all those who looked for redemption in Jerusalem.

The Holy Spirit, through the evangelist, informs us that the humble and pious woman named Anna was a prophetess. She feared, loved, and trusted in the LORD her God and awaited the coming Redeemer. This widow spent her time in the temple. Her service was characterized by fasting and by prayer. When the Messiah was carried to His temple, Anna praised God, thanked Him, and bore witness concerning this Child -- that He was the Christ Who was expected and long hoped for. Having seen the Son of God and Son of Man, Anna continued to speak to those whom she met who were expecting the Ransoming

¹⁸ Leupold, H.C., (Exposition of Isaiah, Volume 1, Baker Book House, Grand Rapids, Michigan, 1968) states: "The prophet begets a son. The 'prophetess' mentioned is naturally his wife. The name involved is a mere title, not an indication that she exercised any prophetic functions" (page 168).

One. That the prophetess named Anna was continually in the temple and there when the temple services took place is without doubt. The Scriptures maintain this. That she was involved with the leading of these services, or speaking during the services, or prophesying during them is another matter. The Word does not mention any of these occurrences taking place. We dare not declare that they did. To do so is to go beyond that which God speaks.

The Daughters of Philip in Acts 21:8-9

⁸ τῇ δὲ ἐπαύριον ἐξεληθόντες ἦλθομεν εἰς Καισάρειαν καὶ εἰσελθόντες εἰς τὸν οἶκον Φιλίππου τοῦ εὐαγγελιστοῦ, ὄντος ἐκ τῶν ἑπτὰ, ἐμείναμεν παρ' αὐτῷ. ⁹ τούτῳ δὲ ἦσαν θυγατέρες τέσσαρες παρθένοι προφητεύουσαι.

On the next day we who were Paul's companions departed and came to Caesarea, and entered the house of Philip the evangelist, who was one of the seven, and stayed with him. Now this man had four virgin daughters who prophesied.

Different Voices / Shared Vision maintains that these four daughters were “prophets.” (prophetesses). However, a careful examination of this text indicates that Luke described them not as “prophetesses” (the noun form which emphasizes office), but as “ones prophesying” (προφητεύουσαι - a plural participle stressing action). While not being called prophetesses, these four daughters were given the ability to set forth God's will based upon His Word and to do so in God-pleasing ways. At the same time, Acts 21:8-9 does not constitute an example of a woman leading a public worship service of the Church.

Noadiah in Nehemiah 6:14

My God, remember Tobiah and Sanhallat, according to these their works, and the prophetess Noadiah and the rest of the prophets who would have made me afraid.

Nehemiah, former cupbearer to the king in Persia and now leader of the LORD's people who have returned to Jerusalem, attempts to do God's will by rebuilding the wall. There is a great deal of opposition, especially by Tobiah and Sanballat who hired the false prophet named Shemaiah, and by the false prophetess named Noadiah. While the two paragraphs in Different Voices/Shared Vision do no mention Noadiah, her situation is worth including in this study. Just as there were men who were false prophets, so also there was a woman sought the office of prophetess apart from the will and call of God. Noadiah was a false prophetess. She is an example of a woman who disregarded God's Word, willfully and actively participated in opposition to the mission of the Church, sought to side-track God's people from His work for them, and did so by claiming "Thus says the LORD!"

That Miriam, Deborah, Huldah, the prophet's wife, and Anna were identified as prophetesses is without doubt. The Scriptures declare them to be so. That the four daughters of Philip were ones prophesying is without doubt. Again, the Word of God declares that they did. That any of them was a prophetess who was involved in praying or prophesying with the worship services, or was leading one of these worship services by singing, praying, or prophesying is another matter.

Conclusion for Section 1

There is no evidence, whatsoever, to indicate that any of the women identified in this section was involved in the leading of or prophesying within the context of a public service of a congregation in worship. To declare, not only that there were, but also that this is the norm, is to go beyond the revealed Word of God. To build a case for women leading worship today, based upon the examples cited is to base a practice on false doctrine.

Section 2:

Exegetical Examinations of Two Texts — 1 Corinthians 14:33b-36 & 1 Timothy 2:8-15

Before examining these two texts, it would serve us well to be reminded of where the readers of *Different Voices/Shared Vision* have been led. Using the principles of historical criticism to understand the texts, it is maintained that the two paragraphs supply the norms and the examples for women being leaders in the worship services of the church. Therefore, such texts as I Corinthians 14 and I Timothy 2 must be obscure texts dealing with local problems. Thus, such texts are not normative for the church today.¹⁹

However, since the previous section of this paper has sufficiently demonstrated that there are no Biblical norms and no Scriptural examples of women involved in the leading of the worship services of the church, we may, with respect to I Corinthians 14 and 1 Timothy 2, proceed with the fact that they are not obscure texts. Thus, before beginning our exegetical examinations of them, we are to proceed with the possibility that these two texts may be normative for and may have applications within the church today.

1 Corinthians 14:33b-36

From Different Voices/Shared Vision we read the following concerning this text:

An especially important case which illustrates this principle is the admonition to women to keep silent in I Corinthians 14:34. There is obviously a conflict between this instance of a corrective (C) text and the norms (A) and examples (B) in the rest of Scriptures: (page 17).

Literarily, we know that the entire section of I Cor. 11-14 deals with worship practices (page 18).

The evidence is such that we cannot conclusively reconstruct answers to who and what are being addressed in this text, or by whom. Without being able to establish certainty about these, and other points in understanding the meaning of I Corinthians 14:34-36, this passage cannot responsibly be used as a proof-text for anything as significant as the role of women in the ministry of the church (page 28).

Isagogics of I Corinthians

The Holy Spirit inspired the Apostle Paul to write I Corinthians about AD 55. After

¹⁹ See Different Voices/Shared Vision, page 17.

working for 18 months (Acts 18) to begin and to maintain the congregation in Corinth during his 2nd missionary journey, Paul left. In response to a number of issues within the Corinthian congregation, Paul wrote this epistle while in Ephesus. The Apostle addresses the topics and applies them to his readers in a firm, pastoral manner. While Paul proclaims the Law in all of its severity, he does so in order that the grace of God through the good news of Christ might be announced to his readers. His purposes for writing were to instruct and to restore the church in her areas of weakness, to correct false doctrine, to expose practices which were contrary to the will of God, and to give instruction concerning an offering for the poor in Jerusalem.²⁰

Text of 1 Corinthians 14:33b-36

³³ Ὡς ἐν πάσαις ταῖς ἐκκλησίαις τῶν ἁγίων
³⁴ αἱ γυναῖκες ἐν ταῖς ἐκκλησίαις σιγάτωσαν·
οὐ γὰρ ἐπιτρέπεται αὐταῖς λαλεῖν. ἀλλὰ
ὑποτασέσθωσαν, καθὼς καὶ ὁ νόμος λέγει
³⁵ εἰ δέ τι μαθεῖν θέλουσιν, ἐν οἴκῳ τοῦς
ιδίους ἄνδρας ἐπερωτάτωσαν· αἰσχρὸν γάρ
ἐστὶν γυναικὶ λαλεῖν ἐν ἐκκλησίᾳ. ³⁶ ἢ ἀφ'
ὑμῶν ὁ λόγος τοῦ θεοῦ ἐξῆλθεν, ἢ εἰς ὑμᾶς
μόνους κατήντησεν;

³³ As in all the churches of the saints, ³⁴ let your women keep silent in the churches, for they are not permitted to speak, but they are to be submissive, as the Law also says. ³⁵ And if they want to learn something, let them ask their own husbands at home; for it is shameful for women to ³⁶ Or did the Word of God speak in church. come originally from you? Or was it you only that it reached?

Context of 1 Corinthians 14:33b-36

Of major importance is the location of this text in the letter. Since I Corinthians 11:5 is thought by some to be in conflict with I Corinthians 14:34-36,²¹ and since some claim that all of I Corinthians 11-14 concerns the congregation in worship,²² a careful examination of the structure of the epistle is necessary. As the outline shown below demonstrates, the text from I Corinthians 11:5 (allowing women to pray and to prophesy) is part of the Apostolic Word given for instructing individual Christians for life in this world (see III below). In a different context, I Corinthians 14:33b-36 is part of Paul's discussion of what is and what is not appropriate within the worship services of the Church (see IV below).

The critical text which requires this division is I Corinthians 11:17-20. Here Paul is addressing problems in a new area — the worship setting — the assembly — the Church.

²⁰ For further information concerning the historical background and the circumstances of this letter, see Lenski, R.C.H., The Interpretation of St. Paul's First and Second Epistles to the Corinthians, Augsburg Publishing House, Minneapolis, Minnesota, 1963, pages 7-17.

²¹ See Different Voices/Shared Vision, pages 26, 70, 91, and 92.

²² See Different Voices/Shared Vision, page 18 ("Literarily, we know that the entire section of I Cor. 11-14 deals with worship practices."), page 91 ("... in I Cor. 11:12-16 Paul gives instructions about how women are to be dressed when they, pray and prophesy in the assembly."), and page 91 ("But it is also important to notice that women do, in fact, have the authority to pray and prophesy in the assembly."). See also the outline in the Concordia Self-Study Bible, page 1746, which does not reflect this important division.

The *“first of all”* helps to direct the reader to the fact that a new area is being discussed. Notice the number of times in these verses when Paul indicates that he is now writing about the congregation assembled in worship.

Now in giving these instructions I do not praise you, since you come together not for the better but for the worse. For first of all, when you come together as a church, I hear that there are divisions among you, and in pail I believe it. For there must also be factions among you, that those who are approved may be recognized among you. Therefore when you come together in one place, it is not to eat the Lord's Supper. (emphases mine).

Outline of I Corinthians:

I.	Greeting and Introduction	1:1 - 1: 9
II.	Preachers and Preaching	1:10 - 4:21
III.	The Christian: Living in the World	5:1 - 11:16
	A. Incest in the Christian Community	
	B. Judging within the Christian Community	
	C. Lawsuits in the Secular Courts	
	D. Marriage for the Christian	
	E. Marriage to an Unbeliever	
	F. The Unmarried & the Widow	
	G. Eating Food Offered to Idols	
	H. Doing God's Will in the World	
	I. Example of the Old Testament Community	
	J. The Christian: Praying & Prophesying	
IV.	The Congregation: Worship in the Church	11:17 - 14:40
	A. The Lord's Supper	
	1. What is not the Lord's Supper	
	2. Institution of Lord's Supper	
	3. Preparation for Lord's Supper	
	B. Manifestations of Spiritual Things	
	1. Diversity within the Assembly	
	2. Unity of the Assembly	
	3. Exercising Spiritual Love	
	4. Use of Foreign Languages	
	5. Godly Order Within Worship	
	6. Silence of Women in Worship	
V.	The Doctrine of the Resurrection	15:1 - 15:58
VI.	conclusion	16:1 - 16:24
	A. offering for the Saints	
	B. Exhortation to Stand in the Faith	
	C. Greetings and Salutations	

Immediately preceding 14:33b-36 Paul addresses the brethren (14:26) and discusses the matter of order during the worship services (14:26-32). This is directed to the men within the assembly who speak. In anticipation of those who would use 14:26-32 as a basis for women speaking in worship, Paul immediately follows with 14:33b-36. To summarize these thoughts, the Apostle states that God is not the author of confusion, but of peace (14:33a). This statement stands of itself. Thus, 14:33b is attached, not to the end of the preceding words, but to the verse following. *As in all the churches of the saints, let the women be*

*silent in the assemblies.*²³

In conclusion, it is first noted that the section dealing with the Church in worship begins, not at 11:1, but at 11:17. Secondly, it follows that there is neither conflict nor contradiction between 11:5 and 14:33b-36. Each is true in its own setting and application. Thirdly, since there is no reason to require that the text be considered obscure or limited to the culture or context of that day, the exegete will proceed with the common, literal meanings of the words and let the Word be understood simply as it is written with applications made where and when needed within Christendom.

Exegetical Examination of I Corinthians 14:33b-36

The last part of verse 33 is a clause which introduces what follows. Since Paul writes of what is to take place "in all of the churches of the saints," we understand that the verses which follow are true wherever and whenever a congregation gathers for worship. There are neither geographic boundaries nor time limitations nor cultural confines to what follows.

Verse 34 continues with the thought started in 33b. Paul repeats the prepositional phrase for emphasis (verse 33b: ἐν πάσαις ταῖς ἐκκλησίαις - *in all the churches*; verse 34: ἐν ταῖς ἐκκλησίαις - *in the churches*). The verb (σιγάτωσαν - "be silent") is 3rd person, plural, present, active, imperative. The use of the 3rd person is significant since, in a preceding verse, Paul addresses the brethren and uses a 2nd person plural imperative. The men were responsible for the conduct of order within the worship service: verse 20 - "you brothers be ..." and verse 34 -- "the women, let them be ..". (Another form of the verb was used in 14:28 to indicate the necessity of the silence of a man within the assembly who would desire to address the congregation in a foreign language when there was no interpreter present.) Within the worship service the women are not permitted to speak (λαλεῖν) in the assemblies. This refers to specific, individual speaking by a woman and applies to such speaking in general: prophesying, praying, proclaiming, bearing witness, leading the liturgy, reading the Scripture, or even asking a question (verse 35).²⁴ The authority for such speaking in the worshiping congregation is not permitted, is not allowed -- literally, the right for such speaking is not to be "handed over to them" (οὐ γὰρ ἐπιτρέπεται αὐταῖς). It is significant that the verb is in the present tense since the meaning is: "it has not been turned over and remains that way now." For they are not permitted to speak; but (contrary to this - ἀλλὰ) they are to be submissive (to be in a state of subjection or under obedience or to be subordinated - ὑποτασσέσθωσαν). Such submission is not intended to be a curse placed upon all females. just as God's original purpose for creating the woman was a blessing, so the abiding by the Lord's direction for the woman to remain in her order will

²³ The Greek text attaches I Corinthians 14-33b to verse 34. The New International Version attaches it to the following verse (*As in all the congregations of the saints, women should remain silent in the churches.*), while the New King James Version places it at the end of the preceding verse (*For God is not the author of confusion but of peace, as in all the churches of the saints.*).

²⁴ See also Frederick Louis Godet, *Commentary on First Corinthians*, pages 545 and 741.

be a blessing. Paul declares these truths and bases them on the revealed Word, and not from his own personal preferences, not on the basis of society's standard, and not on the basis of culture's customs. Such an appeal to the "scriptures alone" 1.) is intended to prevent those who opposed the Apostolic Word from saying, "Well, that's your opinion, Paul. We are going to do our own thing according to our own opinions on this matter." and 2.) would require those who followed their own opinions to declare that their teachings and practices were not based upon the scriptures alone, but were also normed by and based upon human reason. Hence, Paul's denial of the authority for a woman to speak in the worship service of the church is in agreement with the Old Testament -- (*as also the Law says* -- καθὼς καὶ ὁ νόμος λέγει). The basis for Paul's doctrine and practice is the Word. He appeals to the Order of Creation revealed in the Old Testament. While to the Corinthians he simply refers to the Law, He goes into more detail in his first epistle to Timothy (*And I do not permit a woman to teach or to have authority over a man, but to be in silence. For Adam was formed first, then Eve. I Timothy 2:12-13*). Three verses later Paul states that *the things* (plural) *which I write to you are the commandments of the Lord* (*I Corinthians 14.37*).

Verse 35 begins with a simple, statement of condition (εἰ + present indicative verb in the protosis with a present, active imperative verb in the apodosis - ἐπερωτάτωσαν). The force of the present imperative makes the meaning: "If this is happening, then let this other take place and continue to do it." Hence, "If they (the women) desire (verb is 3rd person) to learn anything, then let them ask, and continue to ask, their own husbands at home." (The general situation of a home where a husband and a wife live is presented while the special circumstances involving widows or women married to unbelieving husbands are not addressed.) Why is it to be like this? Paul answers, *for it is a shame* (disgraceful, dishonorable) *for a woman to speak in a church*. Since neither "woman" nor "church" has a definite article, the meaning is not limited to a specific situation or to a particular woman. Consequently, a congregation which permits a woman to speak in the worship service is, either by design or by default, declaring itself to be un-Apostolic.

The Holy Spirit utilizes the personality of Paul to conclude this section with two sharp questions intended to sting the arrogant Corinthians. Verse 36 begins with "or" (ἢ) with the sense of "or particularly for you who are teaching and practicing contrary to what I have just written" *was it from you the Word of God went out?* (go forth, come out of - ἐξῆλθεν). *Or, did it* (the Word of God) *reach* (come to -- κατήντησεν) *only you* (or, "you alone")? The word translated as alone or only (μόνους) is an accusative, masculine, plural adjective. The masculine should not present a problem if it is understood that this criticism is not primarily directed to those (3rd person) women who would presume to speak in church, but *to you* (εἰς ὑμᾶς -- 2nd person, plural, accusative, personal pronoun), namely to you men who would allow this to take place. There is biting sarcasm in these questions intended for those who follow their own desires and practices rather than conforming to the Word of God revealed to the prophets and apostles. The church militant is plagued with innovators who presume either to ignore the Word of God or to inform the people of what its new meaning is. The departure from the formal principle of sola scriptura requires that something be added - the scriptures plus human reason, personal opinion, cultural custom, sociological principles, etc. Those who allow such multiple authorities not

only teach such things but they approve of those who practice them. Paul's stinging questions had particular application for the church in Corinth, but not for Corinth alone!

I Timothy 2:8-15

From **Different Voices/Shared Vision** we read the following concerning this text:

When we first read I Tim. 2:8-15, we are immediately struck by the fact (in keeping with the third hermeneutical principle outlined in the preceding chapter) that the text is a corrective text (C) which seems to contradict the general norms (A) and specific examples (B) of the rest of the Scriptures. (page 21)

Therefore, our primary obligation is to look for hints in the text which would enable us to know the situation that called forth this specific admonition. (page 21)

Historically, we know that Gnostic myths were already beginning to be prevalent in the first century A.D. and that the ancient world had developed some thorough heresies about Eve and her importance in the origin of the world. This cultural context of I Tim. 2:8-15, therefore, must be kept in mind when we try to understand the application of the text in our times. (page 22)

Comments on the Eve Heresy

Since **Different Voices/Shared Vision** presupposes that the two paragraphs establish the norm, this requires that I Timothy 2:8-15 be an obscure, corrective text. It is claimed that these Eve myths were prevalent in the ancient world before AD 100. This is asserted by appealing to two writings: **The Apocalypse of Adam** and **On the Origin of the World**. This approach requires a presentation of the material in order that the section on Adam and Eve (verses 13-14) might not be a general requirement within Christendom. Rather, it is proposed that Paul's directive is a special limitation (both temporal and geographical) which would require the silencing of those women who were pushing the heretical myths about Eve.²⁵

Just how "prevalent" were these myths? Was a particular Eve myth one in which Paul addressed in I Timothy? Using the principles of historical criticism, it can only be said that the certainty of an Eve myth in the Ephesian congregation which prompted Paul in AD 62 to write I Timothy 2:13-14 to silence those women who were teaching the myth is, at best, an unreliable hypothesis. The **Apocalypse of Adam**, for example, comes from a single manuscript discovered near Nag Hammadi, Egypt, in 1946.²⁶ The limits of the dating of

²⁵ Different Voices/Shared Vision, page 23. 1,6

²⁶ Compare this with approximately 5,000 Greek manuscripts containing all or part of the New Testament. These manuscripts have been discovered from Leningrad tonorth Africa, from France to Palestine, and many other places as well. (See Metzger, Bruce M., **The Text of the New Testament**, 2nd edition, Oxford University Press, New York, 1968, pages 36-92.)

the autograph are the rust to the fourth centuries AD.²⁷ Was the Eve myth in The Apocalypse of Adam so widespread that it not only caused problems in a congregation in Ephesus when the only copy of the work found to date was in Egypt? That there were problems with myths, fables, and endless genealogies in the Ephesian congregation is acknowledged by Paul (I Timothy 1:4). That one of these was an Eve myth is a wishful assertion. Such a connection and subsequent contention would seem to be a fabrication formulated in the minds of some in the latter half of the 20th century.

Isagogics of I Timothy

After Paul's release from his first imprisonment in Rome (about AD 59-61), the Apostle continued his work in proclaiming Jesus Christ and Him crucified. On his way to Macedonia, he leaves Timothy at Ephesus in order that he might charge some that they teach no other doctrine (I Timothy 1:3). Realizing that he might not be able to go to Ephesus to be with Timothy (I Timothy 3:14-15), Paul wrote to refute false teachings (especially what appears to be a very early form of Gnostism²⁸) and to guide the young man as he lead the church in Ephesus (especially in the areas concerning worship and the qualifications of men who were to be pastors and deacons).

Text of 1 Timothy 2:8-15

⁸ Βούλομαι οὖν προσεύχεσθαι τοὺς ἄνδρας ἐν παντὶ τόπῳ ἐπαίροντας ὀσίους χεῖρας χωρὶς ὀργῆς καὶ διαλογισμοῦ. ⁹ Ὡσαύτως [καὶ] γυναικῶν ἐν καταστολῇ κοσμίῳ μετὰ αἰδοῦς καὶ σωφροσύνης κοσμεῖν ἑαυτάς, μὴ ἐν πλέγμασιν καὶ χρυσίῳ ἢ μαργαρίαις ἢ ἱματισμῷ πολυτελεῖ, ¹⁰ ἀλλ' ὃ πρέπει γυναιξὶν ἐπαγγελλομέναις θεοσεβείαν, δι' ἔργων ἀγαθῶν. ¹¹ Γυνὴ ἐν ἡσυχίᾳ μανθανέτω ἐν πάσῃ ὑποταγῇ. ¹² διδάσκειν δὲ γυναικὶ οὐκ ἐπιτρέπω οὐδὲ αὐθεντεῖν ἄνδρός, ἀλλ' εἶναι ἐν ἡσυχίᾳ. ¹³ Ἀδὰμ γὰρ πρῶτος ἐπλάσθη, εἶτα Εὐᾶ. ¹⁴ καὶ Ἀδὰμ οὐκ ἠπατήθη, ἡ δὲ γυνὴ ἐξαπατηθεῖσα ἐν παραβάσει γέγονεν. ¹⁵ σωθήσεται δὲ διὰ τῆς τεκνογονίας, ἐὰν μείνωσιν ἐν πίστει καὶ ἀγάπῃ καὶ ἀγιασμῷ μετὰ σωφροσύνης.

⁸ Therefore I desire that the men pray everywhere, lifting up holy hands, without wrath and doubting, ⁹ in like manner also, that the women adorn themselves in modest apparel, with propriety and moderation, not with braided hair or gold or pearls or costly clothing, ¹⁰ but, which is proper for women professing godliness, with good works. ¹¹ Let a woman learn in silence with all submission. ¹² And I do not permit a woman to teach or to have authority over a man, but to be in silence. ¹³ For Adam was formed first, then Eve. ¹⁴ And Adam was not deceived, but the woman being deceived, fell into transgression. ¹⁵ Nevertheless she will be saved in childbearing if they continue in faith, love, and holiness, with self-control.

²⁷ Charlesworth, James B., The Old Testament Pseudepigrapha, Volume 1, *Apocalyptic Literature and Testaments*, Doubleday & Company, Inc., Garden City, New York, 1983, page 708.

²⁸ For a succinct description of Gnosticism, see Lutheran Cyclopedia, Concordia Publishing House, St. Louis, Missouri, 1975, pages 337-338.

Context of I Timothy 2:8-15

The Apostle Paul wrote this letter to his representative and true son in the faith, Timothy. Though written to young Timothy, the letter was also intended for the Church. After the customary greetings (1:1-2), the Apostle begins with a warning against those who are opposed to true doctrine (1:3-11). Paul then relates the truth of God's grace, not in abstract terms, but according to his own life (1:12-17). Paul charges Timothy to fight the good fight of faith. This would not result in a "win-win" situation as Hymenaeus and Alexander discovered and the Church announced (1:18-20). Chapter 2 addresses activities within the Church especially prayer and that the Good News of God in Christ is intended for all (2:1-7). Specific applications concerning men and women in worship are addressed (2:8-15). The qualifications of those men who were to be overseers (pastors) and deacons in the Church are given (3:1-13). Paul writes that he may be delayed in coming to Timothy and confirms the Church's confession of faith (3:14-16). Chapter 4 includes the proper ways of dealing with false teachers within the Church, while the next section speaks of widows, elders, and slaves (5:1 - 6:2). Miscellaneous matters are included in the final chapter (6:3-10) and Paul charges Timothy, once again, to fight the good fight of the faith and remain within the confession of the Church (6:11-16). Following a few words concerning those who are wealthy (6:17-19), Paul tells Timothy to guard what has been entrusted to his care -- the Gospel (6:20-21).

Exegetical Examination of I Timothy 2:8-15

In verse 8 Paul indicates what his intentions ("I desire, I intend" -- Βούλομαι) were concerning the praying (προσεύχεσθαι) within the worship services of the Church. This does not mean that such intentions were merely Paul's personal desires. The Apostle, when he does give his personal opinion, makes it very clear. (For example, *To the rest I say this [I, not the Lord]. If any brother ... I Corinthians 7:12*; and *In this self-confident boasting I am not talking as the Lord would, but as a fool ... 2 Corinthians 11:17*.) The men (τοὺς ἄνδρας) is used instead of the general term for man (ὁ ἄνθρωπος) because Paul wants the reader to understand that this refers to men who are to be doing such leading within congregational worship. (To confirm this, he speaks concerning women [γυναῖκας] in the next verse.) The contention that this section was written in response to an equal rights for women movement in this congregation has no support. The reason why this subject was addressed is simply that the congregations) was recently established and the need for direction for both Timothy and the young congregation required that Paul make known how the people of God ought to conduct themselves in Church (3:15). This follows the hermeneutical principle that the interpretation of any word or assertion must be in agreement with the purpose and theme of the book as a whole. Such was true for many of the places where mission congregations were started. Just as Paul gave instructions to Titus for the appointment of qualified men to be elders (pastors) in every town (Titus 1:5) and just as he addressed Timothy with the truth that was to be proclaimed and practiced in Ephesus, so also the missionary pastor today will find himself in a position of teaching what is appropriate practice in public worship. The definite article is used with the word men -- the men (τοὺς ἄνδρας). This indicates that there were specific men who would be doing the leading -- namely, the ones identified by Timothy as being qualified to lead the worship services. That several men might be involved in this during a service presents no

problem. The missionary pastor will often identify several men within a congregation who are candidates for being leaders. In addition to doctrinal training and study, it would be necessary to determine who had abilities to lead. Consequently, one might be asked to read, another to lead the congregation in prayer, perhaps another to preach. That only the men are to do the leading of prayers within the worship services *in every place* (ἐν παντὶ τόπῳ) confirms that this practice is not limited to the Church in Ephesus, but in every place where there is a congregation — where public worship is held. There are no indications of either temporal or geographic or cultural limits to the practice of this doctrine. The *lifting up holy hands* is an outward adornment made possible by the effective application of the Gospel. Coinciding with this posture is that the lifting up of holy hands be done *without wrath and doubting*.

Verse 9 gives the proper attitude and practice concerning women (γυναίκας). Note that the definite article is missing here. This reinforces the fact that there were not specific women being commanded to remain silent, but all women. While this verse does not have a main verb, the verb from the previous verse is understood, *I desire* (Βούλομαι), especially since the verse begins with *likewise or so also* (Ὡσαύτως [καὶ]). Women are to be present *in orderly apparel* (ἐν καταστολῇ κοσμίῳ) *to adorn themselves* (κοσμεῖν ἑαυτάς) *with modesty and moderation* (μετὰ αἰδοῦς καὶ σωφροσύνης) and not with the outward, flashy adornment of expensive clothing, pearls, gold, or the braiding of hair specifically for the purpose of drawing attention. Women who want to make such stunning impressions in Church are not only not ready for proper worship themselves, but often prevent others from a proper attitude as well.

In contrast to such an intended display of material wealth and exhibitionism Paul states in verse 10 that women are to be adorned *by means of good works* (δι' ἔργων ἀγαθῶν), which (ὁ) *befits, becomes* (πρέπει) *women professing godliness* (γυναίξιν ἐπαγγελλομέναις, θεοσεβείαν). A vane display of dazzling gold and shimmering tinsel is so flashy that it is not possible to let the godly light so shine that others may see the good works and thereby glorify our Father in heaven (Matthew 5:16).

In verse 11, the Holy Spirit caused Paul to write a singular noun woman (Γυνῆ) and, once again, there is no definite article. This denotes generality and not specificity -- it is not "Let the woman" but *Let a woman*. The Apostle uses an imperative of the verb meaning *learn* (μανθανέτω). The use of the 3rd person singular is appropriate because Paul is writing to Timothy. It is in the present tense giving the sense of "Let this happen and let it keep happening." Within the worship service, her learning is to be done in *silence or quietness* (ἐν ἡσυχίᾳ) and *in all subjection* (ἐν πάσῃ ὑποταγῇ). This last word is made up of two words, ὑπό (meaning "under") and τάσσω (meaning "arrange, appoint, set"). The word does not, in itself, carry any negative implication. On the contrary, a form of the verb is used in I Corinthians 15:28 when the Son Himself will be in subjection to the Father. There is nothing degrading or inferior in this subjection of the Son whatsoever. The verb simply means to put or to be put into an appointed order as intended. There is such order between Father and Son. Likewise, for God's creation there is an order in which all creatures are placed. Such an appointment is intended to be a blessing. Eve was intended to be a blessing to Adam. In verse 11, Paul is simply stating that a believing

woman will want to be living in the order that God appointed for her from creation and which continues to be in effect after the Fall. Both the desire to be under such a placement and the living in that order are designed as blessings. Obviously they are not always perceived as intended.

What the Apostle Paul states as a simple doctrine of truth in I Corinthians 14:34 (*it is not permitted*), he personally declares here in verse 12 -- *I do not permit* (οὐκ ἐπιτρέπω). Again the singular noun for woman (γυναικὶ) has no definite article. Within the context of the Church, Paul does not permit a woman *to teach* (διδάσκειν) or *to exercise authority* (αὐθεντεῖν) over *a man* (ἄνδρός). To teach is from the word used to describe the official teaching of the Word of God. In the Gospels it is commonly associated with the public and authoritative teaching of the Word in the temple or the synagogue. While the infinitive form translated as "to exercise or to have authority" (αὐθεντεῖν)²⁹ is only used here and no where else in the New Testament, there is sufficient use of the word in the non-Biblical literature to be certain of its meaning.³⁰ On the contrary, women are *to be* (εἶναι -- present, active, infinitive) *in silence* (ἡσυχία).

What is the basis for this doctrine and its godly practice? It is not Paul's personal opinion, human reason, scientific technology, modern thinking, cultural expectations, or society's standards. As he did in I Corinthians 14:34, Paul bases it on the Word. He does so making two references, first a condition prior to the Fall and the other during, or as a consequence of, the Fall. Verse 13 addresses the former. Paul appeals to the order of creation. *For Adam was formed* (ἐπλάσθη) first (πρῶτος). This verb is an aorist passive and reflects the creation of Adam. The LXX uses the same verb in Genesis 2:7 -- *And God formed the man of dust of the earth* (Καὶ ἔπλασεν ὁ Θεὸς τὸν ἄνθρωπον ...). After Adam was formed, *then Eve* (εἶτα Εὔα). Prior to the creation of Eve, the Word had been entrusted to Adam. As the head of the family, Adam was to share the Word with his helpmate. Male and female He created them -- in that order and for His purposes which were intended as blessed states.

While verse 13 provides the pre-Fall reason for such subjection in the Church, verse 14 deals with the reason based upon the consequences of sin. Making reference to Genesis 3, Paul reminds Timothy (and the congregation in Ephesus and us!) that *Adam was not deceived* (Ἄδὰμ οὐκ ἠπατήθη), *but the woman* (ἡ δὲ γυνὴ -- note the definite article -- a specific woman -- Eve). *But the woman, being deceived* (ἔξαπατηθεῖσα -- aorist passive participle), *fell in transgression* (ἐν παραβάσει γέγονεν). In addition to the pre-Fall reason that the woman was not entrusted with the Word, by reason of Eve being deceived, the woman was not to teach or to exercise authority over men in the Church. It should be noted that Adam was certainly not without fault in Eve's encounter with Satan. Adam had

²⁹ For a short discussion of the genitive with verbs of ruling, see Blass, F., & Debrunner, A., A Greek Grammar of the New Testament and other Early Christian Literature, trans. & rev. by Robert W. Funk, The University of Chicago Press, page 96, paragraph 177.

³⁰ See Bauer, Walter, A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature, 2nd edition, revised and enumerated by F. Wilbur Gingrich and Frederick W. Danker, The University of Chicago Press, Chicago, Illinois, 1979, page 121.

been given the Word and was to be the spiritual leader in his small congregation and in his marriage. Adam's sin was one of neglecting the proclamation of the Word and the defending of the faith. Genesis 3:6 indicates that Adam stood by with Eve and allowed her to be tempted and to fall. He was the spiritual leader of the Church and had been given the authority of the ministry of the Word. However, he neglected his responsibilities and did not respond. God was not pleased then, and He is not pleased now, when the men (who are the called leaders of the Church) allow the Word to be neglected.

Verse 15 has been variously understood. *She will be saved* (σωθήσεται) is a future passive indicative verb. Literally *but she will be saved through the childbearing* (διὰ τῆς τεκνογονίας). The definite article can be used as a possessive, *her childbearing*.³¹ Such salvation is not independent of the Holy Spirit's work of faith. *But she will be saved through her childbearing, if they continue in faith, love, and holiness, with self-control* The change from "she" to "they" in this verse indicates that the application is made universal for women. While there are four interpretations of this verse, only two are possible.

1. A woman is saved on account of the good work that she does in the bearing of a child. Or, a woman is guaranteed salvation by bearing a child. In either instance, she earns her salvation. One of the principles of interpretation is that salvation through Christ is the theme of Scriptures as a whole and its purpose is to make men wise to that salvation. Thus, it follows that every word and assertion of Scripture must agree with justification by grace alone, through faith alone, in Christ alone, as revealed in the Word alone. Obviously any assertion that a woman is earning salvation by the good work of childbearing is not the proper understanding of this text, and must, therefore, be rejected.

2. A woman is saved physically, or kept safe, through the bearing of a child. This can not be the case since not all Christian women live through the birth of a child.

3. A woman is saved by a specific, salvific event, namely the *childbearing* -- the birth of Jesus. The Incarnation and the Birth of the Son of God is the fruition of the promise declared in Genesis 3:15 -- that the Seed of the woman would be the Savior. Eve understood this and, upon the birth of her first son, declared, *I have begotten a man, the Lord!* (Genesis 4:1). However, does 1 Timothy 2:15 speak of the Birth of the Savior? The context does not seem to support such an interpretation.

4. A woman is saved by faithfully serving in the role that God has intended and ordained for her even from before the Fall -- as helpmate and as mother. The context supports such an assertion. Paul has been addressing the order of creation in verse 13. Verses 9 and 10 encourage women to adorn themselves with good works. What greater good work could there be for a woman than to be a mother? It is as if Paul is writing: "By fulfilling the role as wife and mother, a woman is

³¹ Luschnig, C.A.E., An Introduction to Ancient Greek, Charles Scribner's Sons, New York, 1975, page 39, note 4.

what the LORD God intended and ordained when Eve was created in Paradise. This was in a place and at a time when she was right with God, in full fellowship with the LORD, and in complete communion with Him. So, a woman today is saved by the being what God has ordained and by doing what He has intended, if she continues in faith, love, and holiness, with self-control." As the bearing of good fruit presupposes attachment to the Vine (John 15), so also sanctification follows justification.³² Good works are only done by the Christian and these works are fruits of faith (Ephesians 2:8, 9, and 10!). Thus, when Paul makes reference to a woman being saved through or by means of her childbearing, it assumes the faith relationship that Eve had when she was created.³³

This is also the understanding of the confessors. In the Apology of the Augsburg Confession the marriage of priests is discussed. Within that article, the following is presented:

In I Tim. 2:15 he says, "Woman will be saved through bearing children." If our opponents could produce a passage like that about celibacy, they would stage a wonderful victory celebration. Pauls says that woman is saved through bearing children. In contrast to the hypocrisy of celibacy, what greater honor could he bestow than to say that woman is saved by the marital functions themselves, by marital intercourse, by childbirth, and by her other domestic duties? What does Paul say? Let the reader note that he adds faith and does not praise domestic duties apart from faith: "if she continues," he says, "in faith." He is talking about the whole class of mothers, and above all he requires the faith by which a woman accepts the forgiveness of sins and justification. Then he adds a certain task of her calling, as performance of the tasks of a particular calling should follow everyone's faith, pleasing God because of faith. So a woman's duties please God because of faith, and a believing woman is saved if she serves faithfully in these duties of her calling.³⁴

Conclusion - Section 2

Both 1 Corinthians 14:33b-36 and 1 Timothy 2:8-15 are texts which give clear direction to the Church. Both texts, as the Word of God, are applicable to the Church regardless of culture, time, nation, or society. When the Apostolic Church assembles in the Name of the LORD, the women are not permitted to speak as leaders, to be involved in the leading, or to exercise authority over the men. Rather than being obscure, these two texts are quite clear.

³² From Moule: "Possibly one should distinguish under a separate heading the use of $\delta\iota\acute{\alpha}$ with the Genitive to express environment, attendant circumstances, etc.: Heb. 13:22 ..." (page 57). Also see Moule page 57 and page 80, #5.

³³ The question arises concerning a Christian woman who, because of her own or her husband's physical sterility, is unable to be a mother. Is salvation denied to her? Does she remain outside the Kingdom? No, such frustrating circumstances take place after the Fall and are a disappointing reality within this decaying world. The lives of these women are lived out under God's providential care and the umbrella of His grace. Each such Christian woman is encouraged to serve faithfully in the duties of her vocation.

³⁴ Tappert, *The Book of Concord, Apology of the Augsburg Confession, Article 23, Sacerdotal Marriage*, paragraph 32, pages 243-244.

Section 3:

Summary

Concerning the Biblical teaching of "hell," C. S. Lewis once wrote:

There is no doctrine which I would more willingly remove from Christianity than this, if it lay in my power. this doctrine is one of the chief grounds on which Christianity is attacked as barbarous and the goodness of God impugned. We are told that it is a detestable doctrine - and indeed, I too detest it from the bottom of my heart -- and are reminded of the tragedies in human life which have come from believing it. . . . For these reasons, and these alone, it becomes necessary to discuss the matter.³⁵

No doubt there are many within The Lutheran Church--Missouri Synod who, if it be in their power, would willingly remove Paul's teachings concerning both the place of women in worship and the restriction of the office of pastor to qualified men. Such words make many itch and squirm. Cultural irrelevance, sociological differences, male chauvinism, desirable doctrines, and new thinking become scratching posts to relieve the itch caused by Paul's word. But Paul is not the author of these words, the Holy Spirit is. This is God's Word. For this reason, and this alone, it becomes necessary to discuss the matter.

Different Voices/Shared Vision has attempted to build a case for women leading worship services (and thereby clear the way for women's ordination into the Office of the Public Ministry of the Word) by constructing foundational pillars on sinking sand which

- 1.) do not properly distinguish between the Order of Creation and Order of Redemption;**
- 2.) assert an inherent right of every Christian to occupy the office of the public ministry by virtue of Baptism;**
- 3.) claim that there were numerous examples of women singing, praying, and prophesying in leadership positions within the public worship services of both the Old and New Testament gatherings of the people of God (thus establishing the norm), and**
- 4.) require I Timothy 2:8-15 and I Corinthians 14:34-36 to be obscure texts.**

As demonstrated in the preceding pages, the two paragraphs, as well as the others chapters

³⁵ Lewis, C. S., The Problem of Pain, Macmillan Publishing Co., Inc., New York, pages 118-119.

of Different Voices/Shared Vision, contain untrue assertions, false statements, and spurious claim. They represent a position which has departed from the sola scriptura stance maintained by those claiming the name Lutheran. These assertions, statements, and claims have been fabricated and based upon a faulty hermeneutic which seeks to maintain that any Christian has an inherent right to occupy the Office of the Public Ministry of the Word. Texts which have been interpreted or used incorrectly reveal either sloppy exegesis or a willful intent to deceive or a misguided attempt to help the church catch up with society. Regardless of the authors' intention(s), Different Voices/Shared Vision represents a position which seeks to impose society's agenda upon the church and uses sociological premises and principles as well as human reason to do so.

An old tale relates how a young boy who had spread rumors in his village was being disciplined by his pastor. "Take the pillow and place a feather from it in front of each house in the village." The lad did it and returned with a look of accomplishment on his face.

"Now, go back and pick up each feather and put it back in the pillow," said the pastor.

"But they will all have blown away!" exclaimed the boy.

"So it is with what we say," chided the pastor. "Our words, once spoken, can never be retrieved again."³⁶

Words once spoken, can never be taken back. The only way they disappear from those who hear them is by forgetting or by death. Words once written in a book are much different. Every time the book is taken up, the words stand ready to remind and to begin their work once again. If the words written are true, then they serve to help and to inform. (Thanks be to God for His Word which stands forever!) If, on the other hand, the words written claim to be true and are not, then they serve to continue to be a source of trouble wherever they are read. Different Voice/Shared Vision is one such book. The success of the doctrines advocated in this book depends upon the acceptance of it within the Church. Left unchecked, unsuspecting readers may agree with what is contained within the pages of the book. Left unchallenged, some within the Church may either justify present practices or attempt to put into practice what the authors suggest. The Church in general, but the pastors of every generation in particular, do well to listen to the Word spoken to Timothy:

For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine, but according to their own desires, because they have itching ears, they will heap up for themselves teachers, and they will turn their ears away from the truth, and be turned aside to fables. But you be watchful in all things, endure afflictions, do the work- of an evangelist, fulfill your ministry (2 Timothy 4.3-5).

³⁶ Anderson, Richard, and Deffner, Donald, For Example, Concordia Publishing House, St. Louis, Missouri, 1977, pages 107-108.

One might well have hoped that such a book as Different Voices/Shared Vision had never been written. Days and weeks of reading, studying, analyzing, researching, and writing could certainly have been directed to other areas of work in the parishes of the pastors whose names appear below. Such not being the case, the undersigned have recognized the value in this response. First, the issue has taken us back to the Word. Simply to disagree without looking at what the Word really declares would be only rendering an opinion (2 Peter 1:20). This we did not want to do since our opinion or anyone else's really does not matter. What matters is what God says. Consequently, we sought to be faithful to and servants of the Word, and that required a study of it. Truly our LORD has blessed us in doing this. Secondly, the study has been an opportunity to present a defense for the truth (I Peter 3:15) and to contend for the faith (Jude 3). Thirdly, we have reaffirmed the doctrine and practice of the One, Holy, Christian, and Apostolic Church throughout the ages. She is the Church protected by her Bridegroom from each succeeding, pompous generation which has claimed to be the source of new insights and better understanding. Fourthly, the work has helped us to focus more clearly on what are, and what are not, acceptable practices for the Church in worship. The public proclamation of the Word, in whatever form that may be, is to be done by the qualified men called to the office. He, the pastor, is the called preacher of the Word, proclaimer of the Gospel, reader of the Word, and administrator of the Sacraments. Had the authors of Different Voices/Shared Vision not written this book, we would not have been as convinced that it is inappropriate and contrary to the Scriptures that women pray, prophesy, preach, or read the Scriptures during a public worship service.

That we may be very clear on these matters, a declaration of theses and antitheses follows this page. The undersigned maintain the words of the confessors to be most certainly true and quite appropriate:

It must not be thought that anything has been said or introduced out of hatred or for the purpose of injuring anybody, but we have related only matters which we have considered it necessary to adduce and mention in order that it may be made very clear that we have introduced nothing, either in doctrine or in ceremonies, that is contrary to Holy Scripture or the universal Christian church. For it is manifest and evident (to speak without boasting) that we have diligently and with God's help prevented any new and godless teaching from creeping into our churches and gaining the upper hand in them.³⁷

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³⁴ Conclusion, The Augsburg Confession, 1530, The Book of Concord, trans. and edited by Theodore G. Tappert, Fortress Press, Philadelphia, Penn., 1959.

Section 4:

Declaration of Theses and Antitheses

Affirmative Theses

Based upon a correct understanding of God's Word, we believe, teach, and confess the following theses:

- 1. That the LORD our God has created male and female, placed each in a distinctive order, and done so for His particular purposes, and that in this Order of Creation there are differences between male and female.**
- 2. That, prior to the Fall, the LORD our God ordained the Order of Creation, and that male and female were created for different opportunities of service.**
- 3. That, after the Fall, the Order of Creation remains the will of the LORD our God as believing males and believing females serve Him in His Church.**
- 4. That the Son of God, in His substitutionary atonement, has provided the Order of Redemption in which all who are in Christ have the same relationship with the LORD and with one another -- there is neither male nor female, neither Jew nor Gentile, neither slave nor free.**
- 5. That both the Order of Creation and the Order of Redemption remain valid doctrines for the Christian and for the Church.**
- 6. That every Christian (male and female) is, by means of the Word of the Gospel, a member of the priesthood of all believers and is, therefore, a priest.**
- 7. That only those men who are qualified scripturally to be pastors are eligible to be called into the Office of the Public Ministry of the Word.**

Antitheses

Accordingly, we reject as contrary to the Word of God the following teachings:

- 1. That in God's creation of male and female there are no differences in order or in purpose.**
- 2. That male and female, prior to the Fall, were created for the same reason and purpose.**
- 3. That, after the Fall, the Order of Creation is no longer the will of God.**
- 4. That the blessings and benefits of Christ's redemption are to be applied to people in an order based upon sex, age, nationality, social standing, or culture.**
- 5. That the Order of Creation is no longer valid because it has been superseded by the Order of Redemption.**
- 6. That only those men who occupy the Office of the Public Ministry of the Word are priests.**
- 7. That sociological principles, cultural practices, or societal agendas are considered bases for determining who is qualified for the Office of the Public Ministry of the Word.**

Affirmative Theses

Based upon a correct understanding of God's Word, we believe, teach, and confess the following theses:

8. That every Christian (male and female) is a priest, but not every Christian is a pastor.

9. That only those men who are qualified scripturally to be pastors and who are called are to lead the Church in worship by reading the Word, baptizing, preaching the sermon, announcing the absolution, leading the prayers, speaking the Words of Institution, distributing the Lord's Supper, and proclaiming the benediction.

10. That congregation in worship which permits a woman to exercise authority over the men by teaching, speaking, or leading, has stated, either by design or by ignorance or by default, that it is departing from the Apostolic Word and is becoming, or already is, a heterodox congregation.

11. That congregation in worship which does not permit a woman to exercise authority over the men by teaching, speaking, or leading, has confessed its intention, relative to this subject, of remaining steadfast in the Word and the work of the Apostolic Church.

Antitheses

Accordingly, we reject as contrary to the Word of God the following teachings:

8. That the Sacrament of Baptism gives an inherent right for a woman to occupy the Office of the Public Ministry of the Word.

9. That a woman may be involved in the leading of the Church in worship by reading, preaching, teaching, baptizing, distributing the Lord's Supper, or any other form of exercising authority.

10. That a congregation has the right to determine whether or not a woman may exercise authority over men within a worship service.

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(Note: Both the writer and the reviewer are parish pastors who have limited personal libraries. The bibliography which follows is from their combined libraries.)

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