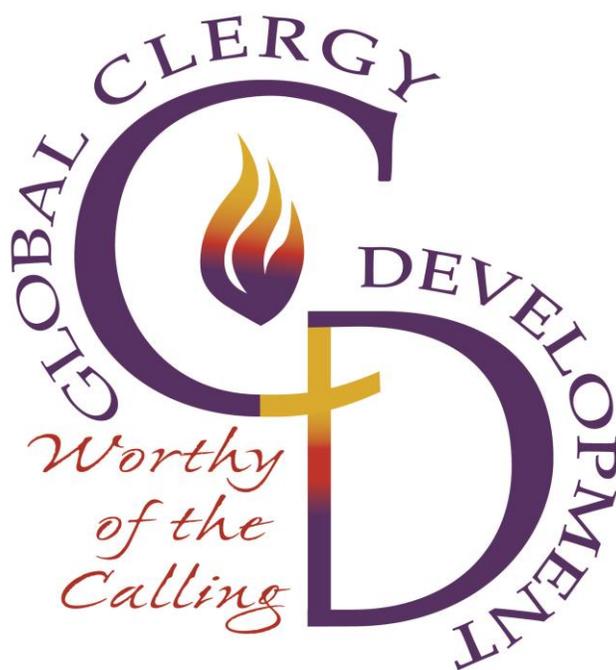


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Faculty Guide

# Foundations of Women's Ordination



Course of Study ■ Modular Education Program  
CHURCH OF THE NAZARENE

USA/Canada Region  
2016

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## Series Foreword

### **A Vision for Christian Ministry: Clergy Education in the Church of the Nazarene**

The chief purpose of all persons—indeed, of all creation—is to worship, love, and serve God. God has made himself known in His deeds of creation and redemption. As the Redeemer, God has called into existence a people, the Church, who embody, celebrate, and declare His name and His ways. The life of God with His people and the world constitutes the Story of God. That story is recorded principally in the Old and New Testaments, and continues to be told by the resurrected Christ who lives and reigns as Head of His Church. The Church lives to declare the whole Story of God. This it does in many ways—in the lives of its members who are even now being transformed by Christ, through preaching, the sacraments, in oral testimony, community life, and in mission. All members of the Body of Christ are called to exercise a ministry of witness and service. No one is excluded.

In God's own wisdom He calls some persons to fulfill the ministry of proclaiming the gospel and caring for God's people in a form, referred to as the ordained ministry. God is the initial actor in this call, not humans. In the Church of the Nazarene we believe God calls and persons respond. They do not elect the Christian ministry. All persons whom God calls to the ordained ministry should continue to be amazed that He would call them. They should continue to be humbled by God's call. The *Manual* of the Church of the Nazarene states, "we recognize and hold that the Head of the Church calls some men and women to the more official and public work of the ministry." It adds, "The church, illuminated by the Holy Spirit, will recognize the Lord's call" (*Manual*, Church of the Nazarene, paragraph 400).

An ordained Christian minister has as his or her chief responsibility to declare in many ways the whole Story of God as fulfilled in Jesus of Nazareth. His or her charge is to "tend the flock of God . . . not under compulsion, but willingly, not for sordid gain but eagerly. Do not lord it over those in your charge, but be examples to the flock" (1 Pet 5:2-3, NRSV). The minister fulfills this charge under the supervision of Christ, the chief Shepherd (1 Pet 5:4). Such ministry can be fulfilled only after a period of careful preparation. Indeed, given the ever-changing demands placed upon the minister, "preparation" never ceases.

A person who enters the Christian ministry becomes in a distinct sense a steward of the gospel of God (Titus 1:7). A steward is one who is entrusted to care for what belongs to another. A steward may be one who takes care of another person or who manages the property of someone else. All Christians are stewards of the grace of God. But in addition, in a peculiar sense a Christian minister is a steward of the "mystery of God," which is Christ, the Redeemer, the Messiah of God. In all faithfulness, the minister is called to "make known with boldness the mystery of the gospel" (Eph 6:19, NRSV). Like Paul, he or she must faithfully preach "the boundless riches of Christ, and to make everyone see what is the plan of the mystery hidden for ages in God who created all things; so that through the church the wisdom of God in its rich variety might now be made known to the rulers and authorities in the heavenly places" (Eph 3:8-10, NRSV).

In fulfilling this commission, there is plenty of room for diligence and alertness, but no room for laziness or privilege (Titus 1:5-9). Good stewards recognize that they are stewards only, not the owners, and that they will give an account of their stewardship to the master. Faithfulness to one's charge and to the Lord who issued it is the steward's principal passion. When properly understood, the Christian ministry should never be thought of as a "job." It is ministry—uniquely Christian ministry. No higher responsibility or joy can be known than to become a steward of the Story of God in Christ's Church. The person who embraces God's call to the ordained ministry will stand in the company of the apostles, the Early Fathers of the Church, the Reformers of the Middle Ages, the Protestant Reformers, and many persons around the world today who joyfully serve as stewards of the gospel of God.

Obviously, one who does not recognize, or who understands but rejects, just how complete and inclusive a minister's stewardship must be should not start down the path that leads to ordination. In a peculiar sense, a Christian minister must in all respects model the gospel of God. He or she is to "shun" the love of money. Instead, the minister must "pursue righteousness, godliness, faith, love, endurance, gentleness." He or she must "fight the good fight of the faith" and "take hold of the eternal life, to which you were called" (1 Tim 6:11-12, NRSV).

Hence, the Church of the Nazarene believes that "the minister of Christ is to be in all things a pattern to the flock—in punctuality, discretion, diligence,

earnestness; 'in purity, understanding, patience and kindness; in the Holy Spirit and in sincere love; in truthful speech and in the power of God; with weapons of righteousness in the right hand and in the left' (2 Cor 6:6-7)" (*Manual*, Church of the Nazarene, paragraph 401.1). The minister of Christ "must be above reproach as God's steward, not self-willed, not quick-tempered, not addicted to wine, not pugnacious, not fond of sordid gain, but hospitable, loving what is good, sensible, just, devout, self-controlled, holding fast the faithful word which is in accordance with the teaching . . . able both to exhort in sound doctrine and to refute those who contradict." (Titus 1:7-9, NASB).

In order to be a good steward of God's Story one must, among other things, give oneself to careful and systematic study, both before and after ordination. This will occur not because he or she is forced to do so, but out of a love for God and His people, the world He is working to redeem, and out of an inescapable sense of responsibility. It cannot be too strongly emphasized that the attitude one brings to preparation for the ministry reveals much about what he or she thinks of God, the gospel, and Christ's Church. The God who became incarnate in Jesus and who made a way of salvation for all gave His very best in the life, death, and resurrection of His Son. In order to be a good steward, a Christian minister must respond in kind. Jesus told numerous parables about stewards who did not recognize the importance of what had been entrusted to them (Mt 21:33-44; 25:14-30; Mk 13:34-37; Lk 12:35-40; 19:11-27; 20:9-18).

Preparation for ministry in Christ's Church—one's education in all its dimensions—should be pursued in full light of the responsibility before God and His people that the ministry involves. This requires that one take advantage of the best educational resources at his or her disposal.

The Church of the Nazarene recognizes how large is the responsibility associated with the ordained Christian ministry and accepts it fully. Part of the way we recognize our responsibility before God is seen in the requirements we make for ordination and the practice of ministry. We believe that the call to and practice of Christian ministry is a gift, not a right or privilege. We believe that God holds a minister to the highest of religious, moral, personal, and professional standards. We are not reluctant to expect that those standards be observed from the time of one's call until his or her death. We believe that Christian ministry should first be a form of worship. The practice of ministry is both an offering to God and a service to His

Church. By the miracle of grace, the work of the ministry can become a means of grace for God's people (Rom 12:1-3). One's education for ministry is also a form of worship.

The modules comprising the Course of Study that may lead a person to candidacy for ordination have been carefully designed to prepare one for the kind of ministry we have described. Their common purpose is to provide a holistic preparation for entrance into the ordained Christian ministry. They reflect the Church's wisdom, experience, and responsibility before God. The modules show how highly the Church of the Nazarene regards the gospel, the people of God, the world for which Christ gave His life, and Christian ministry. Completing the modules will normally take three or four years. But no one should feel pressured to meet this schedule.

The careful study for which the modules call should show that before God and His Church one accepts the stewardly responsibility associated with ordained ministry.

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## Introduction

### Intended Use of This Faculty Guide

This Faculty Guide serves as an instructor's guide for teaching principles of *Foundations of Women's Ordination* to adult learners who are preparing for ordination in the Church of the Nazarene. The content is based on intended outcomes defined through the collaborative process conducted at Breckenridge, CO, USA, between 1990 and 1997 and at Estes Park, 2012-2013. The materials prepare the pastor-teacher to present the topic by providing background reading, lesson plans, lectures, instructions to the teacher, and teaching resources for each class session. In the lessons complete lectures, questions for guided discussions, and defined learning activities are provided.

The pastor-teacher who will lead this module should hold a master's degree. Ideally, the pastor-teacher should have participated as a student in a module using this material prior to teaching the material to others. This Faculty Guide assumes that the pastor-teacher has some basic understanding of the foundations of women's ordination as understood by the Church of the Nazarene.

It is further assumed that learners participating in a module using this material will be high school graduates and be adult learners beyond the traditional college age. Learners are assumed to be motivated to learn, and to have adult life-experiences. No prior college classroom experience is assumed on the part of the learners.

### Acknowledgments

Every module is the accumulation of effort by many people. Someone writes the original manuscript, others offer suggestions to strengthen the content and make the material more easily understood, and finally an editor formats the module for publication. This module is not different. Many people have contributed to this module. Every effort has been made to accurately represent the original intent of the principal contributors.

### Principal Contributors

The principal contributors for this module are:  
**Lesson 1: Dr. Nina G. Gunter** is a preacher, teacher, author, and general superintendent emerita in the Church of the Nazarene. Dr. Gunter served as general director of Nazarene Missions International (NMI) for 20 years.

As an ordained elder in the Church of the Nazarene, she served congregations as co-pastor with her husband in Tennessee, Missouri, and South Carolina.

Nina Gunter earned a bachelor's degree from Trevecca Nazarene University (TNU) and a master's degree from the University of South Carolina in Columbia. Dr. Gunter was honored by her alma mater, TNU, with the honorary doctor of divinity degree, the first woman to receive such recognition from the university.

In 2008 she was named a contributing editor to *Leadership Journal*. In this capacity, Dr. Gunter contributes advice on issues ministers are facing today, as well as periodic articles, reviews, and responses to material in the journal, on its website, and on its blog.

Dr. Gunter has written *The Traveler's Psalm, Our Defining Moment, Christian Perfection, The Cross—Seize It! Share It!*, and *Holy Leadership in a Hectic World*.

**Lesson 2: Dr. C. Jeanne Orjala Serrão** is a Professor of Biblical Literature and the Dean of the School of Theology and Philosophy at Mount Vernon Nazarene University. She is also the founder and coordinator for the Bi-Annual Women In Ministry Networking Day for MVNU zone which has developed into the MVNU Christian Women's Leadership Conference. At the university since 1999, she has taught primarily in the areas of New Testament and Biblical Greek.

Prior to MVNU, Jeanne was the Education Pastor for 12 years at Highland Avenue Community Church of the Nazarene in Rancho Cucamonga, California and Christian School Administrator for 4 of those years as well.

She earned her BA in Biblical Literature from Mid-America Nazarene University, and an M.Div. and an M.A. in Missions from Nazarene Theological Seminary and her M.A. and Ph.D. degree in Religion from Claremont Graduate University.

She began her teaching career at European Nazarene (Bible) College near Schaffhausen, Switzerland, where she taught for 2 years. She is an affiliate faculty member at Nazarene Theological Seminary and has served as an adjunct professor for Trevecca Nazarene University, Azusa Pacific University, Claremont School of Theology (Summer Licensing School), Nazarene Theological Seminary and Nazarene Bible College Online Program.

She is an ordained elder in the Church of the Nazarene and serves as the 2013-2017 chair for the USA/Canada Nazarene Women Clergy Council. She is a member of the Regional Course of Study Advisory Council for the USA and assisted in the development of the revised course of study outcomes and is the primary editor for this module on the Foundations of Women's Ordination.

She has presented at Wesleyan Theological Society and the John A. Knight Bible and Theology conferences and is the author of the *New Beacon Bible Commentary on James*, contributed to the Church of the Nazarene textbooks, *Discovering the New Testament* and *Discovering the Bible* and has written numerous articles for *Holiness Today*, *Illustrated Bible Life*, the *Dialogue* series and other Nazarene publications.

**Lesson 3: Dr. Alex Varughese** is Professor of Biblical Literature Emeritus at Mount Vernon Nazarene University (1982 - 2014). He retired in May 2014 after teaching for 32 years, during which time he also served as Chair of the Division of Religion and Philosophy from August 1993 - June 2003 and before that as Chair of the Department of Religion (August 1993- June 2003). He also served as Director of MVNU's Certificate of Ministry Preparation (1997-2001; 2003- 2006). He began his teaching career at Eastern Nazarene College in Quincy, MA (1979-1982).

Dr. Varughese was born in Kerala, India and earned the B.S. (Zoology) and M.S. in Marine Biology from the University of Kerala. He came to Olivet Nazarene University to pursue his dream of being a doctor, but God placed a call on his life during a Contemporary Theology class. He finished an M.A. Religion at Olivet Nazarene University, the M.Div. Nazarene Theological Seminary with a concentration in Biblical Studies. He went on to earn the M.Phil. and Ph.D. from Drew University in Biblical Studies. He is an ordained elder in the Church of the Nazarene and has held several positions on the North Central Ohio District for many years.

He is a prolific author and editor. The following are representative of his work: 1) *Discovering the Old Testament: Story and Faith*. (Wrote 18 of the total 32 chapters and edited the volume). Beacon Hill Press, Kansas City, 2003. 2) *Discovering the New Testament*; editor of the volume; wrote 1 chapter and co-authored 6 chapters. Beacon Hill Press, 2005. 3) *Discovering the Bible*, editor of the volume. Beacon Hill Press, 2006. 4) Bible Commentaries of numerous biblical texts and several articles in *Illustrated Bible*. 5) Jeremiah 1-25: A

Commentary in the Wesleyan tradition (New Beacon Bible Commentary). Beacon Hill Press, 2008. 6) Jeremiah 26-52: A Commentary in the Wesleyan tradition (New Beacon Bible Commentary). Beacon Hill Press, 2010. He is also the General Editor. New Beacon Bible Commentary (Old Testament volumes) and will continue his writing and editing work with Nazarene Publishing House and Beacon Hill Press in his retirement from teaching.

**Lesson 4: Dr. Jim Edlin** is currently Professor of Biblical Literature and Languages for the School of Christian Ministry and Formation at MidAmerica Nazarene University. He received the B.A. MidAmerica Nazarene College, Olathe, Kansas (1972) with a major in Religion; an M.Div. from Nazarene Theological Seminary, Kansas City, Missouri (1975) with a major in Biblical Literature; an M.Th. from Southern Baptist Theological Seminary in Louisville, Kentucky (1976) focusing on Old Testament Studies and the Ph.D. from Southern Baptist Theological Seminary in Louisville, Kentucky (1985) in Old Testament Studies.

He is an ordained elder in the Church of the Nazarene and has extensive ministry experience in the local church and in the academy. He pastored the First Church of the Nazarene in LaMoure, North Dakota from 1977-1980, then became an associate pastor at Antioch Church of the Nazarene in Overland Park, Kansas (1980-1981).

After completing his Ph.D. he served as professor of Old Testament and Biblical Theology at Asia-Pacific Nazarene Theological Seminary, Manila, Philippines (1985-1988) as well as Academic Dean from 1986-1988. Since then he has been professor of Biblical Literature and Languages at MidAmerica Nazarene University in Olathe, Kansas and has served as Division Chair and Interim Dean for the School of Christian Ministry and Formation. He has also served from time to time as an adjunct professor for Nazarene Theological Seminary.

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He earned his B.A. in Religion from MidAmerica Nazarene University, the Masters in Religious Education from Nazarene Theological Seminary and the Ph.D. in Educational Studies from Trinity International University.

In addition to teaching at MNU, he is the Director of the Undergraduate Honors Program and has served as the director of the Ministerial Student Scholarship program. He also has served as an adjunct professor for the Nazarene Theological Seminary in Kansas City, MO and the Nazarene Theological Seminary in Guatemala City, Guatemala; Northwest Nazarene University, Trinity Evangelical Divinity School Extension in Indianapolis, IN and Fort Scott Community College in Paola, KS.

He has been active in local church ministries as Pastor of Educational and Youth Ministries for the Shawnee Church of the Nazarene, Shawnee KS and is currently the Leader/Liturgist for the Benediction Contemplative Service at Saint Andrew Christian Church in Olathe KS.

**Lesson 5: Dr. Kent Brower** is the Vice Principal, Senior Research Fellow and Senior Lecturer in Biblical Studies at Nazarene Theological College in Manchester, UK. He first worked at British Isles Nazarene College (now NTC) in 1973 while a research student under supervision of F. F. Bruce. After nine years at Canadian Nazarene College (now Ambrose University College, Calgary), he returned to NTC in 1988 as Dean and Lecturer in Biblical Studies.

His PhD thesis, entitled *The Old Testament in the Markan Passion Narrative*, indicates a long-standing interest in narrative and intertextual readings. As a member of the Tyndale Fellowship he has served as Secretary to the New Testament Study Group. He is an active lay-person in Longsight Church of the Nazarene. Social justice issues, especially asylum and immigration, are important to him.

His passion for global theological education is expressed through extensive work with the International Board of Education. He has also taught in ten countries outside the UK. His current projects include being section editor and writer for the *New Beacon Bible Commentary*, editorial committee member and contributor to the *Global Dictionary of Wesleyan Theology*, committee of reference for *Didache*, and *Aldersgate Papers*, and co-chair of the programme committee for the denomination's 2014 Global Theology Conference in Johannesburg, South Africa.

In addition to book reviews and dictionary articles, his recent publications include: 1) *Living as God's Holy People: Holiness and Community in Paul*. Carlisle: Paternoster, 2010. 2) "'Who Then is This?' – Christological Questions in Mark 4:35-5:43" *Evangelical*

Quarterly 81 (2009):291-305. 3) "'We are able': Cross-bearing Discipleship and the Way of the Lord in Mark". Horizons in Biblical Theology 29 (2007): 177-201. 4) *Holiness and Ecclesiology in the New Testament*. Ed. Kent Brower and Andy Johnson. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2007.

**Lesson 6: Miss Jasmine Gilbeaut** is a May 2012 graduate of Mount Vernon Nazarene University, Mount Vernon, Ohio with a double major in Pastoral Ministries and Theological Studies. She wrote this lesson as part of her internship project in theological writing.

**Lesson 7: Rev. Tracy Ogden Johnson** currently serves as pastor of the Ravenna First Church of the Nazarene in northeast Ohio, and has done so since 2000. She also serves in various district ministries including: chairperson of the District Ministerial Studies Board, East Ohio District Site Coordinator for the Mount Vernon Nazarene University Certificate of Ministry Preparation Program, and member of the District Advisory Board and District Credentials Board. She is a member of the Nazarene Women Clergy Council, USA/Canada and has served as a trustee for Mount Vernon Nazarene University.

Prior to moving to Ohio, Tracy served as pastor on the Pittsburgh District for seven years. She received her M.Div. degree from Candler School of Theology, Emory University, in Atlanta, GA, where she also served as an associate pastor. She has always been involved in ministry preparation and training, being involved in district education, Nazarene Bible College, and teaching various classes. She also leads seminars that focus on the Biblical foundations and support for women in ministry.

**Lesson 8: Dr. Carla Sunberg** currently serves as President of the Nazarene Theological Seminary in Kansas City, MO. Before that she was Co-District Superintendent of the East Ohio District for the Church of the Nazarene. She is an ordained elder in the Church of the Nazarene. She and her husband have been involved in ministry together for over twenty years.

They were pioneer missionaries to the former Soviet Union spending thirteen years in Russia. After leaving Russia they ministered together at Grace Point Church of the Nazarene in Fort Wayne, Indiana. Her work has involved compassionate ministries, pastoring and educating pastors. She has served as chair of the USA/Canada Nazarene Women Clergy Council and is responsible for developing videos to augment this

module. She also serves the regional church as a member of the USA Course of Study Advisory Committee and is a member of the General Board for the International Church of the Nazarene.

Dr. Sunberg has a BSN from MidAmerica Nazarene University, an MA in Theological Studies from Nazarene Theological Seminary and a Ph.D. in Historical Theology from the University of Manchester, UK. In May 2012 she was awarded an honorary Doctorate of Divinity from Olivet Nazarene University. She has taught as an adjunct for Northwest Nazarene University, Nazarene Theological Seminary and Mount Vernon Nazarene University.

She has written several articles for Nazarene publications and co-authored *Reclaiming Eve: The Identity & Calling of Women in the Kingdom of God* which was published in 2014 by Beacon Hill Press of Kansas City.

**Lesson 9: Dr. Diane Leclerc** is Professor of Historical Theology at Northwest Nazarene University. She received her BA at Eastern Nazarene College, her MDiv at Nazarene Theological Seminary, and her PhD at Drew University.

She has published many articles and four books: 1) *Discovering Christian Holiness: The Heart of Wesleyan-Holiness Theology* 2) *Essential Church: A Wesleyan Ecclesiology* (co-authored with Mark Maddix) 3) *Pastoral Practices: A Wesleyan Paradigm* (co-authored with Mark Maddix) and 4) *Spiritual Formation: A Wesleyan Paradigm* (co-authored with Mark Maddix).

She has served as president of the Wesleyan Theological Society, is a member of Wesleyan Holiness Women Clergy and serves on the Nazarene Women Clergy Council. She is ordained as an elder in the Church of the Nazarene, has pastored two churches and speaks often at conferences.

**Lesson 10: Dr. Susan Carole's** ministry focus is holiness discipleship. She is an ordained elder and registered evangelist in the Church of the Nazarene. She has served the church as missionary and educator in the Caribbean, West Africa, Canada and the USA. Her recent publication, *Called into Communion* (2013), is a relevant and insightful exposition of the holiness message.

She is an adjunct professor of theology at Nazarene Theological Seminary, adjunct professor of Christian

Formation at Wesley Theological Seminary, and certified theology instructor in the Nazarene Bible College Alliance Curriculum. She is the francophone representative on the Nazarene Global Ministries Women's Council.

She holds degrees in theology and education— Th.B. (Caribbean Nazarene College), M.A. (Education, University of Kansas), M.A. (Theology, University of Toronto, and Ph.D. (Systematic Theology, Calvin Theological Seminary).

**Lesson 11: Dr. Rebecca Laird** is Associate Professor of Christian Ministry and Practice at Point Loma Nazarene University, her undergraduate alma mater in San Diego, California. Dr. Laird holds a Master of Arts in Religion from the Pacific School of Religion in Berkeley, CA, a Doctor of Ministry degree in Spirituality, Worship and Preaching from Drew University in Madison, NJ, a Certificate in Religion, Spirituality and Values Journalism from Northwestern University and a Certificate in Spiritual Direction from Mercy Center, Burlingame, CA.

She was student Director of Campus Ministries at PLNU, served Golden Gate Community Church of the Nazarene in San Francisco in discipleship ministries and was an associate editor in the religious books division of HarperCollins in her 20's. She spent the next decade completing her ordination requirements, interning at the Lamb's Manhattan Church of the Nazarene and leading retreats, offering spiritual direction and working as a consultant to urban church ministries.

Prior to returning to Point Loma, she was Associate Pastor for Spiritual Development of Central Presbyterian Church in Summit, New Jersey and Director of Ministerial Formation at Drew Theological School.

**Lesson 12: Dr. Mary Rearick Paul** is Vice President for Spiritual Development at Point Loma Nazarene University. Previously she was Associate Professor of Christian Ministry at Olivet Nazarene University. She also served for over eighteen years as a senior/co-pastor in several Nazarene Churches.

She received her BA in Social Work from Eastern Nazarene College, a Master of Divinity from Boston University, School of Theology and a Doctorate of Ministry from Asbury Theological Seminary.

**Lesson 13: Dr. Kathy Mowry** is Associate Professor of Mission & Christian Education at Trevecca Nazarene University where she received her B.A. She earned an M.A. from Wheaton Graduate School; and an M.A. and the Ph.D. from Fuller Theological Seminary.

Dr. Mowry, who teaches Christian Education and Intercultural Studies (Missiology), enjoys creating formative mission experiences for students through Trevecca's Mission Study Abroad classes, the summer Immerse Program, and the Submerge Program, which places recent graduates in Eastern Europe for one to two years.

She created and directed an extension theological education program in Russia, Ukraine, Armenia, and Central Asia. She is an ordained elder in the Church of the Nazarene and has also served in Point Loma Nazarene University's Center for Pastoral Leadership, in associate pastor roles in urban churches in Los Angeles, as director of graduate programs at the Bresee Institute for Urban Training, and as a curriculum editor for Christian publishers.

Her research interests include older congregations in transitional neighborhoods, intergenerational ministry, and the formative practice of the Christian year.

**Lesson 14: Dr. Susan Armstrong**, an ordained elder in the Church of the Nazarene, currently serves full-time as Worship Pastor at Manteno Church of the Nazarene in Manteno, IL. She is also an adjunct professor at Olivet Nazarene University teaching *Introduction to Christian Worship* and *Christian Faith* in the School of Theology and Christian Ministry.

Dr. Armstrong graduated from Point Loma Nazarene University with her B.A. in Music and then went on to earn both a master's and a doctorate in Choral Conducting from The University of Oklahoma. After teaching music at Eastern Nazarene College in Wollaston, MA, Malone College in Canton, OH, and Northwest Nazarene University in Nampa, ID, Dr. Armstrong left full-time teaching to pursue her call to ministry.

She earned a Master of Divinity degree from Nazarene Theological Seminary and a Master of Arts in Religion from Olivet Nazarene University. In addition to serving in Manteno, IL, Susan has served on staff at various other churches including St. Mark's United Methodist Church in Bethany, OK, College Church of the Nazarene in Nampa, ID, and Elyria Community Church of the Nazarene in Elyria, OH. She is a member of

Wesleyan-Holiness Women Clergy as well as a member of the Nazarene Women Clergy Council.

**Lesson 15: Dr. Rondy M. Smith** is ordained elder in the Church of the Nazarene and serves Hermitage Church of the Nazarene, just east of Nashville, TN as Community Life Pastor. She is also the Founding Executive Director of Rest Stop Ministries, a missional community dedicated to restoring survivors of sex trafficking.

Dr. Smith holds a bachelor's degree from Trevecca Nazarene University, a Master's degree from the University of Kansas, and a doctorate in Human and Organization Development from Peabody College of Vanderbilt University. She served on the faculty of Trevecca Nazarene University for 12 years and also as chair of the USA/Canada Nazarene Women Clergy Council.

## Intended Objectives for the Module

The *Manual*, Church of the Nazarene, and the *International Sourcebook on Developmental Standards for Ordination* define educational preparation for ordination. Additionally, each region of the International Church of the Nazarene has developed educational guidelines to qualify educational programs for ordination offered within their region.

The USA Region *Sourcebook for Ministerial Development* defines ability statements for the overall ministerial development program. The module assists candidates in developing these skills. Other modules in the program may also address the same outcomes. The specific ability statements that relate to this module are:

PROGRAM OBJECTIVES (From Revised Ability Statements 2013)

CN1 Ability to identify the literary structure, the theological concepts and main story line of the Old Testament.

CN2 Ability to describe the historical and cultural contexts of the major sections of the Old Testament.

CN3 Ability to identify the literary structure, theological concepts and main storyline of the New Testament.

CN4 Ability to describe the historical and cultural contexts of the New Testament including an ability to Biblically affirm pastoral leadership of men and women within the Church.

CN6 Ability to exegete a passage of Scripture using contextual, literary, and theological analysis.

CN8 Ability to demonstrate an understanding of theological reflection, including its sources, its historical development, and its Wesleyan contemporary expressions.

CN 11 Ability to describe the mission and practice of the Church throughout its history.

CN12 Ability to identify the formative influences of the American Holiness Movement and the Church of the Nazarene.

CN13 Ability to identify and explain the significance of the major events, and male and female figures in the Church of the Nazarene.

CP1 Ability to communicate publicly through multiple methods (oral, written, media, etc.) with clarity, and creativity, utilizing gender inclusive language

CH6 Ability to articulate his or her call from God to ministry as affirmed by the Church.

CH8 Ability to practice holistic stewardship (mutual submission in gender relationships, sexual purity, marriage and family, personal finance, professional conduct, practicing Sabbath, etc.).

CX3 Ability to discern sociological dynamics, (including the power dynamics of gender, age and ethnicity) and to apply that information to specific ministry settings.

## About This Module

A module is composed of two major works—a Faculty Guide and a Student Guide. Both are necessary for the whole body of information and learning activities pertaining to the module topic. You will need a copy of both.

We have tried to design this module to be flexible and easy to adapt to your situation. You as the instructor will need to be familiar with the information, activities, questions, and homework that are provided in both works. In some cases you may need to modify the illustrations or questions to meet the needs of your group.

### Rationale

This module is designed to give a multi-disciplinary view of the ordination of women in the Church of the Nazarene. Broader biblical, historical and theological issues will be explored, with specific emphasis given to the Wesleyan Holiness heritage. Practical issues such as power dynamics, the importance of inclusive language, and modeling gender mutuality, as well as the practical aspects of mixed gender pastoral teams, co-pastoring, and family issues for women clergy are also discussed.

## Note on Methodology From the Series Editor

Palmer, Parker J. *The Courage to Teach: Exploring the Inner Landscape of a Teacher's Life*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1998, 115-40.

In his book *The Courage to Teach*, Parker Palmer describes an alternative teaching/learning strategy to the dichotomy of teacher-centered and student-centered classroom models. The alternative he suggests is a subject-centered model. In a subject-centered classroom, the subject—in this case the Bible—not the teacher or the student holds the center of attention. The subject provides a plumbline, a standard that holds both teacher and student accountable for what they say and do.

Palmer, 118.

"In a subject-centered classroom, the teacher's central task is to give the great thing [subject] an independent voice—a capacity to speak its truth quite apart from the teacher's voice in terms that students can hear and understand." The teacher then models for the student ways of approaching, interpreting, and understanding the subject. The teacher does not deliver conclusions of his or her study to the student but demonstrates the methods a professional uses to draw meaning from the subject.

The Bible narrative contains many theological truths and an exhaustive study of them would require many lifetimes. This module cannot hope to deal with the whole scope of biblical theology but through the examples presented in its lessons, the student should seek to grasp the methods of study that will allow him or her to explore the richness of the Bible narrative for personal growth, guidance, teaching, and preaching.

Palmer, 122.

Rather than filling the class time by telling students everything practitioners know about the subject, the instructor should "present small but critical samples of the data of [biblical theology] to help students understand how a practitioner in [biblical theology] generates data, checks and corrects data, thinks about data, uses and applies data, and shares data with others."

To that end, lessons contain many examples of "doing" biblical theology. The instructor may need to select specific examples for classroom activities that are particularly relevant to the students, their culture, and their needs. The other examples within a lesson can be assigned as reading/homework assignments or students may take away the additional examples in the Student Guide for future reference.

## Module Development

One reason for developing this module is for the benefit of extension education. We understand that teachers all over the world are called upon to teach courses are not in their area of specialty, but they teach them because they want to see pastors trained and leaders developed for the church. Extension education is basic to rapid church growth. We want to provide this as a resource for extension educators. If it helps others along the way, that's fine too.

Another reason for developing this module is to equip indigenous faculty. We believe that a class like this is best taught and contextualized by someone from within the culture of the students. There are many fine teachers who are leaders in our churches around the world who do not have higher degrees in theology but who have the skills to teach a module like this effectively. We want to set them free to do so, and in so doing, to actually improve the module and make it more dynamic and meaningful for their context than it would have been had we held on to it and insisted on teaching it ourselves.

## About This Faculty Guide

*Note: It is critical to remember that active participation by the learners will enhance their learning. That means you will not be an information-giver. This module is not about you. The focus of the module is helping students learn. Your role is to design an environment in which your students will learn. Sometimes you will give lectures. At other times you will guide discussions or assign your students to work in groups. These kinds of activities keep the participants actively involved in the learning process. Learning is a team activity.*

The Faculty Guide has been written to guide an instructor as he or she prepares to teach this module. It contains complete lesson plans to provide a solid educational design for the topic. You will need to prepare for each lesson well in advance of the meeting time. Often there are background reading suggestions for the instructor or you may know additional reference materials you want to interject into the lesson.

**A two-column format was chosen for the Faculty Guide.** The right-hand column contains the contents of the lectures, descriptions of activities, and questions to keep students involved. Questions that are intended to be answered or discussed by the students are in italic type. The left-hand column is to give suggested instructions to you, the teacher. It also contains examples you can use to illustrate concepts in the lectures. Whenever possible you should use examples from your own experience and from your students' real-life context.

Large white space has been left in the left column to allow you to write notes and personalize the Faculty Guide.

**The Faculty Guide has two major components:** the Faculty Guide Introduction, and the Lesson Plans. You are reading the Faculty Guide Introduction now. It

provides a teaching philosophy for adult learners, background information for organizing the module, and ideas about conducting the lessons.

**Each lesson of the Faculty Guide is numbered** with a two-part page number. Page 5 of Lesson 3 would be numbered "3-5." The first number is the lesson number and the second is the page number within the lesson.

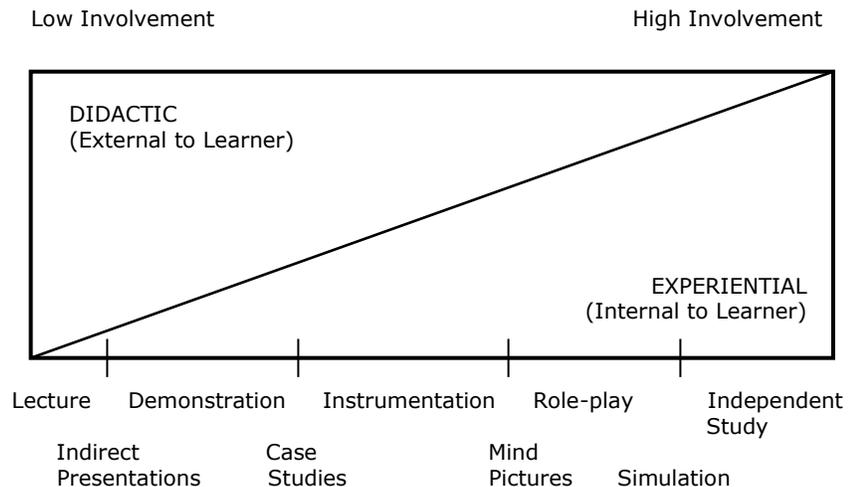
**The Lesson Plans are complete in themselves.** They contain an Overview, Introduction, Body, and Close. The Lesson Overview provides you with a planning tool for preparing and conducting each lesson.

*The Lesson Introduction* should get participants' attention, bring accountability for homework, orient them to the place this lesson holds in the overall module, define the intended objectives, and prepare them for the learning activities.

*The Lesson Body* is the core message of the lesson. The key is to keep the learners actively involved. Even in lectures, ask questions that prompt learners to think about the content not just hear the lecture.

The following chart shows a continuum of learner involvement in different teaching methods.

## METHODS CONTINUUM



Lecture requires the least learner involvement, and independent study requires the most learner involvement. A variety of learning activities are used to present information and allow learners to experiment with their new knowledge.

Each individual has a set of preferred methods of

learning and he or she has different life-experiences that can color or filter what he or she actually learns. A variety of learning activities help adults adapt to the learning task—by hearing, by doing, by reading, by discussing, or by combinations of these. The learners should have opportunities to test and clarify their new learning by talking with the instructor and other participants, and applying new knowledge in real or contrived situations as soon as possible.

*The Lesson Close* provides a time for answering questions, reviewing the information, connecting this lesson to future lessons, making assignments, and punctuating the finish. The close does not provide any new information but gives a sense of closure to the lesson.

**Homework assignments** are important learning activities. They provide the student with an opportunity to synthesize classroom learning. Working on these assignments also extends the learning experience beyond the time constraints of class time.

The student—especially the adult student—needs frequent and timely feedback about his or her learning. While interaction with other students helps the learner refine what he or she is learning, feedback from the instructor is also critical to the quality of his or her learning and ultimately to his or her persistence in the Course of Study.

It is your responsibility as the instructor for this module to provide students with timely responses to homework assignments in order to enhance the learning process. Ideally, homework should be returned at the beginning of the next lesson. Reviewing and responding to homework will also provide you with critical information about what your students are learning and how well the teaching-learning process is succeeding.

*Please note.*

Since these modules are preparing the learner for ordination rather than leading to a university degree, a letter grade may not be appropriate. Your response to the learners' assignments should be thoughtful and in most cases it should be written. Its purpose will always be to refine and enhance the learning of the student.

Letter grades will not be issued at the end of the module as a measure of completion. Completion of the module is based on attendance, participation, completion of all homework, and showing competence in the ability statements.

**Recommendations for printing.** You may print this Faculty Guide if desired. The introduction and lesson

plan segments are formatted for printing on both sides of the paper. The Student Guide can also be printed and can be printed either on one or two sides.

## About the Student Guide

The Student Guide for this module contains the series foreword, acknowledgments, syllabus, all resources, lesson objectives, and assignments. The Student Guide should be made available to each student in hard copy or electronic format, download from <http://www.usacanadaregion.org/modular-cos>, CD or diskette.

Each resource sheet in the Student Guide is numbered at the top for the lesson in which the resource is first used. The first resource page for Lesson 2 is numbered "2-1." In the Faculty Guide, in the left-hand column, you will be informed when to refer to the appropriate resource.

The first page for each lesson

- Reminds the student of the assignments that are due
- States the learner objectives
- Gives instructions for the homework assignment
- Sometimes includes relevant quotes

For each lesson, there are several support pieces, which we have called simply "resources." They help guide the flow of the lesson. Some resources are basic outlines that guide the student through a lecture. Others direct small-group activities. For some lessons, data/statistic resources are given. And for some modules homework assignment information resources are included.

You must determine how each resource will be used in your context. If an overhead projector is available, then transparencies can be made by replacing the paper in your photocopy machine with special transparency material. Resources also can be used as part of a PowerPoint presentation.

The instructor may photocopy resources to use for his or her own lecture outlines. There is space to add notes from the Faculty Guide, from a textbook, or from the additional suggested readings. Add in your own illustrations too!

## Suggested Meeting Schedule

The module lessons are designed to last 60 minutes each. Each lesson is complete in itself with an opening, middle, and a closing. They are sequential. Each lesson assumes the learners have mastered material presented in previous lessons. The lessons can be grouped in a variety of ways to accommodate the schedules of your learners. Some lessons include extra material which can be used as time permits.

When lessons are taught in the same meeting, instructors will need to adjust homework assignments because participants will not have time between lessons to prepare homework. It is very important for the instructor to always be looking ahead and planning for upcoming lessons.

Here are three suggestions—out of many—for ways that the meetings can be organized.

1. Resident campus: The class can meet one day a week for 60 minutes. Present one lesson per meeting time. Total time: 15 weeks. (1 credit hour class) If desired, the course could be augmented by the professor and extra materials provided by some of the lessons and taught 2 days a week for 13-14 weeks for a 2 credit hour class.
2. Extension education: The class can meet one day—or evening—each week for 3 hours. Present three lessons per meeting with a break period between lessons. Participants will need to travel to a centralized location for meetings, so make it worth their time. Total time: 5 weeks.
3. Intensive module: This module could be taught in a weeklong intensive format. That would be 3 hours a day (3 lessons) for 5 days. This leaves time in the afternoons for writing and research.

The module is divided into 5 units. The progression of these units can be seen in the chart below. Space is given for you to fill in the dates when your class sessions will meet.

<b>Date</b>	<b>Lesson</b>
<b>Unit 1</b>	<b>Introduction</b>
	Lesson One: The Need for Ordained Women

	Clergy
	Lesson Two: Overview of Recent History and Hermeneutical Principles
<b>Unit 2</b>	<b>Biblical Foundations</b>
	Lesson Three: Creation and Fall
	Lesson Four: Women of the Old Testament
	Lesson Five: Jesus and the Early Church: The Gospels and Acts
	Lesson Six: Paul and Gender Mutuality
	Lesson Seven: Women of the New Testament and Obscure Passages
<b>Unit 3</b>	<b>Historical Foundations</b>
	Lesson Eight: Women Church Leaders: Early and Medieval Periods
	Lesson Nine: Women Church Leaders: Wesley to the Modern Period
<b>Unit 4</b>	<b>Theological Foundations</b>
	Lesson Ten: Wesleyan Theology and Gender Mutuality
	Lesson Eleven: Gender Roles and Liberation in God
<b>Unit 5</b>	<b>Practical Issues</b>
	Lesson Twelve: Power Dynamics
	Lesson Thirteen: So That All Can Hear; So That All Can Speak
	Lesson Fourteen: Pastoral Teams, Co-Pastoring, Staff and Family Issues
	Lesson Fifteen: Mentoring Decision Makers and Modeling Gender Mutuality

## Recommended Textbooks

Each module within the Modular Course of Study is intended to be textbook independent. This does not imply that the modules are textbook irrelevant or that the module content cannot be enriched by selecting and requiring that students study a textbook along with the lessons provided in this faculty guide.

If these modules are adapted for use outside of the English-speaking countries of North America, a specific textbook may not be available in the language of the students. Therefore, the module does not rely on one textbook. The instructor may select any doctrinally sound textbook that is available to the students.

## A Hidden Agenda

### **Hidden curriculum issues . . . because the way we teach teaches**

In each session, there are certain methodological and environmental things to consider.

**First**, consider the classroom arrangement. Whenever possible, the room should be arranged to encourage a sense of community. The group should sit either in a circle or around a table. If the group is very large, chairs can be arranged for easily moving into clusters for discussion.

**Second**, consider how you present yourself as teacher. Standing behind a lectern with your students facing you in rows says that you are above the students and have something to give them—although in a very large group this standing to teach may be unavoidable. Sitting as part of the circle makes the teacher a co-learner at the same level as the students. Speak naturally. Pay close attention to your students, and value the things they share. Learn their names. Encourage participation. Remember that you are modeling for them, and the way you teach will teach them far more than the words you say.

**Third**, invite the Holy Spirit's presence in the classroom. Do this each time the class meets.

**Fourth**, the sharing of stories activity does more than help the students begin to reflect on their own Christian experiences. It is a way to build community between the students. This is more than an exercise to be checked off. It is vital to set the tone of your intentional community.

When meeting times exceed 90 minutes, consider adding break times. The break between segments is an important time for community building. Remain available to the students during this time. Consider offering coffee or tea during this time as a way to encourage fellowship.

## Journaling: The Key to Spiritual Formation

Journaling is a major assignment of each module in the Ministerial Preparation Course of Study. It is the integrating element that helps you draw spiritual meaning and ministerial application from the content of each module whether the module concentrates on content, competency, character, or context. It ensures

that the "Be" component of "Be, Know, and Do" is present in every module in which you participate. What is journaling and how can it be meaningfully accomplished?

### **Journaling: A Tool for Personal Reflection and Integration**

*The Syllabus contains this explanation of journaling. Journaling provides the spiritual formation component for the module and is an integral part of the learning experience.*

*Journaling is an effective way to get students to think beyond the classroom to real-life applications of classroom concepts.*

*Have students read the journaling section during the Syllabus review in Lesson 1 and emphasize that journaling is an assignment for each lesson in the module.*

*When giving assignments in each lesson, assign journal writing each time the group meets.*

Participating in the Course of Study is the heart of your preparation for ministry. To complete each module you will be required to listen to lectures, read several books, participate in discussions, and write papers. Content mastery is the goal.

An equally important part of ministerial preparation is spiritual formation. Some might choose to call spiritual formation devotions, while others might refer to it as growth in grace. Whichever title you place on the process, it is the intentional cultivation of your relationship with God. The module work will be helpful in adding to your knowledge, your skills, and your ability to do ministry. The spiritual formation work will weave all you learn into the fabric of your being, allowing your education to flow freely from your head to your heart to those you serve.

Although there are many spiritual disciplines to help you cultivate your relationship with God, journaling is the critical skill that ties them all together. Journaling simply means keeping a record of your experiences and the insights you have gained along the way. It is a discipline because it does require a good deal of work to faithfully spend time daily in your journal. Many people confess that this is a practice they tend to push aside when pressed by their many other responsibilities. Even five minutes a day spent journaling can make a major difference in your education and your spiritual development. Let me explain.

Consider journaling time spent with your best friend. Onto the pages of a journal you will pour out your candid responses to the events of the day, the insights you gained from class, a quote gleaned from a book, and an ah-ha that came to you as two ideas connected. This is not the same as keeping a diary, since a diary seems to be a chronicle of events without the personal dialogue. The journal is the repository for all of your thoughts, reactions, prayers, insights, visions, and plans. Though some people like to keep complex journals with sections for each type of reflection, others find a simple running commentary more helpful. In either case, record the date and the location at the beginning of every journal entry. It will

help you when it comes time to review your thoughts.

It is important to chat briefly about the logistics of journaling. All you will need is a pen and paper to begin. Some folks prefer loose-leaf paper that can be placed in a three-ring binder, others like spiral-bound notebooks, while others enjoy using composition books or a computer. Whichever style you choose, it is important to develop a pattern that works for you.

Establishing a time and a place for writing in your journal is essential. If there is no space etched out for journaling, it will not happen with the regularity needed to make it valuable. It seems natural to spend time journaling after the day is over and you can sift through all that has transpired. Yet, family commitments, evening activities, and fatigue militate against this time slot. Morning offers another possibility. Sleep filters much of the previous day's experiences, and processes deep insights, that can be recorded first thing in the morning. In conjunction with devotions, journaling enables you to begin to weave your experiences with the Word, and also with module material that has been steeping on the back burner of your mind. You will probably find that carrying your journal will allow you to jot down ideas that come to you at odd times throughout the day.

It seems we have been suggesting that journaling is a handwritten exercise. Some may be wondering about doing their work on a computer. Traditionally, there is a special bond between hand, pen, and paper. It is more personal, direct, and aesthetic. And it is flexible, portable, and available. However, as computers become more and more an integral part of our lives, the use of a computer for journaling may take on that special bond.

With regular use, your journal is the repository of your journey. As important as it is to make daily entries, it is equally important to review your work. Read over each week's record at the end of the week. Make a summary statement and note movements of the Holy Spirit or your own growth. Do a monthly review of your journal every 30 days. This might best be done on a half-day retreat where you can prayerfully focus on your thoughts in solitude and silence. As you do this, you will begin to see the accumulated value of the Word, your module work, and your experience in ministry all coming together in ways you had not considered possible. This is integration—weaving together faith development and learning. Integration moves information from your head to your heart so that ministry is a matter of being rather than doing. Journaling will help you answer the central question of

education: "Why do I do what I do when I do it?"

Journaling really is the linchpin in ministerial preparation. Your journal is the chronicle of your journey into spiritual maturity as well as content mastery. These volumes will hold the rich insights that will pull your education together. A journal is the tool for integration. May you treasure the journaling process!

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## Online and Video Resources

**Videos:**

[Biblical, Historical and Theological teaching Videos:](#)

C. Jeanne Serrão: Paul and Women  
Joseph Coleson: Women and Creation  
Jesse Middendorf: Introduction to Module  
Harold Raser: Theology and Women in Ministry  
Harold Raser: Bresee on Women in Ministry

[Personal Stories of a Call to Ministry:](#)

Nina Gunter  
Kathy Mowry  
Julie Chaney  
Jennifer Chapman  
Donna Wilson  
Janine Metcalf (see "Other Videos" below for the link)

*Other Videos:*

- Ablaze with Love: Janine Metcalf (Available from Nazarene Publishing House)
- [Come to the Water 2013 - highlight video](#)
- [A Tribute to Mary Lee Cagle by Stan Ingersol](#)
- [An interview with Janine Metcalf](#)  
Story of her Conversion and Call to Ministry, Women models: Crutcher, Cagle, Jernigan, Gardner; personal advice to women in ministry; advice for DS's or the church in general; value of spiritual formation
- [Janine Metcalf on Women in Clergy Leadership](#)
- [Angie Bentley on Being a Female Pastor](#)
- [Shawn and Ashley Evans discuss Married Church Staff Members](#)
- [Margaret Tyler on Passing Faith](#)
- [Diane Leclerc discusses "Discovering Christian Holiness"](#)
- [Althea Taylor on Starting a Compassionate Ministry Center](#)
- [Cheryl Evans on Outreach to the Homeless](#)

**Links**

- [Christians for Biblical Equality](#)
- [Stevenson Center for Women's Studies](#)
- [Wesleyan Holiness Women Clergy](#)







# Lesson 1

## The Need for Ordained Women Clergy

### Lesson Overview

#### Schedule

Start Time	Task or Topic	Learning Activity	Materials Needed
0:00	Introduction	Orientation and Objectives	Student Guide
0:10	The Need	Lecture/Group Discussion	
0:30	The Nazarene Position	Lecture/Group Discussion	
0:45	Women Clergy Council Initiatives	Group Discussion	
0:55	Lesson Close	Review, Assign Homework	

### Lesson Introduction

(10 minutes)

#### Orientation

*Review the syllabus in the Student Guide.*

*Set the dates and times for the lessons.*

*Discuss the requirements for the class.*

*Give and collect information concerning names and email addresses.*

*Make sure the focus is clear.*

#### The Focus

The legitimacy of women clergy in the church affords them places of service, based on need, verified by theological and spiritual persuasion.

This lesson will give learners an overview of the need for ordained women clergy and the Nazarene position on the ordination and service of women.

#### Learner Objectives

- To understand the need for ordained women clergy in the church.
- To understand the position of the Church of the Nazarene on Women's ordination and gender inclusive language.
- To understand the function and initiatives of the Women Clergy Council, USA/Canada.

## Lesson Body

**Video Resource:** [Jesse Middendorf: Welcome to this Module!](#)

### **Lecture: THE NEED**

(15 minutes)

Resource 1-1

Ordained women clergy? Some might say it is not an issue any more. But "Women in Ministry Leadership" has been an issue since Jesus came to the earth and will probably continue to be an issue. However, that is no excuse to ignore it and fail to step into God's future for the church.

#### **The New Creation**

The new creation in Christ gives validity to understanding the place of ordained women clergy. It is beyond gender roles. Jesus came to restore humankind to be the real human beings God created them to be in His image. The purpose of God's redemptive work is to set God's creation free from the curse of the Fall. Men do not represent God's image alone. The image of God is present in both male and female. This is why the Apostle Paul sets out the order of the new creation in Galatians 3:28 "There is no longer Jew or Greek, there is no longer slave or free, there is no longer male and female; for all of you are one in Christ Jesus." Note the language here when he speaks of male *and* female, it is the same language used in Genesis when he speaks of the creation of male *and* female. The image of God does not reside in one's gender, but rather in the human, which God created. Therefore, the call of Christ's followers, male and female alike is to be a reflection of Christ in the new creation.

The ordination of women must be framed as a biblical concept...not cultural, not feminism, not fundamentalism...but rooted in the Biblical ethic of equality in Christ and God's call. (Joel 2:28; Acts 2:18)

- The Holy Spirit gives the gifts (1 Corinthians 12)

Nancy Beach, in her book *Gifted to Lead*, helps us to see the gifts of the Holy Spirit with a fresh view. "No mistake was made in heaven when God gave you a gift of leadership or teaching." (Page 16)

“The Holy Spirit did not distribute the gifts according to gender; both women and men should be free to express their God-given abilities in the local church.” The church has a mission. All hearts and hands are needed for the task of making Christ-like disciples in the nations.

We superimpose our control over God’s when we try to choose who is to preach or teach in the church or whether we think we can decide whether women have the equal right.

- The need for accountability of God-given gifts

How will the church be accountable to God if she fails to use the gifts He has given to women?

### **The Delona Smith Story:**

Rev. Delona Smith (Intha Delona McGraw Smith, 1891-1970) is the mother of well-known Nazarene pastor, Dr. Sam Smith, and noted Nazarene historian, theologian, and professor at Johns Hopkins University, Dr. Timothy L. Smith; founding pastor of Newport News, VA, Church of the Nazarene.

When God called Delona to preach, she believed that a call to preach was a call to prepare, so she along with her husband and several children, moved to Olivet Nazarene College (now University) for her to enroll and prepare for her calling.

After arriving on campus with her family, she met with the religion department committee of professors who seriously questioned her call and decision for college. Standing confident in God’s call, Delona asked, “And which one of you will answer to God if I don’t prepare and fulfill my call.”

Now you know the rest of her story and God’s blessings on her life, family, and ministry. (If not, here’s the story.)

### **Biography by Delona’s granddaughter, Mary Shoff:**

My Grandmother had eight children. When the eighth, my Aunt Ruth, was born she had a twin sister who was named Esther. Esther died at birth. Both Esther and Ruth were very tiny. Ruth was so small that they carried her around on a pillow. It was shortly after the birth of the twins and the death of Esther that my Grandmother announced her calling to the ministry.

My Grandparents were living in Olivet, Illinois at that time. My Grandfather was a full time professor at Olivet Nazarene College. There was concern within the "Olivet Community" that Mrs. Smith was declaring God's call to full time ministry. In response, some persons decided to organize a meeting (an intervention) to dissuade Mrs. Smith of her delusional notion. My Grandfather came home and told her that there was a meeting called by the ONC community i.e. President, Professors, Spouses, etc. and that she was the subject of the meeting. He told her the time and place and said that he would go with her.

When they went into the meeting. Some persons addressed her about her mistaken notion. They opined that God wouldn't call her to full time ministry when she had 8 young children to care for. They suggested that she was in a delicate emotional state due to the recent birth and death of her daughter. They tried to help her understand that her emotions were clouding her ability to clearly know God's call on her life. My Grandmother listened and when they finished and waited for her response, she simply said, "Which one of you wants to face God on judgment day and be accountable for me not answering God's call on my life?" Hearing no response, she walked out of the meeting with my Grandfather, went home and started her ministry.

I have also learned that there is a recorded sermon that is archived at headquarters in which my Uncle Tim expounded on my Grandmother's ministry. She was on street corners in front of bars most Friday and Saturday nights with four of her sons. The quartet sang and Granny preached. She had a heart for "drunkards" with personal knowledge of how a drinking Father affected a family and home. Granny and the quartet also had a regular radio program.

*You can tell the story here or show the [video by Dr. Nina Gunter](#) about her story from *Grace and Peace*.*

### **My Story**

(Nina G. Gunter, General Superintendent Emerita,  
Church of the Nazarene)

Everyone has a story to tell. Mine is understood from the small things perspective.

God loves small things. Jesus said the Kingdom of God is like a mustard seed – like yeast – a pearl – finding one lost coin – one lost sheep – the Kingdom belongs to little children. God passionately cares for and guides the least of them.

While a child, at the age of 12, in having my devotions one morning, God clearly spoke to me through His Word with a call to preach. After my struggle of two years to totally abandon self, surrender my all to His will, and receive the infilling, sanctifying grace of the Holy Spirit, I experienced the blessing of freedom in Christ at the altar in the South Carolina District Camp Meeting.

When I returned home (Wallace, SC) with my family and told my pastor on Monday morning, he invited me to preach in our little country church on Wednesday night. That church then, and later the larger church/denomination, affirmed God's call on my life.

This journey has been anointed and guided by God's Spirit. I have enjoyed pastoring with and assisting my husband in the district superintendency, doing evangelism, promoting missions, and being a general superintendent in the Church of the Nazarene.

I am grateful for the distinctive characteristic of the Wesleyan perspective of Christian holiness that recognizes the need and rightful place of ordained women clergy.

## Lecture: THE NAZARENE POSITION

(20 minutes)

Resource 1-2

Let us read and give special attention to these paragraphs, which were by action of the General Assembly.

**Manual, Church of the Nazarene**  
**Para. 903.5, Women in Ministry**  
**Para. 903.6, Gender Inclusive Language**

### **903.5. Women in Ministry**

The Church of the Nazarene supports the right of women to use their God-given spiritual gifts within the church, affirms the historic right of women to be elected and appointed to places of leadership within the Church of the Nazarene, including the offices of both elder and deacon.

The purpose of Christ's redemptive work is to set God's creation free from the curse of the Fall. Those who are "in Christ" are new creations (2 Corinthians 5:17). In this redemptive community, no human being is to be regarded as inferior on the basis of social status, race, or gender (Galatians 3:26-28).

Acknowledging the apparent paradox created by Paul's instruction to Timothy (1 Timothy 2:11-12) and to the church in Corinth (1 Corinthians 14:33-34), we believe interpreting these passages as limiting the role of women in ministry presents serious conflicts with

specific passages of scripture that commend female participation in spiritual leadership roles (Joel 2:28-29; Acts 2:17-18; 21:8-9; Romans 16:1, 3, 7; Philippians 4:2-3), and violates the spirit and practice of the Wesleyan-holiness tradition. Finally, it is incompatible with the character of God presented throughout Scripture, especially as revealed in the person of Jesus Christ. (2001)

### **903.6. Gender Inclusive Language**

The Church of the Nazarene affirms and encourages the use of gender inclusive language in reference to persons. Publications, including the *Manual* and public language should reflect this commitment to gender equality as expressed in paragraph 903.5. Language changes shall not be applied to any scriptural quotations or references to God. (2009)

### **Nazarene Women Clergy Council—Why?**

In 2008 the Church of the Nazarene established the *Women Clergy Council*. One might ask why it would be necessary to establish such an organization, when we have no *Men's Clergy Council*! The reality is that if we look around, most of the members of the committees and councils of the church are men. Even the recent committee on the Future of the Church failed to assign a single female clergy to the committee.

We often do not see the influences on our Church from outside sources. It was in the 1980's that the Southern Baptist Convention took action to prohibit women from preaching in their pulpits. The Church of the Nazarene had seen a steady decline in the number of women clergy ever since the 1930's. The encroachment of a more fundamentalist reading of Scripture was taking root in the United States. The result of this was the action taken by the Southern Baptists, and while the Church of the Nazarene never took an official stand against women clergy, the subtle encroachment of other theologies resulted in an unofficial state of apathy, or possibly non-encouragement when it came to women clergy.

By the late 1990's the Church of the Nazarene began to take note of the fact that there were nearly no women clergy left within the denomination and action needed to be taken. *Wesleyan Holiness Women Clergy*, an organization founded by the Rev. Dr. Susie Stanley, recognized the problem and was birthed to give voice to the concern of the demise of women clergy within holiness denominations. This was not just a Nazarene problem, but rather, one that had permeated the entire holiness world.

In direct response to the loss of women clergy, Clergy Development for USA/Canada felt that it was an important step to establish the Nazarene Women Clergy Council so that intentional action could be developed to revitalize the vocational ministry of women in the Church of the Nazarene.

This call is important because the call of women to ministry is, not only a part of our holiness heritage, but also, a part of our holiness theology and biblical understanding. These lessons are designed to help us look at not only our tradition, but also our deeply rooted theological position on women in ministry, which speaks directly to our holiness message. One simply cannot exist without the other.

When we examine our history we discover that the period of time in which the Church of the Nazarene in the USA/Canada experienced its most rapid growth and expansion was also the time in which it had the largest percentage of female pastors. One might simply think that this is anecdotal and that statistical evidence does not exist. However, in Jim Henderson's publication "The Resignation of Eve" he comments on Pastor Cho's church in South Korea. This is the largest congregation in the world with over 200,000 members.

Pastor Cho is often asked to teach others on his secrets of church growth. Interestingly, he comments, that people don't seem too interested in one of his main principles, and that is the use of women. He states that he has brought this up around the world and is met with resistance when trying to explain that the major reason his church has grown to its size is because he has utilized women as leaders. Considering he has grown his church in a post-Korean War culture, this is striking, for women are not encouraged to be leaders within the secular culture.

Here is what Pastor Cho has to say:

"In 1964 (when Cho was very ill), I had the choice of one or two steps – to delegate my ministry to lay Christians or keep up the ministry. But when I tried to delegate my ministry to the men, they would all make excuses saying that they were too busy, or not trained, or 'You receive a salary not me.'

So I had to use women. In Korean society – for long periods of time – women had no power or voice in the church, and I began to use women. This was a big risk – but I had no choice – it was a step out in faith, and I had no alternative. Then the women made a tremendous contribution to church growth! Now all the

Korea churches – even Catholic – have accepted women. When I come to Europe and America encouraging pastors to use women, I always receive a lot of opposition – especially in Europe...

Secondly, I want to stress the importance of the use of women. Women are underused in the church....So women are a tremendous strength in church because of culture – but in Western culture – you are afraid of using women. But once women were given the freedom to work as fellow leaders there was an explosion of Cell Leaders."<sup>1</sup>

Currently in Pastor Cho's church there are 50,000 cell groups, 47,000 (95%) led by women, and 600 associate pastors, with 400 (67%) of those, women.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Henderson, *The Resignation of Eve*, p. 249.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid, 251.

## Small Group Discussion: **WOMEN CLERGY COUNCIL INITIATIVES**

**(15 minutes)**

Resource 1-3

*Divide the class into groups to discuss the initiatives. Take time to evaluate the importance of each initiative and how it might be implemented in your area of ministry. Each group appoints a "reporter." The total class is to receive the reports for discussion.*

Why would the Church of the Nazarene develop a Women Clergy Council? Because we recognize that a healthy church is one in which the full of image of God is represented – when both men and women are present as leaders. Therefore, recognizing the significant loss of women, the Church has chosen to take action. The following initiatives were developed by the Council to help the church become intentional.

1. To assure mentoring for called women at all phases of ministry.
2. To develop viable pathways for ministry placement of women clergy.
3. To identify funding sources to support women students and ministers.
4. To lobby for policy and legislation that ensures the systemic support of women clergy.
5. To facilitate the development of regional networking that effectively reaches from the general to the regional to the district to the local levels for women in vocational ministry.
6. To promote a culture of value and visibility for the myriad ministry options for women and the excellent ways they are currently serving.
7. To support the production of state-of-the-art educational resources for leadership training on issues of women in ministry.
8. To influence the dialog regarding a correct Wesleyan biblical and theological view of women in ministry.
9. To utilize all available technology and public venues to market the value of women in ministry.

# Lesson Close

(5 minutes)

## Review

Resource 1-4

Ask learners to list 3 ideas they have learned in this lesson about ordained women clergy and the position of the Church of the Nazarene. Include reflections, reactions, and insights.

Set the atmosphere, both spiritually and intellectually, for anticipation in the remaining lessons.

## Assign Homework

Have students read the Bassett paper and view the video, "Ablaze with Love" for the next class. Come to class 2 with 3 new ideas they read in the Bassett paper and 3 new ideas they heard or saw in the video.

### Required Reading/Resources

Bassett, Paul. *The Ordination of Women to Ministry in the Church of the Nazarene*. (Unpublished paper, included resource)

Metcalf, Janine, "Ablaze with Love." Video Documentary on Women in Ministry (available from Global Clergy Development at Global Ministry Center)

### Recommended Reading

Becker, Carol E. 1996. *Leading Women: How Church Women Can Avoid Leadership Traps and Negotiate the Gender Maze*. Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press.

Cowles, C. S. 1993. *A Woman's Place? Leadership in the Church*. Kansas City, MO: Beacon Hill Press.





## *Lesson 2*

# **Overview of Recent History and Hermeneutical Principles**

## *Lesson Overview*

### **Schedule**

Start Time	Task or Topic	Learning Activity	Materials Needed
0:00	Introduction	Accountability and Orientation	Student Guide
0:05	Overview of Recent History	Lecture/Group Discussion	
0:40	Hermeneutical Questions	Lecture/Group Discussion	
0:55	Lesson Close	Review, Assign Homework	

## Lesson Introduction:

(5 minutes)

### Accountability

*In pairs, have the learners share and critique each other's homework assignments. As time permits, allow one to share the best highlights from their discussions. Collect homework for evaluation. All homework should be evaluated with constructive comments to help the learner with his or her growth.*

### Homework

- 1) Three new ideas from Paul Bassett's Paper: *The Ordination of Women to Ministry in the Church of the Nazarene*.
- 2) Three new ideas from Janine Metcalf's, "Ablaze with Love" video.

### Orientation

*Review the syllabus in the Student Guide.  
Answer any questions students may have from the previous session or about the syllabus or assignments.  
Make sure the focus is clear.  
Ask for insights and highlights from the required reading and video.*

**The Focus:** To gain a brief overview of the predecessors and history of the development of the current Nazarene position on the ordination of women clergy and to learn a simple, but comprehensive method of Bible study which reflects our Wesleyan-Holiness heritage.

### Learner Objectives

*Instruct students to locate objectives in the Student Guide.*

*State the objectives for the learners.*

- To understand that basis of ordination is no different for women than it is for men.
- To understand the influences on the Church of the Nazarene and their perceptions of women clergy.
- To understand the role of the Holy Spirit in the life of the Church and the ordination of clergy
- To get a good grasp of the importance of interpreting Biblical texts contextually and in light of all scripture.

## Video Resource: [Harold Raser](#) on Women in Ministry

### Lecture: How We Got Here: An Overview of Recent History

(35 minutes)

*One can give the lecture as found here, or since the students have read the paper, the instructor can do a guided review of the paper, helping the students to highlight the key ideas.*

*This lecture material was adapted from "The Ordination Of Women To Ministry In The Church Of The Nazarene" by Paul Merritt Bassett, Professor of the History of Christianity, Emeritus, Nazarene Theological Seminary*

Resource 2-1

#### THE THESIS

The thesis of this paper is this: the early (Pentecostal) Church of the Nazarene took for granted the legitimacy of female ordained ministry, and herein lies a primary source of the ambivalence of its subsequent attitude toward the ordination and pastoral assignment of women. As it has sought to put that ambivalence aside, since the late 1970s, it has generally argued for the legitimacy of ordaining women and affording them places of service on grounds very different from those originally established by the Wesleyan Holiness Movement. And, in extension of the thesis, I would argue that the original grounds are theologically and spiritually superior to the grounds usually appealed to currently. I would urge the re-proclamation of those original grounds.

#### A PROLOGUE AND A THESIS

Dr. Stan Ingersoll has written a splendid, popular level sketch concerning the history of ordained women in the Church of the Nazarene and its predecessors. It appears in the March, 2000 edition of *Holiness Today*. The basic point he makes is that the early Nazarenes and their predecessors ordained women to ministry on the basis of their understanding of what the Bible has to say about apostolic ministry. That is a highly significant point, but one which, in the case of the Church of the Nazarene and its lineal institutional ancestry back to the mid-1890s, can generally only be inferred from the data, not directly supported by it. Data do support it quite directly for the two generations of the Wesleyan Holiness Movement that preceded the formation of the Church of the Nazarene. And therein lies the root of much of the problem which U.S. and Canadian Nazarenes have had since the late 1930s with accepting ordained women clergy.

#### HOW HAVE WE COME TO OUR PRESENT POSITION?

##### I. From before the beginning to about 1908

What happened? The battle for women's ordination in the Wesleyan Holiness Movement had been won before 1895, insofar as that movement was predominantly Caucasian and insofar as it would distinguish itself from the Methodist Episcopal Church

and the Methodist Episcopal Church, South. The battle for women's ordination within the Holiness Movement had largely been won before the various bodies which would become the Pentecostal Church of the Nazarene had formed, and certainly before the actual formation of the national denomination in 1907-1908. Luther Lee's sermon at the ordination of Antoinette Brown, had been published almost as soon as it was preached, in 1853, and had wide circulation.<sup>1</sup> Phoebe Palmer's work, *Promise of the Father* had come out as early as 1859; Catherine Booth's *Female Ministry; or, Woman's Right to Preach the Gospel* had apparently begun its life as a lecture no later than the mid-1870s and had become a book before 1888.

With only slight exaggeration, we could say that the publications of Palmer (1859) and Booth (before 1888), not quite a generation apart, serve as book-ends, as it were, to a modest shelf full of women's defenses of woman's ordained ministry. Ms Palmer and Ms Catherine Booth were indisputably among the handful of principal figures, male or female, in the nineteenth-century Wesleyan Holiness Movement. And they had addressed the issue of women's ministry and ordination directly and cogently in two highly effective ways: in speech and in writing. This two-fold witness left no doubt that God had indeed called them to ministry and had set them apart to do the work of ministry.

By 1890, then, for most Wesleyan Holiness people, the ministry of ordained women was as much of the theological and practical fabric of their mission as the doctrine of sin or the practice of congregational singing. Wesleyan Holiness people generally had decided that concerning the matter of women's ordination, *Spiritus Sanctus locuta, caus finita*: the Spirit has spoken, the case is closed.

In the remarkable success of their corps of ordained women in spreading scriptural holiness in preaching, teaching, and social service, most Wesleyan Holiness folk understood the Spirit to have spoken quite clearly and directly to the question of women in (ordained) ministry. And they believed that they could show that all of this was quite in line with the Biblical Word. Here was the testimony of the Holy Spirit upon which good Wesleyans build their understanding of the sufficiency (and authority) of Scripture. Women's right to preach (really understood more as divine gift than "right"), and therefore women's "right" to ordination, no longer needed to be argued, nor was it even a special point to be made in most quarters among Wesleyan Holiness people after the early 1890s.

Just a generation later, however, we see that a problem has developed, at least among the Nazarenes. In an editorial in the *Herald of Holiness* dated 15

October, 1930, James B. Chapman, now a Nazarene General Superintendent, and long-time editor of the *Herald*, apparently meeting resistance to ordaining women, comments on remarks made by P. E Bresee to the *Manual* Revision Committee at the Pilot Point, Texas, meeting in October, 1908.

Bresee had consistently supported women's ordination, but, he generally seems to have taken women's "right" to ordination for granted. Two linked data would seem to indicate this: he did ordain women and he seems to have said very little about it. That second datum would simply be an argument from silence was it not for the fact that like Luther, he seemed to enjoy a following which wrote down most of what he said. The question for Bresee was not one of gender but one of apostolicity, of gifts and graces. We see this in the working of the few exemplars we have of ordination certificates which he himself wrote out and in the process of which he and the early assemblies worked out for examining candidates for ordained ministry.

Bresee's remarks to the 1908 *Manual* Revision Committee are aimed at insisting that gender is not and should not be an issue in ministry.

In 1930, Chapman appeals to Bresee's 1908 remarks as a *defense* of women's ordination although it was not really a primary point as far as Bresee himself had been concerned. Bresee had not so much defended it as he had simply stated his support for it. But what had come to be taken for granted by the time Bresee left Peniel Mission, now, in 1930, had fallen under scrutiny and become a matter for debate in some quarters. What was forgotten in the renewed debate was the original argument for ordaining women, the argument taken for granted by Bresee - that *all* clerical ordination, male or female, is tied to apostolicity.

II. From about 1908 to about 1930, with an excursus on the earlier history of American feminism

Four cultural factors came into play in English-speaking North America in that period, each of them with a theological and spiritual dimension which deeply affected the Nazarenes' understanding of ministry:

- the deflation of feminism,
- the leavening of Fundamentalism,
- the development of a new paradigm or model for "leadership," and the development of

*institutionalism.*

These factors helped Nazarenes to forget what they had never really carefully articulated for themselves in the first place—rather, they had taken it for granted, namely, their rationale for accepting the legitimacy of women’s ordination and ministry.

1) The deflation of the women’s cause took place in the period between the Spanish-American War (1898) and the coming of the Great Depression in October, 1929. The Pentecostal Church of the Nazarene was born in the wake of the “Womanist Movement,” which really was the second wave of feminism to sweep across Canada and the U. S. in the nineteenth century. The first had begun to have public affect in the late 1830s, just as Phoebe Palmer began her work with the Tuesday Meeting for the Promotion of Holiness. It had crested with the Seneca Falls Convention in July, 1848, held in the Wesleyan Chapel in Seneca Falls, New York, under the leadership of Lucretia Mort and Elizabeth Cady Stanton, both of whom had strong Methodist Episcopal connections.

The long and bitter prelude to the Civil War and the War itself focused national attention away from the women’s rights resolutions agreed upon at the Convention and the movement faded for a generation, except for a few lively individuals, such as Ms Stanton and Susan Brownell Anthony, and a few lively spots, such as Oberlin College in Ohio (the first co-educational college-level institution in the U.S.); and Mt. Holyoke College in Massachusetts (the first permanent woman’s college in the country). But most of the feminist movement had retreated to the shadows by the 1850s.

The second wave of English-speaking North American feminism had begun in the mid-to late 1870s and had rather quickly developed two segments - a religious and a secular. A familiar name in the religious segment is Frances Willard; in the secular, Florence Kelley. You can see one of the more interesting examples of the ideology and the power of this second wave in Theodore Roosevelt’s senior dissertation at Harvard, written in 1880. Its title: “The Practicability of Equalizing Men and Women Before the Law.” Obstacles littered the way, he said, but the ideal state would have equal justice for both genders. “I would have the word ‘obey’ used not more by the wife than by the husband,” said the future Bull Moose leader and builder of the Panama Canal. By the time he became Vice President under William McKinley, he had done what

the rest of American culture had done- he'd shipped his feminism into a backwater. Even his Progressives divided over the issue of women's suffrage in the 1912 election.

But in the years from the late 1870s to 1899, feminism, or "The Womanist Movement," as it was often called, rolled along in full strength. Women won the right to vote in Wyoming, Colorado, Utah, and Idaho in the 1890s. In the 1912 election, California, Arizona, Washington, Oregon and Kansas extended the vote to women. Then, with the ratification of the 18th Amendment (prohibition) in 1919, and the 19th Amendment to the Constitution, in 1920, giving all women citizens 21 years of age or older the right to vote, the women themselves began to speak and write and act as if their cause was won, and they went on to other matters.

The Nazarenes in many places were coming to enjoy their own version of the "return to normalcy." In his University of Chicago Ph.D. dissertation, "Christian Perfectionism in America," approved in 1929 and revised and published in 1939, Merrill Gaddis had described the Church of the Nazarene as "the right wing of the Holiness Movement." Many a Nazarene, upon learning of this description, took this to be one more affirmation that their denomination had "arrived," socially—an affirmation all the more important because it came from a quarter recognized as significant by people and institutions who "counted." The processes that had gotten underway in 1919 with the dropping of "Pentecostal" from their name and with the centralizing and rationalizing of the administrative structure of the Church gained social cachet with the holding of the General Assembly in Columbus, Ohio, in 1928. There were a few embarrassments to report, but generally the secular press noted that these Nazarenes were solid citizens with an excusable zeal and an understandable excitement about themselves and their faith. In short, they were "normal" folks with commendable religion. Not quite mainline, but surely not far away. And the Nazarenes themselves breathed a sigh of relief and agreed. But it was a costly agreement, and one of the costs was the place of women in ordained ministry.

Theologically, in the matter of women's ordination and women's ministry, the "return to normalcy" and the deflation of the women's movement by about 1925, cost the Wesleyan Holiness Movement dearly, especially the Church of the Nazarene. The Nazarenes still had not articulated a rationale for ordaining and making places of service for women and now their acculturation exacerbated their theological amnesia.

### III. From about 1930 to the mid-1940s

In its earliest decades, the Church of the Nazarene in most quarters seems to have taken for granted the rationale provided even before its own existence. In the late 1920s and on to the 1940s, it still enjoyed the ministry of women, pastors and evangelists, who had come in during the early days - when their "right" to ministry was taken for granted. And, women, some of them ordained, continued all along to make strong contributions within the Movement's schools and in extra-U.S. missionary work. But with "normalcy" and the deflation of the second wave of the women's movement, not only was that which had been taken for granted lost; what had been taken for granted also lost its sustaining context.

Popular culture portrayed women in ways which would have been totally unacceptable to even the secularists among the earlier women's movements, let alone the religiously and theologically rooted. The phenomenal rise of popular radio programming and of the moving picture industry in the 1920s and 1930s, both appealing to cultural least common denominators, increasingly idealized material and physical satisfaction.

Female sexuality was caricatured in all of the mass media and became a cultural obsession. The Nazarenes avoided the cinema and generally took care with what they listened to on the radio - practices which had far more merit than we knew at the time. But, they let their avoidances become the substitutes for teaching discernment and principle. And this left them with nothing, or next to nothing to say about being male and female; and left them nearly mute where they sorely needed to discuss and to teach and to proclaim thoroughly Christian understandings of gifts and graces and callings. They simply turned to the models declared appropriate by those elements in the surrounding culture which they considered decent.

Earlier Wesleyan Holiness thought had rested its case for ordination to ministry precisely in theological reflection. The earlier holiness people made it clear that the basis for ordination to ministry was **apostolicity- that is to say; one was fit for ordination if one clearly possessed the gifts and graces of ministry presented in Scripture**, especially as they were understood to be defined and exercised in the New Testament churches. That theological idea is absolutely necessary to any appropriate exegesis of the system which those earliest

Nazarenes put in place for determining eligibility for ordination. Gender was incidental. In fact, while the language of "rights" was used, it is clear that the referent in the "right" to preach was not anything "natural" to either men or women. The "right" to preach arose out of one's being *divinely engrafted and gifted and divinely called* to preach. Ordination was a recognition and confirmation of God's work, not a "right" totally within the control of the church.

But with the deflation of the women's movement by the late 1920s, and the rise of the twin menaces of the new culturally-produced female ideal (woman as the source and object of all physical desire) and social respectability, the Nazarenes went two ways at once. On the one hand, some in their sometimes over-eager desire to be socially acceptable sentimentalized women. By the late 1930s, Nazarenes generally would not have given a moment's thought to observing Maundy Thursday or Ascension Day, but they reverently celebrated Mother's Day.

On the other hand, some, in their sometimes over-eager desire to negate the allurements of modern society and modern society's pre-occupation with sexuality, rejected the new ideal as if it really were the truth about women - an awful truth, but the truth. So we had serious mini-wars about skirt lengths and "bobbed hair," face powder and sheer hose, open-toed shoes and jewelry, and we got all sentimental about "tell[ing] Mother [we'd] be there" and "Mother's Old Bible."

There were exceptions, of course, but generally, we simply could not think of women in ways that allowed us to focus on the fact that God calls women to *ministry* and grants the gifts and graces which qualify them for ordination. The fact is, we had a great deal of difficulty focusing on the fact that it is divinely given gifts and graces which qualify *men* for ordination as well. Cultural considerations (or counter-cultural considerations) all too often entered the decision to ordain men as strongly as they entered the decisions concerning women. Many of the Nazarene district superintendents simply would not recommend unmarried men to congregations as pastors.

The second cultural factor which "helped" Nazarenes forget what they had once taken for granted (but seldom articulated) about ordaining a woman for ministry was Fundamentalism which had come into play in the Pentecostal Church of the Nazarene in the 1910s but did not really make itself felt until almost 1930. The Nazarenes agreed with the Fundamentalists

that Scripture is divine revelation and not simply a record of human reflection upon something which the reader has chosen to call "religion" or "religious experience." But with that agreement came a tendency to narrow our vision of the work of the Holy Spirit to that of agent of entire sanctification. In the late 1920s, we began to look at the Bible as a set of propositions and an arsenal of proof texts about almost anything. And the Spirit simply said, "Yes, that is true."

We lost the capacity for seeing Scripture whole, as guided by the Spirit; and we focused on pericopes, as guided by whatever need was at hand. In other words, we "proof texted." Where we found passages difficult for us to handle, such as those of Paul concerning women speaking up in church services, we finessed them one way or another and said, "Well, we don't want to proof text, do we. But we did not move back out from "proof texting" to seeing Scripture as a whole, and as the Holy Spirit's vehicle for revealing Christ and his saving way to us.

To put the matter in terms of ordained women's ministry, we could not see that the gifts and graces for ministry are not at all tied to gender, and that Paul's concerns about women speaking in church must be read through the lens of those passages speaking of those gifts and graces - not vice versa. And those gifts and graces are given to the Church, the Body of Christ, in which there is neither "male nor female," etc. So there is a "lens" which is even more basic than the gifts themselves- it is the nature of the Church itself. This would seem to imply that the Church is to remain open to recognizing these gifts in "whomever" they occur in the Church.

The third cultural factor was the rise of new models or paradigms of "leadership." Involvement in the Spanish-American War and in WWI, with the concomitant rise in the magnitude and intensity of manufacturing/industry produced a very different definition of "leader" from that which had prevailed previously. Perhaps the quickest way to say it is that up until the turn of the 19th c., the dominant view of the leader was of one who understood and articulated the people's common purpose and gave primary attention to getting the best possible production from each individual in working toward meeting the common purpose. The good leader expected that good individuals, working together as best they could, would make good government or a good company, or even a good military unit. The best leader, then, was one who could turn the energies of the greatest variety of persons to a common purpose.

In the new paradigm, the leader defines the common purpose (good government, good company, good military unit), often without consultation with those to whom he attributes it. He makes his definition ultimate and seeks to conform individuals to that purpose. This model of leadership simply had no place for women as women had come to be defined in that period. As best I can determine, the term "little woman" as a popular synonym for "wife" comes from this period.

Nazarene general leadership in the late 1920s and into the 1940s had all grown to adulthood as the new paradigms were developing. So, it is no surprise that in the late 1920s, the newer paradigm began to take hold in areas with relatively strong Nazarene populations- in the Olivet and Pasadena Zones especially. A new style of district superintendent came into being, and that new style of district superintendent tended to seek to secure and develop pastors who fit their plans. They expected more in the way of organizational skills and administrative know-how; less in the way of preaching ability and theological depth. This, in turn, led to an increase in the importance of pragmatic savvy and a diminution of theological sensitivity.

And from thence came a growing indifference to the fact that God could be calling women to ordained ministry. The pragmatic argument was that in then-current society people simply had no desire for women pastors and that leadership had no compelling reason even to encourage women to be open to God's calling to and gifting for ministry. **The original reason, the one which had been taken for granted early on and seldom articulated among Nazarenes, had been completely forgotten. It was not even applied now to *men*.**

#### IV. From the mid-1930s or so until the early 1980s

As we have said, early Nazarenes seldom stated for themselves the theological grounds of the legitimacy of female ordained ministry. They simply accepted, tacitly and implicitly, the theological formulations of others within the Wesleyan/Holiness Movement. Again, they took for granted the legitimacy of female ordained ministry. But a serious problem would develop from this taking-for-granted. The problem is this: few would think to explain or present any rationale for what was taken for granted. So, in time, as the Church of the Nazarene in the United States and Canada, responding to various cultural factors and aping various cultural mores, developed an almost all-male clergy, the diminishing presence of female clergy was hardly noticed.

With a few exceptions, the women themselves fell silent. From the late 1910s onward to the late 1950s, pastors, evangelists, missionaries, teachers and administrators frequently and fervently, and publicly, urged young persons, men and women, to heed the call of God to ministry. Abundant sermons and talks and books and articles sought to sensitize youth to give themselves to such service. But two elements in those materials are quite clear to us now that probably were not clear to their original audiences and readers. First, males produced almost all of those materials. Second, except for the call to missionary service, the appeals were almost always pitched toward young males. They re-enforced values and understandings of adventure and romance which the culture habitually identified as male, and their clinching illustrations almost invariably involved males.

Then, too, when Nazarenes looked at their phenomenal growth in the United States during the decades from the 1930s to the 1960s, and on around the world since the end of World War II, an almost all-male clergy led in that looking-an almost all-male clergy that saw all of history in that period focused on men.

What then becomes important to us is the fact that the clergy's general concurrence with the cultural mores in these matters led them to two conclusions which marginalized women who believed that they were called to ordained ministry in the Church of the Nazarene.

First, that almost all-male clergy, from the mid-1930s onward, read itself back into the period from 1894 to the 1930s - that is to say, most of the denomination's clergy, including even its women clergy, somewhere in the 1930s, forgot how deeply influential were its women clergy in tending the growth of the denomination in its first thirty-five years. And that amnesia has stuck with us until quite recently.

For the fifty years from about 1930 to about 1980, almost everyone thought that the *men* had done it all, all along. Many knew the names of the women but had little idea of the depth and breadth of their work. It seemed to be a bit of a surprise when the stories of some of the women were rehearsed that they had been disproportionately significant. But try telling the story of the Nazarenes in Texas without mentioning any ordained women. Nor can the story of Los Angeles First be told without telling about some ordained women. It would be impossible to recount the history of the denomination in Argentina or in the Caribbean without

telling of the work of ordained women. Pastors, too, the great majority of them. But, until just a decade or two ago, most everyone thought that men had done it all, all along.

Second, Nazarenes also marginalized women who believed that they were called to ordained ministry by way of the consensus criteria for measuring success. Especially after the middle 1940s and the end of World War II, enculturation came more and more to be the implicit measure of that success. From the late 1940s into the 1970s, the *Herald of Holiness* is filled with news of this congregation or that moving out of its former location in an inner city or mid-town area to a "commodious building" on a site often described as being "in a desirable part of town." This was news because it was thought to represent success.

Sociologically speaking, from the perspective of the role of women, our ideals were Donna Reed of "Father Knows Best" and June Cleaver, mother of Wally and Theodore. At NTS, from its earliest days until about 1980, faculty and headquarters wives gave concerted attention to helping students' wives (they were organized as the Parsonettes) learn how to set a proper table for dinner or for a reception, how to decorate the parsonage so that it would always be presentable should anyone of social significance drop by, how to maintain that spare bedroom for evangelists, etc. In short, the Parsonettes spent lots of time learning how to be upper middle class hostesses on poverty-line budgets. Ironically, the strongest voices among the NTS and Headquarters wives who led this campaign in enculturation were either ordained women or women who considered themselves full-time partners in the public aspects of their husbands' ministries. Homebodies or Martha Stewarts they were not.

Even our women full-time preachers obliged us by working to type. Except for a few caricatures of femininity, we prided ourselves on our women preachers: well-mannered, well-spoken, well (and modestly)-dressed. They fit quite acceptably into the man's world of Nazarene clergy from the 1930s onward. Just enough face powder, lace hankies and perfume to keep the good old boys from slapping them on the back and inviting them to a bout of swapping stories or a game of horseshoes, and just enough obvious toughness and disinterest in male preening to chase away any protective jealousy on the part of pastors' or laity's wives.

"Sensible" was the word most often used to describe them, if someone wanted to pass them a compliment. Males coveted such adjectives as "dynamic" and "go-getter." But these were risky terms to apply to a woman, especially a woman preacher, for such terms came with connotations of "pushy." And not a few women clergy became masters at playing out that stereotype of "sensible" - not because they wanted to be actors but because those were the dimensions of the role laid upon them by the nearly all-male Nazarene clergy.

Only in the 1970s, thanks in large part to the rise of *secular* feminism, did one begin to hear Mary Scott and Estelle Crutcher, Mary Latham and Mildred Wynkoop, and others preaching and teaching in their own (feminine) voices, though those particular women were by then in their senior years.

But on what grounds are we now again opening the door to ordaining women for ministry? Is it theological and spiritual? And if it is theological and spiritual, is it consistent with the Gospel grounds?

#### CONCLUSION - WHERE TO FROM HERE?

Permit me to be so bold as to suggest three problems which I believe we are already creating:

- 1) Let us look at that particular way of interpreting Scripture. Actually, it involves two ways of interpreting Scripture. On the one hand are the literalists, who look at some passages in I Corinthians and I Timothy, especially, and, on those bases are against ordaining women to ministry. On the other are the contextualists, who suggest that Paul wrote those passages to specific persons in specific circumstances. The latter usually go on then to point to passages, even in Paul, which seem to suggest that Paul's general point of view actually drew no distinction between men and women in the matter of ordained ministry. So the discussion concerning women's ordination becomes a "battle from the Bible."

In fact, not a single word in the Bible was originally addressed to some abstract audience. But the Wesleyan tradition (among others) recognizes that it is not the letter, but the Spirit which gives life to the Bible. And that means that we must keep on the alert, for the Spirit may apply those Pauline prohibitions again. It also means that the Spirit may require men to fall silent as well. Paul explicitly commands it in I Cor. 14.28, if there is no one to interpret the prophecy. "Let the man keep his revelation between himself and God alone," says Paul.

But the real point is that as Wesleyans, we do not seek proof texts, but look at Scripture as a whole and we continually seek the testimony of the Holy Spirit in our use of the Bible.

We probably would be helped if we were to go back and see just how it was that Phoebe Palmer, Catherine Booth, and others, male and female, used Scripture, and appealed to the work of the Spirit, to make the argument for ordained women's ministry. In fact, while they made a special plea for woman's ordination, they did not make a plea for the uniqueness of women's ordination. Their case for the ordination of women serves also as a theological delineation of ordination, period.

2) The second path which some seem to be taking, in which I believe there is considerable peril, is putting the question of women's ministry and ordination in terms of "rights."

Ordination to ministry is no one's "right." And the church must remove from its language and its ritual, formal and informal, the language of "rights" as it speaks of ordination. Ordination is a matter of discernment- discernment of a call to preach and discernment of gifts and graces. The church must take every precaution to see to it that this discernment is rooted and grounded in the work of the Trinity alone, so here it must hew closely to Scripture. So, while we know that cultural factors will enter into our discernment of a call to preach and a discernment of gifts and graces, we may work in confidence that the Holy Trinity is also at work in the process.

And, after all, the credential for ordination is the same for all: male and female, bond and free, Jew and Gentile. It is a positive response to a divine call and the presence of divinely granted gifts and graces.

3) The word "empowerment" could be used with a biblical referent, of course. But its usual use in the current concern for women's ordained ministry does not have a biblical referent. It has either a personal referent, such as a mentor or a mentoring or sponsoring group; or it has an ecclesiastical meaning. But neither of these is biblical, or at least they have no essential relationship to a biblical understanding of being set apart for ministry. As used, the term comes from the social sciences and has to do with one person or more enabling or credentialing another person to perform certain tasks.

*If you have a large class, break into groups of 3-4 and have them discuss these questions, then have one person record their thoughts and report to the whole class.*

Far better, it seems to me, would be conversation among us – to the point that we reach some sort of biblically-theologically sound consensus – about discernment. “Discernment of spirits” is a sound biblical concept. Such discernment itself is wholly dependent upon the work of the Holy Spirit; and, biblically, that work may be carried on in an individual or in a group of individuals. What this means is that we get back to the biblical idea of ordination as recognition by the Church, the Body of Christ to whom the Spirit gives life, that someone has been specially called to proclaim the Gospel and has been granted the gifts and graces necessary to fulfill that calling. Ecclesiastical ordination should involve a process of discernment and a declaration of recognition of God’s gifts, including the authority to preach the Word and to administer the sacraments.

In suggesting that we avoid the language of “empowerment,” I am not at all objecting to mentoring processes and sponsoring activities. The ministry is, after all, according to Scripture, accountable one to another and to the body of Christ at large. I am simply suggesting that in developing a strong conscience regarding ordination of both men and women we do what we can to keep priorities clear and straight.

Our task, then, is to work diligently, grace-fully, to reconscientize and commit ourselves and our peers to what is basic in ministry and in ordination, and that is the biblical-theological point of apostolicity – that God specially calls and has called some; called them to the proclamation of the Good News of full salvation; and, according to Scripture and its fulfillment in the life of the church by the Spirit, has clearly testified that this call has come to male and female, Jew and Gentile, bond and free.

### **Note**

1 Question has rightly arisen as to whether Ms Brown was actually ordained or simply installed as a pastor. She certainly remembered it as an ordination. But the issue is confused by the fact that on the United States’ frontier, opposition to the ordinary judicatories and pyramidal structures of most denominations was quite common, and people often simply took matters into their own hands. Cf. Luther Lee, *Woman’s Right to Preach the Gospel. A Sermon At the Ordination of Rev. Miss Antoinette L. Brown, at South Butler, Wayne*

*County, N. Y., Sep. 15, 1853* (Syracuse: The author, 1853). It should be noted that the title of the book, published by Lee himself in the very year in which he preached the sermon, indicates that Lee himself believed that he had preached at an ordination.

**Questions for Reflection:**

- 1) Is a well-articulated reason for why the Church of the Nazarene ordains women necessary? Why or why not?
- 2) Do you see cultural influences on the church today which tend to negate our theology? If so, what are they? If not, why not?
- 3) Do you agree that apostolicity should be the only basis for ordination? Why or why not?

## Lecture: Hermeneutical Questions

(15 minutes)

Resource 2- 2

We agree with Dr. Bassett that apostolicity and the gifting for ministry by the Holy Spirit is the basis for recognition by the Church of God's selection of a person for ordination ministry. However, we also believe that the Bible does not contradict the gifting of women for ordination ministry when understood within its social and literary contexts. Thus it is important to review a Wesleyan way of exegeting the Scriptures.

**BIBLE STUDY WITH THE FIVE "W's": Learning to Ask the Right Questions (C. Jeanne Serrão, Ph.D.)**

### **BIBLE STUDY AND EXEGESIS**

Proper Bible Study does "exegesis" which means to "read out" of the text the meaning of the scripture. Most times the meaning of the Bible passage is simple to understand, but sometimes we can read a verse "out of context" because we do not understand or take into consideration the historical and cultural setting of the passage.

There are Five Hermeneutical Questions we can ask to establish the CONTEXT of a Bible Passage:

#### **I. WHO?**

We need to identify both the person(s) speaking and the listener(s). If these are different from the author and the reader(s), then these must also be identified. Try to answer the question first from your text and secondarily from commentaries: "Who are they and how can they be described?"

A. The Speaker/Author's point of view:

1) Read the chosen text and identify who is talking. It may be a "narrator" and thus the only "Speaker/Author" is the Author. There may be one or several people speaking, if so describe each one. Most times clues about the Author are found in the first few verses of the book. Rarely are there any clear descriptions of the Speakers or the Author. So look "between the lines" for any clues.

2) We can learn more about the Speaker and Author by looking at their choice and arrangement of words, treatment of the subject matter, use of

evidence, the argumentation and the control of emotion to see how the author/speaker tries to persuade his/her audience to believe something or believe it more profoundly.

B. The Listener/Reader's point of view  
The type of audience affects the arguments, tone of voice and word choices which the speaker chooses to use. Different audiences can account for differences in style by the same author/speaker. Look for clues in the text which will tell you what kind of audience the speakers or author is talking to.

C. Cultural considerations  
What are the general customs, authority structures, relationships (marriage, friendship, employment) and commerce (agricultural/urban) in the first century world? This background with actual descriptions of these issues which we have read in the text will give us a clearer picture of everyday life and the people we are trying to understand.

## **II. WHERE?**

What is the geographical setting of the text?

A. Look for clues in the sections right before and after your text for the geographical setting. Is a town or city name mentioned? Are there animals or crops talked about? Try to answer the question, "How does this geographical setting affect how the people would have heard/read your text?"

B. Read the introductory sections to your specific book in commentaries and New Testament introductions and find out if the author or his audience would have been familiar with the geography of your text. How would they have understood the text from their geographical perspective?

## **III. WHEN?**

Here we are not so much after a date as we are concerned about the historical setting and what events came before and after the text.

A. Look for clues in the sections right before and after your text for the historical setting. Is a political or civil event mentioned? Is a ruler mentioned? Try to answer the question, "How does this historical setting affect how the people would have heard/read your text?"

B. Read the introductory sections to your specific book in commentaries and New Testament introductions and find out if the author or the audience would have been familiar with the history of your text. How would they have understood the text from their historical perspective?

**IV. WHAT?**

"What does the text say?"

A. Make a simple outline of the text you are studying. Identify the major events or points of teaching and then list a couple of minor points which help to describe the event or point of teaching.

B. Identify the form and style of writing/speaking: Is it a story? a warning? a lecture? a sermon? a poem? a hymn?, etc. Identify what the author/speaker is trying to do. Consult a commentary for a description of the form or style of writing/speaking.

C. Pick out 2-3 key words in your text and look them up in a Bible Dictionary. Check commentaries for ideas on key words as well as for studies on those words. How does the study of these words help you to understand what the author/speaker is trying to say?

D. Paraphrase the text in your own words, taking care to keep the contexts in mind and the meanings of the key words.

**V. WHY?**

A. Why did the speaker say what he/she did?

B. Why was this section included in the book?

C. Why is it important for us today?

D. What is the central point of the passage and why is it important in each of the 3 situations above?

**FOLLOW THESE PRINCIPLES:**

1. Always interpret a verse in agreement with its context. That is, the meaning of the part must be consistent with the whole.

2. Interpret a text in the light of its probable meaning for the persons to whom it was written.

- When interpreting a passage, consider the customs and events when it was written.

4. Interpret a passage in the light of all other Scripture.

- Do not interpret a passage in such a way as to make it deny what we know to be true of God from other Scripture
5. Interpret a passage according to the best use of the original language. This includes using the earliest text available, the most literal translations (unless contradiction or absurdity), and the understanding of literary devices and idioms.
  6. If there is a principle set forth in the passage, do not interpret or apply the passage in such a manner as to deny or reverse the principle.
    - Interpret social teaching in line with doctrinal teaching in the text.
  7. Interpret the unknown in accordance with the known.
    - Do not use an obscure passage to disprove one with clear and obvious meaning.
  8. Interpret commandments as covered promises. Whatever God commands us to do, God will enable us to do it.

**Adapted from:** Bernard Ramm, *Protestant Biblical Interpretation*; Patricia Gundry, *Woman Be Free*; Scott Jones, "The Rule of Scripture," in *Wesley and the Quadrilateral: Renewing the Conversation* and Diane Leclerc, *Discovering Christian Holiness*

**Questions for Reflection:**

- 1) Think about a conversation you have had lately with someone quite different from yourself. How did the age, gender or cultural context of the person you were talking to affect how you communicated with him or her?
- 2) Which of the hermeneutical principles do you find most significant?

*If you have a large class, divide up into groups of 3-4 and have them discuss the reflection questions. Then have one person record their thoughts and report to the whole class.*

## *Lesson Close*

(5 minutes)

Read and discuss the following review questions:

### **Review**

- 1) What hermeneutical principles does Dr. Bassett endorse for understanding women's ordination?
- 2) What are the 5 main questions to ask in interpreting a scripture passage?
- 3) Name two principles important to interpretation.

### **Assign Homework**

#### **Required Reading and Questions to Answer:**

Read Genesis 1 – 3 in at least 3 different translations and answer the following questions:

- 1) How many "creation stories" do you find in these chapters?
- 2) What are the differences between the creation stories and how do you account for those differences?





## Lesson 3

# Creation and Fall

## Lesson Overview

### Schedule

Start Time	Task or Topic	Learning Activity	Materials Needed
0:00	Introduction	Accountability and Objectives	Student Guide
0:10	Creation	Lecture/Group Discover	
0:20	Fall	Lecture/Group Discussion	
0:30	Women in Ministry in the Old Testament	Lecture	
:50	Lesson Close	Review, Assign Homework	

## Lesson Introduction:

(10 minutes)

### Accountability

*In pairs, have the learners share and critique each other's homework assignments. As time permits, allow one to share the best highlights from their discussions. Collect homework for evaluation. All homework should be evaluated with constructive comments to help the learner with his or her growth.*

### Homework

From your reading of Genesis 1-3 how did you answer the following questions?

- 1) How many "creation stories" do you find in these chapters?
- 2) What are the differences between the creation stories and how do you account for those differences?

## Orientation

*Review the syllabus in the Student Guide.*

*Answer any questions students may have from the previous session or about the syllabus or assignments.*

*Make sure the focus is clear.*

*Ask for insights and highlights from the required reading and video.*

**The Focus:** To discover what the Bible says about creation and fall, human identity and the purpose of creation. Learning to read the story of the fall in its own literary and cultural context and seeing how God used women leaders in spite of the patriarchal culture they found themselves in.

## Learner Objectives

*Instruct students to locate objectives in the Student Guide.*

*State the objectives for the learners.*

Learner Objectives:

- 1) To understand how the Bible describes the reason God created human beings and specifically the woman.
- 2) To understand that the Fall was the result of both the male and the female disregarding God's instructions.
- 3) To understand the context and reasons for women leaders in the Old Testament.

## Lecture & Group Discovery: Creation

(10 minutes)

Adapted from an article and presentation by Dr. Jeanne Serrao and Dr. Kent Brower.

Resource 3-1

*If you have a large group, you may want to divide into groups of 4 with two from each Discovery group.*

In Genesis, God creates and the entire created order, inanimate and animate, is pronounced good. Finally, God creates humankind ('*adam*'), [with gender differentiation as male ('*ish*') and female ('*ishshah*')], in the image and likeness of God and charges them both with responsibility for God's creation (Genesis 1:26-28, 5:1-2). God declares that everything is *very good* (Genesis 1:31).

### Group Discovery:

Group One: Read Genesis 1 and outline the order of creation.

Group Two: Read Genesis 2 and outline the order of creation.

Discussion: How are they similar—how are they different? Why would two versions of creation be preserved?

**Lecture:**

His creation is working in peace and harmony, just the way God intended. The human creatures reflect the being and life of their triune Creator--a bond of love.

The second chapter of Genesis gives a stunningly beautiful picture of the way things work when everything in the garden is according to God's creative purposes. Relationships are harmonious and the garden is fruitful.

The animals are in a close relationship with the man who is fashioned by God from the same dust. And the companionship of the man and the woman--the one-fleshness--is symbolized by the creation of woman from the rib of man (Genesis 2:21-24). The woman is the 'ezer (helper) of the man.

"Helper" when referring to a person in the Old Testament always refers to God, except for the reference here and one reference to David. It is not understood as an expression of submission. Rather she is an equal partner who serves God *with* the man.

**Video Resource: [Joseph Coleson](#) on translation of "Ezer Cenegdo: A Power Like Him, Facing Him as Equal"**

(10 minutes)

*Adapted from an unpublished paper by Dr. Alex Varughese, Professor of Biblical Literature at Mount Vernon Nazarene University.*

Resource 3- 2

**Lecture: Fall****Exegesis of Genesis 3:16**

When we place the text within its most immediate and larger literary and theological context, it becomes clear that this statement speaks about the consequences of humankind's sin against God.

We do not find here God's will or divinely determined destiny, rather a statement that speaks about the outcome of human sin. God's will for humankind's existence is clearly stated in Genesis chapters 1, and 2. He created humankind as male and female, as a human society as well as two distinct genders with equality before God and responsibility to God as God's image to exercise dominion over God's creation.

When we take this larger context of the story of humanity, we find in Genesis 3:16 a backward look and a forward look – backward look in the sense that here we are reminded of the original condition of

innocence and holiness, equality and mutuality of relationship and responsibility. The text also takes a forward look – the human predicament under the influence of sin – the relationship now characterized by disrupted relationship, pain and suffering at childbirth, exploitation and domination of one gender by the other and strange yet a natural longing for each other.

This text has three parts: (1) the divine speech about the painful experience of childbirth; (2) word about the woman's longing for the man, and (3) a word about the man's domination of the woman.

The first word is again a word of punishment, neither a curse nor an expression of the divine will. The text makes clear that what we have here are the consequences of sin. However, what is important here is that though humankind now lives under the influence of the power of sin, they will fulfill the divine mandate, "be fruitful and fill the earth." They will experience the divine blessing through the process of procreation. Life will come; creation will continue – that's amazing grace! Sin cannot stop God's plans and purposes. However, along with the blessing of procreation also comes the agony and pain of childbirth. This blessed moment will also be an intensely painful experience for the woman – that's the paradoxical side of the divine blessing of procreation. Sin spoiled the fullness of the joy that God intended for the woman to experience during childbirth. This is similar to the word to the man about his task and the difficulty of fulfilling his task.

The third part, "he shall rule over you" is also a statement that deals with the consequence of sin (I will come back to the second part in a moment). Sin has not only brought an end to the harmonious relationship between the man and the woman, it has also reversed the order of creation. The relationship of mutuality and equality before God is broken. Humankind no longer listens to God rather to an inferior creature. Humankind is no longer God's image over God's creation. Care and concern for each other is no longer the way of life. The ideals of shared responsibility and authority are no longer the agenda that guides human existence. The man and the woman have chosen for themselves a world in which one gender will exploit and manipulate the other gender. The text simply and clearly projects the reality of human existence brought upon by the power of sin. This will be the way of life for the man and the woman as long as they live under the power of sin.

But there is good news. There is grace. That

good news, the pronouncement of grace, I find in the second part of the text – “your desire shall be for your husband.” In the midst of this predicament of human sin and the loss of identity as God’s image, sexual intimacy and sexual desire will continue and the man and the woman will continue to exist as “one flesh.” God does not take away from his sinful creatures, the capacity to belong to each other in sexual union and intimacy. There will be pain, there will be agony, there will be subjugation, and domination – but there will also be the longing and desire for each other; the human bond of “bone of my bones and flesh of flesh” is not broken.

Humankind under the power of sin will continue in this paradoxical existence of love and hate, union and brokenness, longing for each other and subjugation, divine judgment and divine grace. This is parallel to the expressions of grace in 3:15; 3:20; 3:21. The God who judges is also the God who brings healing and grace to the sinful and broken humanity.

Finally, the text does not establish a theological principle that would permit us to justify domination and subjugation at any level of our human existence. Rather the text clearly reminds us that such domination or subjugation whether in the church or outside the church is a clear sign of the prevailing power of sin.

Equality of gender and mutuality of responsibility and relationship to God and to others are the key biblical principles that we need to take into account when we consider the role of men and women in ministry. If we are faithful to the biblical principles, then we will recognize ministry at all levels (ordained and non-ordained) as the responsibility and privilege of all of God’s people – both male and female.

### **Lecture: Women in Ministry in the Old Testament**

(20 minutes)

Resource 3-3

From an unpublished paper by Dr. Alex Varughese.

Ministry is our service that we render to God or service that we render to others in the name of God. As creatures created by God, we are responding to God’s goodness and graciousness toward us with our work done for him and on behalf of him – this is what ministry is all about.

A key biblical principle to keep in mind when we think about ministry is that it is our special place in God’s creation as God’s image that invites and

challenges us to do the task of ministry.

Ministry is thus fulfilling our task, our function, and responsibility as God's image.

In the context of creation, "image" and "likeness" relate to the divine purpose for humankind (Gen.1:26: "let them rule over the fish of the sea and the birds of the air, over the livestock, over all the earth, and over all the creatures that move along the ground").

This refers to humankind's function, place, and responsibility as God's appointed ruler over creation. Humankind reflects God's image and "the Godness of God" by being a faithful, loving, caring ruler of God's creation.

The authority God grants ("dominion" in NRSV) to humankind is not an arbitrary and despotic power to exploit and destroy, but the power to care for and nurture, as a shepherd cares for and nurtures his flock.

In that sense, the concept of the "image of God" conveys the truth that humans are endowed with the capacity to love and care for God's creation in an unselfish manner. In the larger context of biblical theology, this capacity to love includes first and foremost the capacity to love God with one's whole heart, soul, and strength (Deut. 6:4).

The New Testament portrays Jesus as the "image" of the invisible God (Col. 1:15), who for the sake of the salvation of the world took the "very nature of a servant" and "became obedient to death, even death on a cross" (Phil. 2:6-11). Loving God with unreserved obedience and loving others in an unselfish manner are thus essential marks of being the "image of God."

The image of God concept is thus essentially linked to service and servanthood. Jesus is our model servant – he is the true image of the invisible God.

I equate the concept of the image of God thus with our servanthood – our service to God. This is ministry in the true biblical sense.

We are created for this purpose. This function or task is not confined to one gender of the human society. Genesis chapter 1 makes it very clear that both male and female constitute the "image of God (1:26-28)." In Genesis, image of God is both

communal and individual.

Humankind as a society, a community created by God reflects the Godness of God in the world that he created. In the same way, each individual member of the human society – male and female – reflects the Godness of God in the world.

The creation account in Genesis 1 places both male and female at the same level of equality before the creator. The biblical view of male and female as the image of God clearly rejects any notion of the superiority of one gender over the other.

This fundamental principle should guide our understanding of who we are and what we are called to do by our creator.

We also need to remember that any hierarchy that we find in the Bible is cultural and largely the perversity of human sinful nature.

### **Let us now look at the OT patterns of ministry.**

There are three religious orders in the OT. I use the term religious order rather loosely here. These three groups of people provided religious and spiritual leadership to the people of Israel.

The first one is that of **the priest**. On the one hand, the whole nation Israel is given a priestly privilege at Mount Sinai. They are called a kingdom of priests.

But within this kingdom of priests, we find a particular tribe being chosen by God as a priestly tribe and a particular house within this tribe to carry out the tasks associated with the tabernacle or the Temple. Members of the house of Aaron were installed into this office through a special ritual of ordination. The rules and regulations of this priestly ordination is the subject of Leviticus chapters 8-19.

The most important religious authority in Israel was *the Torah/law/instruction/* teaching and the priest or the *kohen* was the preserver/custodian and interpreter of the *torah*.

The center of the activity of the *kohen* was at first at places like Shiloh, Bethel, Gilgal, and later the Jerusalem temple. They were not only the keepers of *the torah* but also the officiants at the temple rituals.

In addition to the temple work, the priests were also medical authorities, judges in civil and criminal cases, and authorities over religious matters.

They also preserved the stories of creation, the garden of Eden, the Flood, the patriarchal stories, the stories of the Egyptian bondage, the exodus, the Sinai, and the wilderness wanderings.

All of the legal manuals/collections of laws (*torot*) in Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, and Deuteronomy come from the priest (among them are the Covenant Code in Exodus 21-23 and the Holiness code in Leviticus 17-26).

The authority of the priest was derived from the divine revelation to Moses, who appointed his brother Aaron and ordained Aaron and his sons into the priesthood.

Since the Temple was the primary location of their ministry, when the temple was destroyed by the Babylonians in 587 BC, their temple ministry came to an end. However, they resumed their writing activities in the exile.

Most likely during the Babylonian exile, the priests collected and put together all the past traditions and legal codes that came from the ancient past and thus the Torah was given the present shape that we have in the Pentateuch.

When the temple was rebuilt by the Jews who returned to Judah, they resumed their ministry again.

This temple was destroyed again by the Romans in AD 70 which was not rebuilt again; thus the priestly ministry ended in AD 70.

Letter to the Hebrews describes the ministry of Aaron and the Levitical priesthood as temporary, and superseded by the priesthood of Jesus Christ, who was not only the High Priest, but the sacrifice itself.

**Now, the prophets** – a less formal religious leaders whose began their history as informal religious leaders – not associated with the temple; almost itinerant preacher type individual who performed miracles and gave the divine word to those who came to “inquire” of him the Word of the Lord.

We find such types in Samuel, Elijah, Elisha and a number of lesser known individuals. These men are often called “seer” or “visionary” or “man of God” and vision was the key source of their preaching/speaking of the divine word.

The authority of the prophet was in his conviction that he was personally called and commissioned by God to speak his word.

We find this movement later guided by people such as Amos, Hosea, Isaiah, Micah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel etc. who came to be known as *nabi* (one who speaks for God).

The prophets spoke the word – the word of judgment against Israel’s covenant breaking. In that sense they were also preachers of the torah – one of their main goal in preaching was to bring Israel back to the great historical traditions – particularly to the Sinai covenant and the giving of the torah at Sinai.

Unfortunately, their voice was often not heard, and they lived their lives as unpopular individuals, often ostracized from the society. Only after their words were fulfilled (the great catastrophe of 722 and 587 BC), they were vindicated and given the honored place they deserved in Israel. The post-exilic Judaism also found fulfillment of the prophetic words that gave them hope for the future and their restoration from the exile.

**Now the third group: the wise (*hakam*)** also known as the elder (*zaken*). This group contributed to Israel’s religious leadership through their wisdom (*hokmah*).

Wisdom – *hokmah* – realistic approach to the problems of life, including all the practical skills and technical arts.

Examples of *hakam* in the OT: Bezalel the skilled craftsman who built the Tabernacle, Weavers, goldsmiths, midwives, women skilled in lamentation, magicians and soothsayers, musicians and singers.

In addition to this embodiment of wisdom in art, architecture, and crafts, we also find wisdom in the OT as a literary movement that produced what we call wisdom writings. The Books of Job, Proverbs, and Ecclesiastes are thus products of this wisdom movement.

In Israel, a mother was the most important wisdom teacher. She imparted wisdom to her children and directed them in the way of the Lord.

In 2 Samuel 14 we find a wise woman from Tekoa, through a skillful act, challenging king David to bring home his son Absalom who was banished from Jerusalem.

In the Book of Proverbs, wisdom is personified as a woman, calling the simple minded and the unwise

to seek wisdom from her.

### **Where do women belong in this wide spectrum of ministry and religious leadership in ancient Israel?**

Certainly, women were excluded from the priesthood. However, we find them playing a significant role in other areas of religious leadership.

The role of women as leaders goes back to the earliest history of Israel, which begins in the Book of Exodus with the story of Israel's bondage in Egypt.

There are four instances where we find women providing leadership at crucial times in this book:

1. Shiprah and Puah – two women midwives – were the first to lead a civil disobedience against the oppressive demands of Pharaoh. They brought to the Hebrew people a religious and moral consciousness in the midst of the royal decrees of Pharaoh (Exod. 1:15).
2. A woman who defied the royal decree and decided to save her son's life (Exod. 2:1 ff), and her daughter who skillfully schemed a plan to reunite the infant with his mother as his nurse.
3. Zipporah, the wife of Moses who took a quick action to save the life of her husband who was about to be killed by God. Here Moses was on the way to Egypt to be a leader, but he was not obedient to the requirement of circumcision. He failed to circumcise his son. When the attack came, Zipporah circumcises her son and thus saves Moses' life (Exod. 4:24-26).
4. Miriam, called a prophet, led Israel in their victory celebration and song of praise to God/ worship after crossing the Sea of Reeds (Exod. 15:20-21). She is given the title prophet because of her ability to elicit from people their devotion to God. In Micah 6:4, Miriam is listed among the three leaders that God sent out before Israel.

In the Book of Judges, Deborah is a prophet as well as a judge. She is one of 14 charismatic judges who ruled Israel during the first 200 years of their history in the promised land. She was a brilliant military

strategist who led Israel to victory in their battle against Jabin the King of Canaan, and Sisera his commander. The victory of song of Deborah, a hymn of praise to God, is most likely one of the oldest pieces of writing in the OT.

During king Josiah's reign over Judah in the seventh century, when the law of the LORD was discovered in the Temple, the palace officials called Huldah the prophet to give advice to the king and a word from the Lord. It is interesting that during that time we know of at least two other prominent prophets – Jeremiah and Zephaniah – in the land. Wonder why the palace officials did not call these prophets for a prophetic word! (2 Kings 22:14-20).

Isaiah the prophet refers to his wife as a "prophetess" though we do not have any spoken word from her preserved in the book.

Nehemiah 6:18 mentions a woman prophet by name Noadiah who stood in opposition to the work of Nehemiah.

Perhaps the most significant statement about women being part of those who will speak on behalf of God is the prophecy of Joel 2:28. Your sons and daughters shall prophesy is the promise of God to his people, a promise realized through the coming of the Holy Spirit on the Day of Pentecost.

### **What is our conclusion?**

Except in the case of the temple centered priestly ministry, which was confined to one particular family, both men and women enjoyed the privilege of ministry – service to God and service of others on behalf of God – in ancient Israel.

Prophecy or speaking on behalf of God is a significant part of ministry. Women were part of this ministry and are promised by the Spirit a place equal to that of their male counterparts, according to the words of Joel.

Prophecy or speaking on behalf of God is what takes place through the preaching ministry.

In the last days, I will pour out my Spirit upon all flesh, says the LORD

Your sons and your daughters shall prophesy...

Even on the male and female slaves I will pour out my Spirit.

May the Spirit of God empower you to boldly proclaim the word of God and be his prophets in these last days!

## **Lesson Close**

(10 minutes)

Review by answering the following questions, first in pairs and then to the whole group as time permits:

## **Review**

- 1) What is the significance of the two reports of creation for the understanding of the partnership between men and women?
- 2) Do you agree that the Biblical account of the fall “clearly reminds us that such domination or subjugation whether in the church or outside the church is a clear sign of the prevailing power of sin”? Why or why not?
- 3) Do you think Dr. Varughese’s conclusion on the role of women in Ancient Israel’s religion would bar women from the senior pastorate role today? Why or why not?

## **Assign Homework**

Read the following passages of Scripture. Consult commentaries if available to you:

- Patriarchal social and cultural norms of Israel: Leviticus 10:8-11; 15:19-30; Numbers 27:1-11; 30:3-16; 36:1-13; Isaiah 3, specifically verse 3; Isaiah 49, specifically verse 13; Isaiah 66, specifically verse 13; Haggai 2:12-14.
- Women in leadership:
  - Miriam: Exodus 12:1-16; 15:19-21
  - Deborah: Judges 4 and 5, specifically verses 4:4-7
  - False prophets: Ezekiel 13:17-24
  - Huldah: 2 Kings 22:13-20; 2 Chronicles 32:22-28
  - The Wise Woman of Abel: 2 Samuel 20:15-22
  - Esther: especially chapters 2, 4-5, 7-8, 10
- The eschatological trajectory of women’s status for leadership: Numbers 11:29; Joel 2:28-29; and Acts 2:17-18
- If time allows: Exodus 12:6; 21:10; 23:25-26; 38:3; Numbers 5:11-31; 6:1-21; Deuteronomy 21:15-17; 24:1-4; 1 Samuel 1:1-2:10; Job 24:21; Psalm 68, especially verse 11; Psalm 113:9; Proverbs 31, specifically verse 23 and 27; Isaiah 8:1-4.
- Write out possible questions or ideas that come to mind as you read. Be prepared to participate in discussion.





## Lesson 4

# Women in the Old Testament

## Lesson Overview

### Schedule

Start Time	Task or Topic	Learning Activity	Materials Needed
0:00	Introduction	Accountability and Orientation	Student Guide
0:10	Class Activity	Create List	
0:20	Lecture	Social and cultural Background Biblical Survey	
:50	Application Group Work	Comparison and Contrast	
1:10	Self-Assessment/Individual Work	Writing Exercise	
1:25	Lesson Close	Review, Assign Homework	

## Lesson Introduction:

(10 minutes)

### Accountability

In pairs, have the learners share and critique each other's homework assignments. Collect homework for evaluation. All homework should be evaluated with constructive comments to help the learner with his or her growth. Completion is based on achieving competence in the abilities as stated in the Outcomes, attendance, and completion of all homework assignments.

Read the following passages of Scripture. Consult commentaries if available to you:

- Patriarchal social and cultural norms of Israel: Leviticus 10:8-11; 15:19-30; Numbers 27:1-11; 30:3-16; 36:1-13; Isaiah 3, specifically verse 3; Isaiah 49, specifically verse 13; Isaiah 66, specifically verse 13; Haggai 2:12-14.
- Women in leadership:
  - Miriam: Exodus 12:1-16; 15:19-21
  - Deborah: Judges 4 and 5, specifically verses 4:4-7
  - False prophets: Ezekiel 13:17-24
  - Huldah: 2 Kings 22:13-20; 2 Chronicles 32:22-28
  - The Wise Woman of Abel: 2 Samuel 20:15-22
  - Esther: especially chapters 2, 4-5, 7-8, 10

- The eschatological trajectory of women's status for leadership: Numbers 11:29; Joel 2:28-29; and Acts 2:17-18
- If time allows: Exodus 12:6; 21:10; 23:25-26; 38:3; Numbers 5:11-31; 6:1-21; Deuteronomy 21:15-17; 24:1-4; 1 Samuel 1:1-2:10; Job 24;21; Psalm 68, especially verse 11; Psalm 113:9; Proverbs 31, specifically verse 23 and 27; Isaiah 8:1-4.

Write out possible questions or ideas that come to mind as you read. Be prepared to participate in discussion.

## Orientation

Before class, write the Key Thought on a poster, overhead, or board.

- Key Thought: A faithful understanding of women and leadership in the church begins with careful consideration of Old Testament tensions.
- Church members and pastoral leaders possess strong opinions about women and leadership in the church of today. Some may assume that the Old Testament record does not shed much light upon issues pertaining to women, leadership, and the church. Perhaps surprisingly, the Old Testament can and does inform this discussion.
- It merits our attention, although it does not propose a systematic theological model for consideration. Instead, the Old Testament record of women and leadership lies nested within the greater social and cultural contexts of the patriarchal Ancient Near East, and the greater theological context of salvation history. For the sake of Israel and the whole world, God decisively acts to bring salvation through diverse and sovereign means--through the leadership of both men and women.
- As we carefully consider the biblical record, all of us must resist the temptation to impose our own cultural convictions and biases upon Scripture, selectively assigning importance only to those texts that seem to lend support for our own perspectives.

## Learner Objectives

*Instruct students to locate objectives in the Student Guide.*

*State the objectives for the learners.*

### Learner Objectives:

- Learners will recognize and appreciate the contextual circumstances that surround the issue of women and leadership in the Old Testament.
- Learners will assess their own convictions concerning women and leadership in the church today, in light of Old Testament contextual circumstances.
- Learners will establish a biblical foundation upon which to explore the New Testament's treatment of women and leadership in the church

### Class Activity

(10 minutes)

Adult learners perform best when teachers solicit their prior knowledge and build upon the expertise that adult learners already possess.

**Class Activity (10 minutes):** As the lesson begins, ask the learners to create a summary list of the Old Testament's teachings about women in leadership. For this activity, it is not important that they give "right answers" or to avoid "wrong answers". Instead, they simply need to create a list that reflects their own initial understanding. As the lesson unfolds, learners should keep track of the teachings that they already accurately understood, those that they needed to clarify or correct, and the teachings about which they were unaware.

## Lecture: Social and Cultural Background and Biblical Survey

(30 minutes)

During this lecture, supplement with additional research where appropriate.

Resource 4-1: Lecture Outline

### Social and Cultural Background

- **In order to assess the proper significance and meaning of female leaders in the Old Testament, it is first necessary to assess the social and cultural background of the Ancient Near East.**
  - **The social and cultural background of the Ancient Near East is patriarchal.** Throughout this lesson, the term "patriarchal" connotes an ancient system of political authority and leadership, not a modern attitude of sexist discrimination against an allegedly inferior class. Put another way, patriarchy divides up spheres of authority for each gender, assigning roles

for survival that entail both privilege and responsibility to the other gender. For example, Matthews and Benjamin (1993) argue that all patriarchal societies share two characteristics: "They are all 'patrilocal,' which means that a woman lives in the household of her husband. And they are all 'patrilinear,' which means that the heir of the household must be a natural or adopted son of the father" (p. 23). Matthews and Benjamin also argue that "The status of women in early Israel may be no model for the reconstruction of contemporary society on more inclusive principles, but neither is it a unilateral endorsement for the subordination of women. And the world of the Bible may not be feminist, but neither is it completely male oriented. It may not be liberated, but it is liberating" (p. 22-23). In particular, Matthews and Benjamin note that women in the Old Testament:

- Enjoyed a status, power, and authority that differed from males, but was not necessarily inferior (p. 24).
- Managed the resources and ordered the life of the home (p. 25-26).
- Taught the children, and thus taught the society (p. 27-29).
- Mediated conflicts and brokered out-of-court settlements between household members (p. 29).

To summarize, Matthews and Benjamin argue that Old Testament patriarchy "was not based on the subordination and exploitation of women, but rather on the efforts of all the men and women in its household to survive" (p. 23).

- **The social and cultural background of the Ancient Near East--and of the Old Testament--reflects a patriarchal norm that is widespread and unquestioned. Today, however, we do question the proper application of this norm within contemporary society and culture.** To this

point, Reese (2005) writes, "While the biblical text contains a trajectory that understands humanity as male and female co-rulers who participate equally in the purposes of God, this vision is sometimes obscured by difficult texts in the canon. A good portion of our contemporary difficulty is related to the patriarchal nature of the ancient culture to which Scripture was originally addressed. In a good many places the ancient culture is not called into question. . . . Are these instructions for one time period and culture, or the norm for all cultures and times?" (p. 478). For example, when Isaiah associates the social and cultural leadership of women with shame and ridicule (3:12), what is a modern reader to make of that? In this chapter, does Isaiah intend to demean all women? This seems unlikely. Instead, it seems more likely that Isaiah uses cultural imagery to describe a world of disordered norms that stands against Yahweh.

- **In part, ancient Israel positioned its social and cultural norms against those of goddess worshipping cultures.** For example, Ishtar functioned as the most important goddess of the Babylonians. She was a goddess of sexual love and fertility. The ancient Assyrians also worshiped her as a goddess of war. The Babylonian and Assyrian understandings of Ishtar meet at this point-- Ishtar was a goddess of passion (Horsnell 1988, pp. 85-98). In ancient Canaanite culture, fertility goddesses such as Asherah, Ashtoreth and Anath--likely derivations of Ishtar--served as consorts to fertility gods such as Baal. Worship of Asherah, Ashtoreth and Anath often involved temple prostitution. The Lord called upon the Israelites to eradicate idolatrous practices such as these in their midst (Sayce and Jung 1979, pp. 319-320; see also Matthews and Benjamin 1993, pp. 29-30).
- **Ancient Israel understood God to reflect both male and female characteristics, although Israel's language referred to God in male terms.** The prior lesson noted that

both maleness and femaleness fully reflect the image of God (Genesis 1:26). Nevertheless, the language of Israel consistently referred to God as "He", thus positioning itself against goddess-worshipping cultures. Nevertheless, Israel's understanding of God was broader and more complex. In Isaiah's prophecy, for example, God speaks these words: "As a mother comforts her child, so will I comfort you; and you will be comforted over Jerusalem" (66:13). "Can a mother forget the baby at her breast and have no compassion on the child she has borne? Though she may forget, I will not forget you" (49:15)! In her assessment of ancient Israel's metaphorical "God-talk", Sumner declares, "it's unbiblical to pray 'Dear Mother' to God. But it's acceptable to pray, 'Thank you, God, for mothering me'" (p. 119). Sumner concludes, "Biblically we can say that God is more motherly than a nursing mother. . . . But with that, we insist that he is not to be confused with a female mother goddess physically giving birth to the world. . . . In fact, everywhere in Scripture that God is named, his name is rendered in masculine form. But again, that doesn't mean that God is masculine. It means, rather, that the metaphorical names for God are masculine" (p. 122). Furthermore, the Hebrew language provides allowance for reference to two genders only--masculine and feminine. The Hebrew language makes no provision for the neuter. Thus, Hebrew writers utilize the masculine as the "generic".

- **The social and cultural norms of Israel reflected a patriarchal order common to the Ancient Near East.**
  - **The rights of women often were dependent upon, relative to, or secondary to the rights of men.** For example, sons rightfully inherited the estates and mantles of leadership from their fathers. Daughters could not inherit estates, except under two conditions: if no male heirs were available (Numbers 27:1-11), and if they married husbands from

within their father's tribe (Numbers 36:1-13). Grenz and Kjesbo (1995) outline additional statuses and rights of women in Israelite society (pp. 65-66):

- Fathers and husbands could nullify the vows of women--even vows to the Lord (Numbers 30:3-16).
- Wives are called to be "fruitful," while "barrenness" brings shame (Exodus 23:25-26; 1 Samuel 1:1-2:10; Job 24:21; Psalm 113:9).
- Husbands could divorce their wives (Deuteronomy 24:1-4) or take other wives (Exodus 21:10; Deuteronomy 21:15-17), but wives could not divorce their husbands.
- Wives suspected of marital unfaithfulness were subjected to difficult—even harsh—examination and cursing (Numbers 5:11-31).
- While the ideal wife cares for the household (Proverbs 31:27), the Israelite man cares for the city, seated among his male peers at the gate (Proverbs 31:23).

Evans (2003) further argues, "There are indications that women were seen as the property of their fathers or husbands, and it could be assumed that women had no rights of their own" (p. 898). McVann (1993) similarly notes in his discussion of family-centeredness in Israel, "Although father and mother are frequently mentioned together, male authority is clearly preeminent in this strongly patriarchal society" (p. 71).

- **At the same time, the regulations and norms of ancient Israel provided women with protection and status.** Although fathers could sell daughters as slaves (Exodus 21:7), they could not sell daughters as prostitutes (Leviticus 21:7). An assault on any slave--whether male or female--was treated with equal gravity (Exodus 21:20, 26-27). When women were sent away from their husbands for displeasure, they carried a paper that

allowed them to remarry free from the charge of adultery (Evans 2003, p. 899). Wives suspected of adultery could not suffer consequences without proof--accusation alone was insufficient (Deuteronomy 22:15-21). Numbers 6:1-21 presents a legal basis by which both men and women could serve as Nazirites--"a sacred person who was consecrated to divine service for a specific period of time as the result of a vow and as an expression of special commitment to God" (Harrison 1986, p. 501).

- **The social and cultural status of both women and men hinged upon bodily functions--at least in part--thus subjecting women to a measure of marginalization.**
  - On a regular basis, menstruation rendered women ceremonially unclean. Leviticus 15:19-30 indicates that this uncleanness lasted for seven days during every monthly cycle, contaminating those who touched the woman and contaminating those items upon which the woman sat or lay. Hartley (1979) writes, "It is important to realize that cleanness must be attained by each person and is nontransferable. Uncleanness, on the other hand, is readily transmitted," as in Haggai 2:12-14 (p. 720). Within the strict logic of holiness, tribal peoples understood uncleanness to alienate people from God. Thus, regular uncleanness automatically assigned women to some cultural and spiritual margins. Priests were charged to distinguish between holy/profane and clean/unclean (Leviticus 10:10), even though cleanness and holiness were not fully identical (Moyer 1985, p. 253). Hartley also observes that cultures throughout the Ancient Near

East observed ritual purity laws in an attempt to secure fertility through proper worship of their gods. He writes, "The general idea of clean and unclean is in no way unique to Israel, nor are particular expressions of it, but Israel's overall system is unique because it is built on her view of Yahweh" (p. 718). In contrast, the ritual of circumcision signified and sealed the covenant between God and Israel--undeniably through the male body, but also through the heart (Deuteronomy 10:16). Within the context of Ancient Near Eastern patriarchy, membership in the covenant came through men (Lewis and Armerding 1979, pp. 700-702). Nevertheless, this final statement should not be overstated. The covenant ceremony of Deuteronomy 29-30 explicitly and fully included women, as did the regular law reading (Deuteronomy 31:12), sacrificial acts, and sacrificial feasts (Deuteronomy 12:12; 14:26; 16:14-16). Clearly, women in the Old Testament negotiated a set of complex tensions between inclusion and marginalization.

- **Biblical Survey of Women in the Old Testament**
  - **Grenz and Kjesbo (1995) assemble a helpful assessment of women and leadership throughout the Old Testament.**
    - **Miriam, sister to Moses and Aaron, prophet of the Israelites (Exodus 15:19-21):** Miriam fosters worship among Israel's women and men through liturgical leadership (Exodus 15:20-21). Although she and Aaron both speak against Moses because he marries a Cushite

woman, God vindicates Moses. In God's rebuke of Miriam and Aaron, Miriam is singled out for punishment (Numbers 12:1-16). Grenz and Kjesbo note that "nowhere does the text suggest that Miriam sinned by circumventing male leadership. Rather, she and Aaron went astray by questioning Moses' status" (p. 68).

- **Deborah, prophet and judge over Israel (Judges 4:4-7):** Deborah holds court and speaks for God as the Israelites come to her for judgment. Although she is married (4:4), she nevertheless commands and leads men (4:6-7). She stands alongside a man, fostering worship among Israel's women and men through liturgical leadership (Judges 5). And, she carries out her leadership in Bethel--a seat of public power, religious practice, and prophetic activity (1 Samuel 7:16; 2 Kings 2:3; 27:28; Amos 7:10-13). Grenz and Kjesbo suggest that "The example of Deborah confirms that neither God nor the ancient Hebrews found female leadership intrinsically abhorrent" (p. 70).
- **Ezekiel:** He records that God denounces some women who function as prophets, not because they are women, but because they are false (13:17-24).
- **Isaiah:** He marries a female prophet (8:1-4).
- **Psalmic worship:** Women foster worship among Israel's people through liturgical leadership (68:11).
- **Huldah, prophet in Judah (2 Kings 22:13-20; 2 Chronicles 34:22-28):** When the Book of the

Law was rediscovered during King Josiah's reign, he sends five officials to bring Huldah the prophet to him. Huldah speaks for the Lord with great power, conviction, and effect. Grenz and Kjesbo note that Josiah's choice to consult with Huldah is noteworthy for its silence regarding Zephaniah (1:1) and Jeremiah (1:2), both prophets of renown at that time (p. 71).

- **The Old Testament presents further information concerning women and leadership.**
  - **Exodus 15:20-21** allows for the involvement of women in musical aspects of worship.
  - **Exodus 35-36** makes provision for women and men to share in the craft work of sanctuary construction.
  - **Exodus 38:3** indicates that women served at the door of the tabernacle, while 12:6 indicates that both women and men offered sacrifices.
  - **2 Samuel 20:15-22** draws a sharp contrast between Joab, the commander of King David's army, and the "wise woman" of Abel, a city which Joab lays under siege. Joab and the monarchy would destroy the whole city of Abel --a "mother in Israel" and "the peaceful and faithful"--for the sake of capturing one man. With skillful words, the wise woman negotiates the safety of Abel in return for the surrender of man that Joab seeks. Of the wise woman, Brueggemann writes, "The wisdom of the woman and the well-being of the city stand together. Wise words override ruthless policy. At the end, not only the woman and

the city are saved; something of David's dignity and self-respect are also rescued from Joab's mad, obedient intent" (p. 332).

- **Esther** is used of God to prevent the genocide of Israel at the hands of its Persian captors.
  
  - **Proverbs 31:10-31** examines the household role of women, giving attention to their domains of influence and leadership as well as their character.
- **Roll call of women in Old Testament leadership:** This lesson has given attention to Miriam, Deborah, the wise woman of Abel, Huldah, Esther, and the wife of Proverbs 31. Other Old Testament women deserve further attention, including (but not limited to) Sarah, Zipporah, Rahab, Jael, Hannah, Judith, and Susanna.

## Application/Group Work:

(25 minutes)

Resource 4- 2

- Compare and contrast the Ancient Near Eastern understanding of women with a contemporary understanding of women in your own culture.
- Pastoral Paradigms: how do OT women fare in light of pastoral roles such as prophet, priest, and shepherd-king?
- We will not find the equivalent of modern social or cultural norms, but we will find compelling examples of women carrying out certain aspects of these.
- The prophetic role implies proclamation on behalf of God. We see this in the examples of Miriam, Deborah, and Huldah, among others.
- The priestly role is less prominent, not least because of Israel's care to differentiate its own worship from that of goddess worshipers. Nevertheless, if the priestly role encompasses the mediation of worship, then we see this particular dimension at work within the examples of Miriam, Deborah, and Psalmic liturgy.
- The shepherd-kingly role is also less prominent. Nevertheless, Esther demonstrates the call and fitness to rule on behalf of God, albeit under extenuating circumstances.

## Self-Assessment/Individual Work:

(15 minutes)

Resource 4- 3

Take time to write out your answers to the following questions.

- What are the cultural norms concerning women, leadership, and the church within your own congregation? Within your regional culture?
- How do you think that your own cultural background influences your personal view of women in church leadership?
- As you anticipate the next lesson on the New Testament, women, leadership, and the church, what insights from this Old Testament lesson seem most relevant or helpful to you?

## Lesson Close

(5 minutes)

### Review

- **Summary:** Despite its patriarchal social and cultural context, the Old Testament does not provide sufficient support for the exclusion of women from leadership in ministry. Although the context and content of the Old Testament reflect a range of related tensions in this regard, many women rise to social, political, and religious leadership in the Old Testament. In the final analysis, the reader of the Old Testament should resolve these tension in an eschatological light, or, in light of God's future Kingdom breaking into the current kingdom of this world.
- **The eschatological trajectory of women, leadership, and the church:** Moses prays (Numbers 11:29), Joel foresees (2:28-29), Peter proclaims (Acts 2:17-18), and the Spirit inaugurates an eschatological vision of men and women serving alongside one another in proclamation and ministry--a vision already realized among the first evangelists at the empty tomb of Jesus (Matthew 28:1-10; Luke 24:1-12; John 20:11-18). The eschatological horizon of the Old Testament frames a future that may be described as egalitarian and

inclusive--a future in which all persons live toward freedom from sin's curse (Genesis 3:16) through the reconciling work of Christ (Galatians 3:28; Colossians 3:11).

## Assign Homework

### Reading for Class Preparation:

- Acts 1:15, 2:11-18, 10:13
- Exodus 20:14
- John 4:4-43
- Lev 12:7; 15:19-33, esp. v 25; 20:18
- Luke 10:38-42
- Matthew 5:28
- Psalms of Solomon 16:7-8
- Sirach 41:19-22, 9:8
- Testament of Issachar 4:49-54, 7:1
- Testament of Judah 12:3
- Testament of Rueben 3:10-12, 5:1-5, 6:1

**Write down the top five insights** on women in ministry you gained from these passages and why they were significant to you.

### Resource List

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- Evans, Mary J. (2003). Women. In T. Desmond Alexander and David W. Baker (Eds.), *Dictionary of the Old Testament: Pentateuch*, (pp. 897-904). Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press.
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# Lesson 5

## Jesus and the Early Church: the Gospels and Acts

### Lesson Overview

#### Schedule

Start Time	Task or Topic	Learning Activity	Materials Needed
0:00	Introduction	Accountability and Orientation	Student Guide
0:10	Introduction: Cultural and Social Context	Lecture/Group Discussion	
0:30	Jesus' Response to Women: Vignettes on the Journey	Lecture/Group Discussion	
0:50	The Earliest Community in Acts 1 & 2	Lecture/Group Discussion	
1:00	Lesson Close	Review, Assign Homework	

### Lesson Introduction

(10 minutes)

#### Accountability

In pairs, have the learners share and critique each other's homework assignments. Collect homework for evaluation. All homework should be evaluated with constructive comments to help the learner with his or her growth. Completion is based on achieving competence in the abilities as stated in the Outcomes, attendance, and completion of all homework assignments.

#### Homework: Reading for Class Preparation:

- Acts 1:15, 2:11-18, 10:13
- Exodus 20:14
- John 4:4-43
- Lev 12:7; 15:19-33, esp. v 25; 20:18
- Luke 10:38-42
- Matthew 5:28
- Psalms of Solomon 16:7-8
- Sirach 41:19-22, 9:8
- Testament of Issachar 4:49-54, 7:1
- Testament of Judah 12:3
- Testament of Rueben 3:10-12, 5:1-5, 6:1

**Write down the top five insights** on women in ministry you gained from these passages and why they were significant to you.

## Orientation

*Make sure the focus is clear.*

### The Focus

The setting of Jesus and the Apostles in the late Second Temple Period is an important place to begin seeing just how counter-cultural and radical the teaching and practice of Jesus really was especially in light of Ancient Israel's practices and the customs of the 1<sup>st</sup> century Greco-Roman world.

## Learner Objectives

*Instruct students to locate objectives in the Student Guide.*

*State the objectives for the learners.*

- 1) To gain insight into the cultural and social context of the first century AD regarding women and their place in society.
- 2) To reflect on Jesus' attitudes and relationships with women and how these were different from the surrounding culture, both Jewish and Roman.
- 3) To see how the New Testament Church wrestles with the inclusive nature of Jesus' teachings and actions in light of the surrounding first century culture

## Resources for Lesson 5:

Elaine Fantham, et al., 'The "New Woman": Representation and Reality', *Women in the Classical World: Image and Text*, (Oxford: OUP, 1994), 300.]

'Georg Strecker, *The Sermon on the Mount: An Exegetical Commentary* (Trans. O C Dean, Jr, Nashville: Abingdon, 1988ET), 71

Sharon Betwsorth, *The Reign of God Is Such as These: A Socio-Literary Analysis of Daughters in the Gospel of Mark* (LNTS 422; London: T. & T. Clark, 2010), 107.]

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Q49BbfgJbto>

# Lesson Introduction: Cultural and Social Context

(20 minutes)

## Lecture:

Share the information provided and have students pair up to answer "Questions for Reflection" then have one of the students share with the whole group.

*Resource 5-1: Lecture Notes*

## Introduction to Cultural and Social Context

### Some facts for reflection:

- The first century culture was what sociologists call an honor-shame culture in which family ties, prestige, honor and public appearance were important for all family members.
- Position, privilege and power were firmly in the hands of the elite, whether of Roman society, with the Emperor at the top, or their clients, including the Herodian family and the high priestly aristocracy
- Galilee and Judaea were client states of the Roman Empire where the local rulers swore an oath of loyalty to the Roman Empire. Breaking that oath would mean exile, imprisonment or death.
- A significant portion of people were slaves, up to  $\frac{3}{4}$  of the population of Athens about  $\frac{1}{2}$  the population of Rome. These were slaves primarily because of economic issues (owed money to their masters) or war (captured in war and brought as slaves because of their skills).
- Underneath the surface, Judaea, and Galilee were seething places of discontent, in which many longed for a leader who would overthrow the Romans, restore the kingship to the Davidic line (certainly not Herodian), and inaugurate peace. A few even engaged in guerrilla activity to achieve these ends.
- Many believed that the only hope was in God. Some questioned God; others believed that the people were insufficiently holy for God to redeem them.

Read against this background, it is remarkable, then, at how challenging the actions and words of Jesus as reported in the gospels really are. This is the cultural context in which Jesus gathers around himself a new people. They are transformed by the presence of the Holy One of God. They are called to follow his mission, to be the vanguard of God's redemptive work in the world. And they challenge the way things are.

Socially Jesus and the Apostles lived in a patriarchal society. The social rules for men and women were rather different.

As a rule women were considered perpetual minors in this patriarchal society but it would be wrong to suggest that women were inevitably mistreated or overtly oppressed.

Some late second temple period texts shed some light on the Jewish society's view of women:

- Sirach 9:8 'Turn away your eyes from a shapely woman, and do not gaze at beauty belonging to another; many have been seduced by a woman's beauty, and by it passion is kindled like a fire.'
- Sirach 41:19-22: 'Be ashamed . . . of looking at a prostitute . . . and of gazing at another man's wife; of meddling with his servant girl.'
- Psalms of Solomon 16:7-8: 'Restrain me, O God, from sordid sin, and from every evil woman who seduces the foolish. And may the beauty of a criminal woman not deceive me, nor anyone subject to useless sin.'
- Testament of Judah 12:3 'Since I was drunk with wine, I did not recognize her [Tamar] and her beauty enticed me because of her manner of tricking herself out.'
- Testament of Issachar 7:1 'I have not had intercourse with any woman other than my wife, nor was I promiscuous by lustful look. I did not drink wine to the point of losing self-control.'
- T Issa 4:49-54 '[Repent] and do not commit more sin. . . . Do not kill with the sword, do not kill with the tongue, do not fornicate with your body, and do not remain angry until sunset. . . . Do not look at a woman with a lustful eye.'
- Testament of Rueben 3:10-12 'Do not devote your attention to a woman's looks, nor live with a woman who is already married, nor become involved in affairs with women. For if I had not seen Bilhah bathing in a sheltered place, I would not have fallen into this great lawless act. For so absorbed were my senses by her naked femininity that I was not able to sleep until I had performed this revolting act.'
- T Rueben 5:1 'For women are evil, my children, and by reason of their lacking authority or power over man, they scheme treacherously how they

might entice him to themselves by means of their looks.'

- T Rueben 5:3 'An angel of the Lord told me and instructed me that women are more easily overcome by the spirit of promiscuity than are men'
- T Rueben 5:5 'flee from sexual promiscuity, and order your wives and your daughters not to adorn their heads and their appearances so as to deceive men's sound minds'
- T Rueben 6:1 'protect your senses from women'
- Exodus 20:14 'you shall not commit adultery'
- Matthew 5:28 'You have heard that it was said, "You shall not commit adultery." But I say to you that everyone who looks at a woman with lust has already committed adultery with her in his heart.'

While modern definitions of adultery include extramarital sexual intercourse by either husband or wife, sexual intercourse between a man, married or not, and an unmarried woman or a prostitute was not understood to be prohibited by this command. A man could also have more than one wife as well as concubines. This command 'presupposes the patriarchal structure of society in the ancient orient. The man who seduces the wife of another man destroys her marriage, not his own. He is fundamentally entitled to have more than one wife (Deut 21:15ff.). Thus, this Old Testament-Jewish legal practice rests on the viewpoint of polygamy; therefore, a wife cannot call her husband to account because of a marriage violation.' Georg Strecker, *The Sermon on the Mount: An Exegetical Commentary* (Trans. O C Dean, Jr, Nashville: Abingdon, 1988ET), 71.

- The Hellenistic culture of the Graeco-Roman world took a similar view on adultery:

"Adultery was defined by law and custom as sex with a married woman other than one's wife; a free man still had sexual access legally to his slaves, to women whose work as prostitutes or barmaids put them outside the law's concern, and to concubines. None of these cases counted as adultery for him, although a married woman was an adulteress if she had sex with anyone but her husband.' Elaine Fantham, et al., 'The "New Woman": Representation and Reality', *Women in the Classical World: Image and Text*, (Oxford: OUP, 1994), 300.]

Some recent studies reflect upon the significance of women's clothing within a culture as a statement of values. Covering of the face and/or head was a social necessity for women in the Greek and Jewish worlds. Other studies show that the 'New Roman Woman' rejected traditional forms of dress. Upper class wives were to dress in such a way as to avoid bringing dishonour upon their husbands. The largely unspoken but implicit expectation is that women need to be properly clothed. Only this will diminish male temptation to illicit sexual contact. This pattern still exists in traditional middle eastern cultures today and is increasingly the norm amongst modern western Moslems.

- It seems that in Jesus' teaching the responsibility for preventing covetousness – and adultery – is not placed on the woman. It is actually placed on the man who is coveting the woman.
- So Jesus challenges the boundaries of conventional society because it gets to the heart of God's purposes. And this brings him into conflict with the guardians of the tradition – the religious authorities and the holiness movement people (the Pharisees) – who protect God's holiness by erecting and maintaining boundaries.
- He is calling and shaping the renewed holy people of God.
- He calls disciples. In fact, Jesus invites all who would come after him to take up their cross and follow.
- Those around Jesus are on his mission and proclaiming the good news.
- Along the way and on the mission, boundaries are broken
- The unclean are transformed and empowered for mission.
- Those excluded are now included.
- Even family ties are relativized: the family of Jesus is those who do the will of God.

**Questions for Reflection:**

- What might some of these texts tell us about how women are perceived?
- How might these texts point to the

responsibility of men and women in sexual relations within the wide sweep of culture in Jesus' day?

- What might have been some of the cultural outcomes as a result of these attitudes? Think especially of social relations in society in settings like synagogue and the market place? How might it have influenced the way that women were expected to conduct themselves and to dress in public?
- In what ways might these attitudes have changed since the first century? In what ways might they remain?
- To what extent does Jesus' teaching support or challenge culture in this setting statement from Matthew? To what extent is Jesus' teaching a daring assertion or even a measure of cultural subversion?

## Lecture: Jesus' Response to Women: Vignettes on the Journey

(20 minutes)

Share this lecture and have students reflect on this material with the questions for reflection given below the lecture.

*Resource 5-2: Lecture Notes*

The gospels are clear: at point after point, Jesus' story challenges social and religious convention. His treatment of women fits this pattern exactly. And this evidence is spread throughout all four gospels. Consider these examples:

1) The genealogy of Jesus (Matthew 1:3 [Tamar], 5 [Rahab, Ruth], 6 [the wife of Uriah], 16 [Mary]). Many intriguing parts to the genealogy. But several key points for us:

- Women are named in the genealogy
- All of them have some dubious stories and would be 'tainted' by convention
- A key woman is Ruth – the Moabitess – with a double role of inclusion in the story of the Messiah

2) Jairus' daughter and the woman with gynecological problems (Mark 5:21-45)

First, the key element lying behind both is the issue of impurity. In both cases, these females are a source of Levitical impurity.

- The woman with the twelve-year gynecological disorder has been ritually impure probably for

that entire time. She may be a constant, potential source of impurity (see Lev 12:7; 15:19-33, esp. v 25; 20:18). And she would likely have been childless for this period.

- The probability of some separation from the community is strong
- Jairus' daughter is dead and touching a corpse conveys impurity.

Second, the Markan Jesus has compassion for both of these women.

- Jesus acts well outside the bounds of conventional behavior between women and men--speaking to this woman in public.
- We hear the internal thoughts of the woman.
- We are privy to the woman's inner sensations of being healed.
- The healing has implications:
- Her impurity is gone and she can now function as a normal part of the people of God.
- She is the paradigm of those who come to Jesus and are transformed by his power and welcomed into God's family.

Third, Jesus refers to both women as daughters.

- This is a family term. The Markan Jesus welcomes both of these into his fictive family (see 3:35).
- The first daughter is a unnamed woman

"When Jesus calls the woman 'daughter', he does not merely address her affectionately; rather Mark is making a significant statement regarding the inclusive nature of the Reign of God. All types of daughters are included in God's rule, even older, impoverished ones who were formerly chronically ill." [Sharon Betwsorth, *The Reign of God Is Such as These: A Socio-Literary Analysis of Daughters in the Gospel of Mark* (LNTS 422; London: T. & T. Clark, 2010), 107.]

- In the second, the beloved daughter is dead. Jesus restores her to her family.
- The Aramaic *Talitha cum* goes beyond affection; this too is family language and this twelve-year-old is part of Jesus' fictive family.
- Finally, societal oppression of women for religious or social reasons is not part of the way the new people of God are called to display their holiness before the world.

3) Mary and Martha (Luke 10:38-42). Jesus teaches women – another breach of convention. Mary, the sister of Martha, is the paradigm of loving God with all the heart.

- The setting of this story is the question in 10:25, what must I do to inherit eternal life, followed by the recitation of the great commandments, loving God and loving neighbor.
- The response is, 'who is my neighbor?' The explanation for that question is the parable of the Good Samaritan.
  - Impure
  - Alien
  - Samaritan
  - Excluded
- The next story is the Martha-Mary episode with Mary at the feet of Jesus
  - Mary is being taught by a man
  - Mary is not in women's space
- It completes a literary (chiastic) structure with the Great Commandments.

A	Love God	B	The Good Samaritan as model of loving neighbour
B	Love your neighbour	A	Mary the model of loving God

- Just as the Samaritan illustrates the second command, Mary illustrates the first command – Love the Lord your God.
- But the Lord answered her, "Martha, Martha, you are worried and distracted by many things; there is need of only one thing. Mary has chosen the better part, which will not be taken away from her."

Notice:

- A woman
- Out of place
- Chosen the better part

- Not taken away from her

4) Jesus talks to a Samaritan woman at noon (John 4:4-43) What's wrong with this picture?

- A Samaritan
- A Samaritan woman
- A Samaritan woman on her own
- A Samaritan woman on her own with Jesus
- A Samaritan woman on her own with Jesus on his own
- A Samaritan woman on her own with Jesus on his own talking to each other
- A Samaritan woman with a dubious reputation on her own with Jesus on his own talking to a Samaritan woman risking his reputation
- Samaritans believing the testimony of one Samaritan woman of dubious reputation who has been talking to a Jewish prophet on his own and who now proclaims the gospel to them inviting them to come to Jesus.

5) Other places for women in the Gospels

- Eight named women join Jesus' itinerate mission
- Several of them support Jesus' mission.
- Jesus accepts the gratitude and love of a notorious woman who has been forgiven.
- At the cross, the women who had followed Jesus and ministered to him in Galilee are those who stay to the end, witness his gruesome death and care for Jesus.
- On Easter morning, women are the first witnesses to the empty tomb. According to John, Mary Magdalene is the first to see the risen one.

### Questions for Reflection

- Why are there no women named amongst the Twelve? Does this indicate that leadership is restricted to men?
- Why are there no uncircumcised Gentiles amongst the Twelve? Does this mean that leadership is restricted to circumcised Jewish males?
- What are some of the boundaries that Jesus crosses? What purity boundaries are crossed and why? What conventions does Jesus breach with respect to women?
- Why does Jesus call the women 'daughter' in Mark 5? What are the characteristics of those who are in Jesus' family?
- Why have some of the followers of Jesus been reluctant to follow Jesus in his calling, empowering and affirming of women?
- How might reading the Gospels again help reluctant disciples reconsider their support for women in ministry?

## Lecture: The Earliest Community in Acts 1&2

(10 minutes)

Share this lecture and have students reflect on this material with the questions for reflection given below the lecture.

Resource 5-3

### 1) Pre-Pentecost

- Women were the earliest witnesses to Jesus' resurrection
- Women were among the 120 disciples who were in the upper room waiting for the coming of the Holy Spirit (Acts 1:15).

### 2) Pentecost

- The message of the Gospel is heard by every listener in their own languages: *in our own languages we hear them speaking about God's deeds of power*" (Act 2:11).
  - There is no sacred language: Hebrew, Greek, Latin, Arabic

- The praise of God is universal and diverse. The Spirit knows no boundaries. All nations, tongues and people offer their diverse praise to God through the Spirit
- Peter's sermon at Pentecost quotes the prophet Joel
  - Last days have dawned with the outpouring of the Spirit – this is the promise from the Father through the Son
  - Spirit is now on all flesh -- far more than Peter even imagined as he speaks.
  - No longer for special people in special places for specific tasks
  - All God's people are prophets – there is no gender qualification nor economic distinction nor age barrier.
  - All are now part of the Spirit-people of God, created in Christ
- The sermon emphasizes God's gender inclusiveness in receiving the Spirit and proclaiming the Word:

*In the last days it will be, God declares that I will pour out my Spirit upon all flesh, and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, and your young men shall see visions, and your old men shall dream dreams. Even upon my slaves, both men and women, in those days I will pour out my Spirit; and they shall prophesy. (Act 2:17-18 NRSV)*

There is an irony about this, however. Peter's sermon says far more than he imagines.

- Peter tended to think only of the Jewish race; Acts shows that the people of God are inclusive of all ethnicities.
- Peter resisted the inclusive work of God; Acts shows Peter requiring a vision to persuade him to treat Gentiles as brothers and sisters

- Peter is concerned about scriptural purity laws; Acts shows that the Spirit purifies the hearts of those who are unclean. Purification is the work of the Spirit, not the keeping of boundaries.

### **Questions for Reflection**

- What does the period before Pentecost tell us about the composition of the new people of God?
- How important is Peter's sermon for the diversity in those who proclaim the gospel?
- Acts not only includes Gentiles (of both genders) but people who are excluded from worship such as the Ethiopian Eunuch. What implications might we draw from this?
- Why is Peter so reluctant to 'kill and eat' (Acts 10:13) when confronted by a vision of unclean beasts? What lessons does Peter have to learn about purity? About boundaries? About how to use scripture in these decisions?

## *Lesson Close*

(10 minutes)

### **Review**

*Resource 5-4*

Review the material above by considering these questions for reflection:

- 1) What were some of the most countercultural ideas or actions of Jesus and the New Testament Church when considering the cultural and social contexts—both Jewish and Roman?
- 2) What are two important principles we learn from the way Jesus interacted with the women he met?
- 3) What do you think is the significance of the Prophet Joel's prophecy which Peter quoted in Acts 2 for the 1<sup>st</sup> century church—for the 21<sup>st</sup> century church?

## Assign Homework

### Homework for Lesson 6:

#### Reading:

- Romans 16
- Galatians 3
- Ephesians 5
- Colossians 4
- Philippians 4
- I Corinthians 12
- I Timothy 2
- 

#### Write down:

- 1) The top five insights on women in ministry you gained from these passages and why they were significant to you.
- 2) The 3 significant questions you have about Paul and his view of women in ministry.





## Lesson 6

# Paul and Gender Mutuality

## Lesson Overview

### Schedule

Start Time	Task or Topic	Learning Activity	Materials Needed
0:00	Introduction	Accountability and Orientation	
0:10	The Bible On Gender Mutuality	Class Activity	Resource 6-1
0:20	Paul and Women	Lecture	Resource 6-2
0:45	Applying the Lesson	Encouragement	Resource 6-3
0:55	Lesson Close	Review, Assign Homework	Student Guide

## Lesson Introduction

(10 minutes)

### Accountability

In pairs, have the learners share and critique each other's homework assignments. Collect homework for evaluation. All homework should be evaluated with constructive comments to help the learner with his or her growth. Completion is based on achieving competence in the abilities as stated in the Outcomes, attendance, and completion of all homework assignments.

### Homework Due:

Reading:

- Romans 16
- Galatians 3
- Ephesians 5
- Colossians 4
- Philippians 4
- I Corinthians 12
- I Timothy 2

### Write down:

- 1) The top five insights on women in ministry you gained from these passages and why they were significant to you.
- 2) The 3 significant questions you have about Paul and his view of women in ministry.

## Orientation

*Before Class, have the capstone verse written on a blackboard, poster, or PowerPoint slide.*

*Capstone Verse: "There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free man, there is neither male and female; for you are all one in Christ Jesus (Galatians 3:28, NASB or in another version of your choice. You may also underline the "neither male and female" phrase to show the emphasis of this lesson.*

## The Focus

In Paul's ministry, he consistently affirms women in regards to gender mutuality, not inferiority. Never once does he say that women are lower than men, and he had both sexes in his fellowship and ministry. In terms of relationships, Paul teaches men are not a leader over woman like culture insisted. In terms of ministry, he recognized the giftedness of both sexes as being given by the Holy Spirit without any discrimination. Also, both men and women are allowed to pray with authority, neither being better than the other. Then finally, Paul encouraged the education of women before teaching and preaching instead of having them cut off from the ministry all together like the spirit of the times suggested. Since men and women are all a part of the body of Christ, being under the new covenant and having the same inheritance, they all have the same share of life through Jesus Christ.

## Learner Objectives

*Before getting into the lesson, direct the student guide to see the learner objectives.*

*Read the objectives for the learners.*

By the end of this session, the students should:

- survey the list of women involved in Paul's ministry
- understand the Biblical principle of mutual submission
- understand the Biblical principle of mutual submission
- go over the Holy Spirit's role to men and woman in regards to spiritual gifts
- learn Paul's instructions for women in the church
- grow a more comprehensive understanding of women's equal position to man

## Lesson Body

### Class Activity: The Bible on Gender Mutuality

(10 minutes)

Resource 6-1

You will have approximately five minutes to individually work on the exercise in Resource 6-1. Then, for the time remaining, you will share what you have learned.

Resource 6-1: Read the following passages from the New Testament; reflect on them and write down the universal principles you find in them:

- I Corinthians 11:11-12
- Ephesians 5:15-21
- Galatians 3:23-4:7

### Lecture: Paul and Women

(25 minutes)

Resource 6-2: Lecture Notes

Paul's Female Coworkers: Paul's female contemporaries are listed in his writings. Most of them are found in his epistle to the Romans, specifically in chapter sixteen. These women include Mary, Tryphaena, Tryphosa, Persis, Julia, Junia, Nereus' sister, Priscilla (or Prisca), and Phoebe.

#### Romans 16

A. In this last chapter, Paul is sending greeting to those he considers saints.

1. Phoebe is a diakonon of the church Cenchræa. Diakonos is the Greek word for deacon, which would suggest that Phoebe was a leader, whereas in most translations she is left as only being a servant in the church. Also, Paul holds high regard for her; she has helped many, as well as him.

B. Next, there is Priscilla (or as Paul also calls her by her un-diminutive name Prisca), and she is mentioned alongside her husband Aquila, but why is a woman mentioned before her husband? This is not common for that time. In introducing a couple, a man is always mentioned before the woman in the relationship, unless she is more prominent than him in some way. As we can recall from Acts 18, she and Aquila helped Paul by giving him a place to stay during his ministry, and he also shared the tent-making trade with them. Later in that same chapter, we see that Priscilla and Aquila take Apollos in and teach him more accurately about the Scriptures in order to help him preach the message.

C. In verse six, you have Mary mentioned as having worked very hard for the church at Rome. Not much can be concluded from this, but obviously, Paul must have found her prominent enough to have mentioned her in his epistle.

D. In the next verse, we have Andronicus and Junia. The problem is that Junia has also been translated as Junias, which would mean that the name is masculine. The textual differences have become a debate among biblical scholars, but it has ultimately turned out that Junia has been the consistent translation of the name in earlier manuscripts. The name only became masculine when the translation was handed down to medieval translators, who were in the masculine favoritism of the era. Once it is concluded that Junia is a woman, the idea follows that Andronicus must be her husband. Finally, the two are mentioned as Paul's kinsmen and fellow prisoners in the Lord. What is more is that they are outstanding among the apostles. The key note here is that a woman is an apostle, and not just any apostle but a prominent apostle. The concept here however that I like is how both of them are mentioned as equally prominent, not Andronicus as being the head of prominence between the two.

E. Moving down to verse twelve, we have three other ladies mentioned among the apostle's list of associates: Tryphaena, Tryphosa, and Persis. Tryphanea and Tryphosa are women who Paul says have "worked hard in the Lord." Persis is a "beloved one" who noted as basically doing the same thing as Tryphaena and Tryphosa. These are more women that Paul generally finds as important enough to mention; he does not denounce their work but affirms their great spiritual character by what they have done.

F. At the end of listing people, Paul finally mentions Julia and Nereus' sister. Nothing more is said of them other than their company as being other saints. The ordination of women is framed in biblical concept...not culture, not feminism, not fundamentalism...but rooted in the Biblical ethic of equality in Christ and God's call. (Joel 2:28; Acts 2:18)

#### **Philippians 4:**

In verses two and three, Euodia and Syntyche may seem to have problems with getting along, but nonetheless, they are the apostle's coworkers in the faith that share in his same struggle for the gospel.

### **Colossians 4:**

In verse 15, Paul asks the church to greet Nympha and the church in her house. This is good in the sense that Paul is sending greeting to her, but also, there is a church that meets in her house. Her only prominence among the believers may be the fact that she has a church meeting in her house. On the other hand though, having her name out in front before mentioning the church seems to suggest that she might also be the leader of the church. It is not exactly proven, but nonetheless, it is a possibility.

The bottom line here is that Paul upholds all of these women. They all hold some significance to him, and he does not let that go unrecognized. Rather, he even writes some of their work down for the whole church to read in his epistles to them. Normally, with the culture of this time, women would never be mentioned for anything prominent. They are merely submissive, quiet subjects that barely ever leave the house, and even inside the house, they can only do housework, not ministry. With every woman that Paul lists, he defies this traditional gender role; women also participate in ministry alongside men.

After talking about the women in Paul's long list of associates, we move on to the theological concepts that support gender mutuality in ministry.

### **Mutual Submission:**

Ephesians 5:21: "Submit to one another out of reverence for Christ."

This is a universal practice that Christian men and women are called to in relationship to one another. This goes against the practices of the context this was originally written in that put men as being the authority of women. This verse comes at the end of Paul's instruction to the church in Ephesus for how they are to live among one another and before a passage in which Paul describes the roles of man and wife in the marital relationship. The verb for submit in this verse is *hupotasso*, and this verb does not fall under the nature of being ruled. Rather, this kind of submission comes voluntarily by the one that is choosing to submit themselves to another. The better wording for this might be "to devote to." This does not mean that someone must dogmatically do the commands of someone that is better than them, but instead, they devote themselves to the care and concern of someone else. Men and women are to hold

each other in concern over themselves when they live in Christian community.

#### The Gifts of the Holy Spirit:

God gives spiritual gifts to people through the Holy Spirit, and this distribution is done without discrimination. Paul writes about spiritual gifts in his first epistle to the Corinthians as well as in his epistle to the church in Ephesus.

#### To Both Man and Woman:

In I Corinthians 12, when Paul talks about spiritual gifts, he makes no distinction as to who gets what gift. He notes that there are many gifts but the same spirit and a variety of ministries but the same Lord (vv. 4-5). Then finally, there are different types of effects, but the same God that works through all persons (v. 6), and each one is a manifestation of the Spirit (v. 7). The list of gifts given in the next few verses includes: wisdom, knowledge, faith, healing, miracles, prophecy, discernment, and tongues-speaking, tongue-interpretation. This is most likely not an exhaustive list either, but the apostle lists a good handful of these to make the point that there are many gifts. Nonetheless, in all these gifts, the Spirit gives them as he chooses, whether to man or woman.

#### Equal Importance:

After the talk of spiritual gifts, Paul also goes over the order of the body of Christ. Everyone is a member, and each serves a different function. Every function builds up the body and causes it to work and not a single part of the body is without importance. As Paul gives rhetorical examples, one part of the body cannot deny the necessity of another. Each part works together to keep the body fully functional, running smoothly in order to advance. This hallmark is highlighted even more in verse twenty five; there is to be no division among the body. No part of the body is separate from another, and in encouraging unity, Paul makes it clear what the purpose of this unity is: that each one might take care of one another. This care is shared equally among all the members because they are all equally important.

In Ephesians, Paul continues to encourage unity, but in the beginning verses of chapter four, he writes that this unity is because there is: one body and one Spirit, one hope of their calling, one Lord, one faith, one baptism, and one God and Father. There is only one of each of every one of these because as Paul notes that

the God and Father that is the head over all of these things is "over all and through all and in all" (v. 6). It is not that God is only in men; he is in women also. He works through both sexes. Also, there is the list of gifts in this chapter, specifically in verse eleven: apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors and teachers. These also fall under the category of universal principle. Paul does not make any distinction of any gift being better than another or even one sex being better than the other according to their gifts. These gifts are to be used for equipping other saints for the service to the Lord, for maturing members of the body in order that they might attain to the fullness of Christ in unity of faith and knowledge. There is no room for division in the body of Christ; that was never God's intention, not even in the distribution of His Spirit.

#### Praying with Authority:

As he continually affirms women, Paul writes about how women are to have authority in the church. Still, she is not less than man, but why must she wear a head-covering to show her authority? That hermeneutic point will be discussed in the next lesson, but for now, the point is that women pray and prophesy with authority. Men have a different dress code and Paul is careful that the church at Corinth does not offend. However, this ancient culture has also shaped the church dress-code for women. By breaking the dress code, men or women can disgrace themselves. There is no different of merit or disgrace between the sexes in how well they obey the tradition. The main point is that they follow Paul's instructions. Nonetheless, Paul affirms that both have authority in praying and prophesying. Neither is exempt from being able to have authority.

#### "Because of the Angels..."

Among these verses though, Paul mentions that it is "because of the angels" that women should wear a symbol of authority on her head. What do the angels have to do with anything? It was once proposed by Tertullian that if women did not wear head-coverings that angels might fall in love with them, but this is only a mythological thought. Not very many thoughts have come to the table regarding this statement, but another thought has been about the power that has been granted to women through the work of angels. First of all, there is the archangel Gabriel that came to Mary to announce to her that she would give birth to the Savior of the world. Then, at the end of Jesus' earthly life, after He rose from the dead, angels came to Mary Magdalene, Joanna, and Mary the mother of

James when they arrived to see the tomb was empty. Those women were the first to be appointed to spread the good news that Jesus had risen. Finally, even further after Jesus' return to heaven, the Spirit shakes the upper room on the day of Pentecost in Acts chapter 2. The Spirit was distributed to each one so that they could speak in tongues and prophesy to all who were gathered in the city, and most certainly this group on which the Spirit was poured out included women! This event might also be considered the work of angels. On each of these occasions, angels are considered to be the agents through whom God administered power to women to act on His behalf. The only problem with this thesis about the significance of angels is the discontinuity between the angels and the significance of a head-covering. Even so, we can see that God has granted the authority of praying and prophesying to be shared with women.

#### Education of Women for the Ministry:

In what are considered the Pastoral Epistles, Paul writes to leaders that he has established at some of his churches. Those that Paul addressed in these epistles include: those at the church in Thessalonica, Timothy, Titus, and Peter. He gives them directions on how they are to act as ministers and leaders of the church, but still, there is a problem that Paul mentions in I Timothy 1:6-7. Some people stray from what the ministry is really about: instruction to the people from love that comes from a pure heart, clear conscience, and a sincere faith (v. 5). When people stray from that, they tend to turn into mere teachers of the law, and people like this have completely missed the point! They don't even know what they are talking about when they teach; these people seriously needed to be taught in the first place. Then in learning correctly what it means to be in ministry, men and women can both make their claims to holiness in service to the Lord.

#### Empowering Women to Learn:

In this time and culture, it was not uncommon for men to learn; rather, they were the only ones that were encouraged to learn, starting at approximately age six. Women were never permitted to receive an education, and if men were to teach women, they would be accused of committing an abominable act. It was even said that if a woman learns as a result from the teaching of her husband that their marriage is doomed to disband. Women learning was feared by that culture, but in I Timothy 2:11, Paul encourages women to learn. Of course, it is said that they must learn in silence and "submission" (still in the same sense under

the Greek work *hupotasso* as mentioned earlier), but the fact that women are encouraged to learn is of ground-breaking importance.

Safe Guards in Their Ministerial Education:

Now we have established that women were allowed to learn, but as we see in the following verses, they are not allowed to teach or have authority over man in the church. This brings us to the main reason that any minister needs careful instruction before they teach or preach: heresy. If men and women are going to be leaders of the church, they need to be carefully taught good and biblical principles of the Christian faith. Timothy's church is being troubled by a false teaching that has taken root in the church, and this new heresy is supposedly that of a deified Eve in the beginning. This heresy may no longer be active in today's church, but the same principle is still true: good leaders of the church, both men and women, must be brought up with sound teaching in order to teach the true message of the Bible to the church.

## Reflection: Applying the Lesson: 10 minutes

Resource 6-3

*Give the Students about 5 minutes to work on this assignment in class.*

To reflect on how this lesson relates to your life, answer the following questions below:

1. What would mutual submission look like if it was truly lived out in the entire church?
2. What spiritual gifts do you believe that you have? What spiritual gifts have you noticed in a woman that has made a great impact on your life?
3. Can you name a woman that has actually helped guide your beliefs? If so, how?

Once the five minutes are up, ask students to feel free to share what they have written down if they so desire.

Be wary that no one feels forced to share what they have written down; these questions might be a little too personal for some.

In closing this section of the lesson, thank everyone for what they have chosen to share and give an example of your own if you so feel compelled.

# Lesson Close

(5 minutes)

## Review

*Resource 6-4*

Ask students for any questions or comments that they have concerning the lesson. Set the atmosphere, both spiritually and intellectually, for anticipation in the remaining lessons.

Reflect on what you have learned from this lesson. What do you agree with? What do you oppose? What do you still have trouble understanding? How do you make sense of this and relate it to your field of ministry? How might you serve alongside women in the ministry? Reflect on how you would treat them or even encourage them.

## Assign Homework

From the [Wynkoop Center study series on Women in Leadership in the New Testament](#), read the Bible Study: "Women Associates of Jesus" (Session 3) and "Women Associates of Paul" (Session 6). Write down the women around Jesus and the women around Paul. Choose 2 discussion questions from each session and come prepared to share your questions and answers with the class.

Recommended Reading:

- 1 Corinthians 11:3-16 and 14:26-36
- Ephesians 5:21-24
- Peter - 1Peter 3:1-6
- 1 Timothy 2:11-15
- Titus 2:3-5



# Lesson 7

## Women of the New Testament, Obscure Passages

### Lesson Overview

#### Schedule

Start Time	Task or Topic	Learning Activity	Materials Needed
0:00	Introduction	Orientation and Objectives	Student Guide Resource 7-1
0:10	Women of New Testament	Accountability: Homework Review	Resource 7-2
0:20	Obscure Passages and Hermeneutics	Lecture/Group Discussion	Resource 7-3
0:50	Lesson Close	Reflection Question and Assign Homework	Resource 7-4

### Lesson Introduction

(10 minutes)

#### Orientation

Resource 7-1

*Take ten minutes to set a tone of dialogue, of mutual hearing, and of respect for mutual opinions, which will lead directly into today's topic.*

#### Sharing Question:

In view of customs, lifestyles, clothing, language, in what ways has our society changed in the last one hundred years? Give specific examples of the way social customs have changed...Here are some examples to begin thinking in these ways...

- Big white wigs in Patriotic America, and now how even formal British parliament maintains some of this historical clothing custom.
- In mid-1900's, as people came into the Church of the Nazarene, women were expected to stop wearing jewelry, including wedding rings.
- Women were expected to wear long sleeves and no makeup.
- 

When you were a child, what was the expected clothing choice? How does that compare to today's elementary-aged child attending a secular school? (this could go either way—very lax, or uniforms).

Discuss these cultural changes, and what impact they have on our own lives and on the way we see the world. Talk about how this affects our Biblical views as well.

## Learner Objectives

*Instruct students to locate objectives in the Student Guide.*

*State the objectives for the learners.*

Upon completion of Lesson seven, learners should be able to:

- Have a good understanding of women around Jesus and Paul.
- Understand how women were seen, not just as equals to men, but as equals in leadership as men.
- Understand the contexts which affect the interpretation of scripture that have been used to prohibit women from ministry leadership in the Church.

## Review: Women in the New Testament

*(10 minutes)*

### Accountability:

*Resource 7-2*

Have the students identify the women associates of Jesus and the women associates of Paul as outlined in these two sessions. Then have students share which discussion questions they chose and their answers. Discuss the diversity of women and their relationships to Jesus and Paul.

### Homework:

From the [Wynkoop Center study series on Women in Leadership in the New Testament](#), read the Bible Study: "Women Associates of Jesus" (Session 3) and "Women Associates of Paul" (Session 6). Write down the women around Jesus and the women around Paul. Choose 2 discussion questions from each session and come prepared to share your questions and answers with the class.

# Lesson Body

## Lecture: Passages from the Letters of Paul and Peter

(20 minutes)

Resource 7-3

From the ["Difficult Passages in the New Testament"](#) in the Wynkoop Center's Study Series read the following:

Unit 4, Session 1  
Unit 4, Session 2, p. 5-7  
Unit 4, Session 4  
Unit 4, Session 3, p. 5  
Unit 4, Session 3, pages 7-9  
of this 1 Peter text

### 1 Corinthians 11:2-16

Clarify the definition of "head," the cultural significance of whether men's or women's heads should be covered, and the importance Paul put on distancing the Christian's testimony from the pagan worship of the day.

**Read or summarize from [Unit Four, Session One, Exposition by Kaza Fraley, pp. 1-2.](#)**

### 1 Corinthians 14:26-36

Discuss the tension between different parts of the letter, using Johnson's "plain meaning" discussion as well as the "solutions" listed.

**Read or summarize from [Unit Four, Session Two, Commentary by Andy Johnson, pp. 5-7.](#)**

### 1 Timothy 2:8-15

1 Tim brings in two more prohibitions that are often used to deny the use of women's ministry gifts. Verse 12 begins: "I do not permit a woman to teach." (NIV) First, we observe that this is Paul's current position (I am not presently permitting, present active); it is not a command for all time from God. In light of the situation in Ephesus, Paul did not think it was best for the women to teach. Why would Paul say this? In the first century, Jewish and Gentile girls were usually only trained in skills needed to fulfil their domestic roles. Some Jewish writers actually stated that women did not have the mental capacity to study the Torah and so were excused from even hearing the Law. (Cowles, p. 143) A close reading of 1 & 2 Timothy indicates that at this time the church in Ephesus "was plagued by all sorts of strange philosophical mythologies." (Cowles, p. 141) 2 Timothy 3:6 indicates that Ephesian women had a tendency toward unorthodox teaching.

In contrast to his culture, Paul commanded that these women be taught the Torah and the Gospel (v. 11) while being submissive to their teachers and learning quietly which was the custom of the day for male students as well. This, of course, is merely following

the pattern of Jesus who teaches women (see Luke 10:28-42). Perhaps Paul would have changed his policy for Ephesus later on after these women had been taught the Scriptures. We do not hear of him prohibiting Priscilla from teaching Apollos. Paul does recount the damage his own ignorance caused. (1 Tim 1:12-14)

Paul also goes on to say in 1 Timothy 2:12 "or to have authority over a man." (NIV) The Greek word (authentein) translated "authority" is a rare word which is only used here in the NT and is best translated "to dominate or domineer." In secular Greek this word had the meaning "to commit a murder," "to kill with one's own hands." "It suggested monarchical authority where one has life-or-death power over another." (Cowles, p. 146) This dominance goes directly against Paul's principle in Ephesians 5:21 of mutual submission. Although it is unclear, there is some evidence to suggest that women priestesses in Ephesus exerted this kind of authority over their worshipers in the pagan religions.

**Use the explanation above or read or summarize from [Unit Four, Session Four](#) by Melanie Starks Kierstead.**

#### **Ephesians 5:21-24**

Use Tegerstrand's discussion of unconditional love of a newborn as a jumping off point for this section.

**Read or summarize [Unit Four, Session Three](#), pp. 1-2.**

Then include the introductory comments regarding the customs of the NT times versus our own culture today.

**Read or summarize [Unit Four, Session Three](#) "Introduction" to Commentary Ephesians 5:21-24 by Kent Brower, p. 5.**

Then discuss the emphasis Paul places on mutual submission.

**Read or summarize [Unit Four, Session Three](#) Commentary on Ephesians 5:21-23 by Kent Brower, pp. 5-7.**

#### **Peter - 1 Peter 3:1-7**

Emphasize the cultural overtones of modesty, marriage, and godly Christian behavior. This statement summarizes it clearly: "Even within the cultural constraints of their day, Peter and Paul have good news for women. First, women, as women, are

full participants in the new community of believers. Second, women are responsible to respond to their own calling to be holy people, and therefore to be counter-cultural in refusing to conform to some of the patterns of the world. Third, the overall emphasis upon serving and caring for the other moves the whole discussion to the place where the model of submission is no longer that of slave to master but of Christ's servanthood of all. That kind of servanthood has nothing to do with gender."

**Use the explanation above or read or summarize from [Unit Four, Session Three](#) by Kent Brower, pp. 7-9.**

## Lesson Close

(10 minutes)

### Reflection as We Conclude

*Resource 7-4*

*Take a few minutes of the class session to pause and ask some reflection questions.*

#### Questions:

1. How could we get so many of these passages so wrong over the centuries?
2. Discuss what insight has been most persuasive and most beneficial to each, and, as an assignment for next session, journal on your response to this discussion.
3. In what ways have your views on women in ministry been changed, or been reinforced?
4. What passage is still the most difficult for you to interpret?
5. What will you do with the new information?

## Assign Homework

**Read through Romans 16 and list every woman and her role in ministry.**

**Read The Acts of Paul and Thecla**

<http://www.fordham.edu/halsall/basis/thecla.asp> and prepare a one-page response as to what you could perceive as having been real and what may have been myth.

Ask five individuals whether they can tell you the names of two women who have been leaders in the church from the early church through 1500. Write their responses up in a report to be able to compare next session with other students. Comment on why or why not people are able to identify these women.

**Required Reading/Resources**

**Review:** Ablaze with Love– DVD may be ordered via NPH

<http://www.nph.com/nphweb/html/nph/itempage.jsp?itemId=DVD-2400>

**Read the following:**

Junia:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kdD36zVVOb0>

The Acts of Paul and Thecla

<http://www.fordham.edu/halsall/basis/thecla.asp>

Thecla

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PW7UvD1dFjo>

The Life and Works of Hildegard von Bingen

<http://www.fordham.edu/halsall/med/hildegarde.asp>

The Way of Perfection

<http://www.ccel.org/ccel/teresa/way>

**Recommended Reading**

Bible Studies on Women by the Wynkoop Center. See the Wynkoop Center Resources in the following collection:

<https://www.whdl.org/collections/resources-usacanada-modular-course-study-foundations-womens-ordination>

From *Holiness Today*, Article by Jeanne Serrao and Kent Brower, "Reclaiming the Radical Story" [Part 1](#) and [Part 2](#)





## *Lesson 8*

# **Women Church Leaders of the Early and Medieval Period**

## *Lesson Overview*

### **Schedule**

Start Time	Task or Topic	Learning Activity	Materials Needed
0:00	Introduction	Orientation and Accountability	Student Guide Resource 8-1
0:10	Junia	Lecture and Application	Resource 8-2
0:20	Thecla	Lecture and Application	Resource 8-3
0:30	Macrina	Lecture and Application	Resource 8-4
0:40	Female Pope	Lecture and Application	Resource 8-5
0:50	Hildegard & Teresa	Lecture and Application	Resource 8-6

# Lesson Introduction

(10 minutes)

## Orientation and Accountability

Resource 8-1

*Time for discussion regarding reflection over the homework reading assignment.*

### The Focus

There seems to be a misconception that there have been no women leaders in church history. The reality is that female church leaders have existed from the earliest days of Christianity.

- Why do you think we don't know their stories?
  - Not written down – predominately male authors
  - Patriarchal society – women not seen in positions of power//therefore their stories are not important
- Who are some of the women you have heard of in history?
- Why do you know who they are?
- Just because it's not written down, does it mean that it didn't happen?

## Learner Objectives

*Instruct students to locate objectives in the Student Guide.*

*State the objectives for the learners.*

Upon completion of Lesson Eight, learners should be able to:

- Be able to identify 3-4 women who have been significant in the development of Christianity and Christian thought from the early Church through the Medieval Period.
- Discuss ways in which women have been influential in the Church.
- Identify reasons for which women have been excluded from Church history.
- Identify methods in which people of power may be able to open opportunities for those without power.

## Lesson Body

### Lecture: The Early Period – Romans 16

(10 minutes)

Resource 8-2

One of the greatest places to start with this material is – the Bible. Often the Apostle Paul has gotten a bad rap for his attitude toward women. The reality is that if you take he had quite a strong view of women which would have been in contrast to the culture of the day. Romans 16 is filled up with women who were partners with him in the ministry. He views them very highly and they are significant in his life. We will begin with verse seven.

*Rom. 16:7 Greet Andronicus and Junia, my relatives who were in prison with me; they are prominent among the apostles, and they were in Christ before I was.*

#### Junia:

Here in the midst of his letter to the Romans we find mention of a prominent female leader in the church. Andronicus and Junia are relatives of Paul and they have spent time with him in prison. They have suffered for their faith in Jesus Christ. The wording here is significant for they are prominent among the apostles. It doesn't say that he was prominent among the apostles and she happened to have been with him, but that they were prominent.

Here is the first mention of a woman who is regarded as an apostle. She has been a follower of Jesus long before Paul, she has suffered in prison and is a leader among the apostles. A great church leader in the 5th century, John Chrysostom refers to Junia as an apostle but then sometime after this she begins to disappear from history.

During the 4th century the Church unites with the Empire and begins to compromise for the sake of power. Whereas women had been in leadership roles from the beginning days of the Church, now that the Church was interacting with the government leaders, they had to become more respectable. Suddenly Bishops were wearing the same robes that could be found in the Imperial Court and the official structures of society were superimposed upon the Church. Women had no official place of leadership within the Empire, therefore why should they within the Church. Little by little they were excised from the Church and also her history. Translators of the Biblical texts began

to change the form of her name from Junia, to Junias, masculinizing her. Somehow it was more appropriate for her to be a "him".

**Application:** Read the remainder of Romans 16 and list the women found and their roles within the life of the Church.

*Give time for the reading and listing of the women, then have students share what they have found.*

## Lecture: Thecla

(10 minutes)

Resource 8-3

### Thecla:

*And Thecla arose and said to Paul: I go unto Iconium. And Paul said: Go, and teach the word of God. Now Tryphaena had sent her much apparel and gold, so that she left of it with Paul for the ministry of the poor.*  
Author Unknown -- *Acts of Paul & Thecla 41b*

Coming at the close of the Apostolic era we find another woman whose name has remained legendary within Christianity. This is a woman named Thecla. The main document in which we learn of her is the writings known as the "Acts of Paul and Thecla," a document which has always been a bit controversial. While the document may be controversial both written historical documents, and archaeological evidence point to her existence. A shrine to Thecla developed in the area of Seleucia, where thousands of pilgrims a year went to worship God.<sup>3</sup> This shrine had developed around the site where it is believed that Thecla had concluded her years of ministry and asceticism as a virgin. Archaeological evidence reminds us of her existence. On a hillside above the ruins of the city of Ephesus lies additional archaeological evidence of her existence in the form of a long abandoned cave, one in which are found the remnants of a church. This cave, known today as the "Paul and Thecla Cave" contains a series of frescos which depict the Apostle Paul, along with two women.<sup>4</sup> One is identified as Theoclia and

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<sup>3</sup> Davis, *the Cult of St. Thecla*, Location 397

<sup>4</sup> In 1906 the cave was discovered but through the years was forgotten. It wasn't until 1996 that the University of Vienna decided to reexamine the cave. Over 300 signatures had been written in the cave through the centuries, possibly by pilgrims. In an effort to recover the signatures a cleaning of the cave walls was begun in 1998.

the other as Thecla, the fresco depicting the story found in The Acts of Paul and Thecla.

Who was this woman? She was a young lady from a very notable family who happened to come across the path of the Apostle Paul. Day after day she would go to the home of Onesiphorus and sit in the window and listen to Paul's preaching. She was so convinced of the truths she was learning from Paul that she wanted to become a follower of the Way. She wanted to serve Jesus wholeheartedly and so determined that she would not be married.

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It was at that time that Renate Pillinger and her team of archaeologists discovered the frescos on the walls. In 2011 this cave was explored by this author. Entering on the right one encounters three figures in excellent condition. These are of Saint Theokli(a), Saint Paulos and Saint The(k)la. The figure of Saint Thekla is that of a young woman sitting and looking out of the window of a house or a tower made of brick. This coincides with the description of Thecla found in *the Acts of Paul and Thecla*, 2.1-3, "While Paul was preaching this sermon in the church which was in the house of Onesiphorus, a certain virgin named Thecla (whose mother's name was Theoclia, and who was betrothed to a man named Thamyris) sat at a certain window in her house. From where, by the advantage of a window in the house where Paul was, she both night and day heard Paul's sermons concerning God, concerning charity, concerning faith in Christ, and concerning prayer; Nor would she depart from the window till with exceeding joy she was subdued to the doctrines of faith." Pillinger contends that the woman, Theoclia is the mother of Thecla. See "Die so genannte Paulusgrotte" Cited 5 February, 2011. Online: <https://klass-archaeologie.univie.ac.at/forschung/rp-paulusgrotte/>. Theoclia is the name of Thecla's mother in the *Acts of Paul and Thecla*, and therefore the fresco could be that of her mother. While some manuscripts of the *Acts* do not have the mother converting, the Coptic version ends with a story which would lead us to believe that Thecla returns home and brings out her mother's conversion. The woman (Theoclia) depicted in the grotto is labeled as a "Saint" and has her right hand up in worship of Christ. Later in Thecla's journeys, a princess by the name of Tryphaena adopts Thecla as her own. It is believed that this Tryphaena is "Antonia Tryphaena, daughter of Queen Pythodoris, and herself queen of Pontus." See Gocha R. Tsetskhadze, *Ancient West & East*, Volume 4, Issue 1. Brill, Leiden, 2005. Cited 2 February 2011. Online: [http://books.google.com.au/books?id=6Xh14u9WmnYC&pg=PA102&lpg=PA102&dq=strabo+and+antonia+tryphaena&source=web&ots=js2mzwPbOl&sig=At4DEOKQwZv2DjtqJt\\_7PMYdVP8&hl=en#v=onepage&q=strabo%20and%20antonia%20tryphaena&f=false](http://books.google.com.au/books?id=6Xh14u9WmnYC&pg=PA102&lpg=PA102&dq=strabo+and+antonia+tryphaena&source=web&ots=js2mzwPbOl&sig=At4DEOKQwZv2DjtqJt_7PMYdVP8&hl=en#v=onepage&q=strabo%20and%20antonia%20tryphaena&f=false). Also of note in the translated text by M.R. James, Oxford 1924, <http://www.earlychristianwritings.com/text/actspaul.html>. Accessed 8 July 2008, he notes, "Moreover, one historical personage is introduced into the story, namely, Queen Tryphaena, who was the widow, it seems, of Cotys, King of Thrace, and the mother of Polemo II, King of Pontus. She was a great-niece of the Emperor Claudius." One might ask whether this is the same Tryphaena which is mentioned by the Apostle Paul in his letter to the Romans 16:12 "Greet those workers in the Lord, Tryphaena and Tryphosa." (NRSV) Interesting to note that within Coptic Christianity there exists a Saint Theoclia who was the wife of Saint Justus who lived in the early 4<sup>th</sup> century and was martyred. The possibility exists that the two stories became mixed and by the time the frescos were painted on the cave walls in the 5<sup>th</sup> century, Thecla's mother, having the same name as this woman, had become a Saint.

The problem was that she was already engaged to a powerful man within the community. She refused to marry the man and this caused great problems for both Thecla and Paul. Eventually she was sentenced to death for this act of defiance. God intervened and her life was saved. For her own personal safety she had to cut her hair and dress as a man so that she could travel. She tried to follow Paul so that she could continue to hear his preaching and learn from him.

While Thecla's family disowns her for her actions she is adopted by a wealthy woman Tryphaena who becomes a believer and adopts Thecla and supports her. Paul mentions a woman named Tryphaena in Romans 16:12. Could it be that this is the same woman? Because of the support of Tryphaena, Thecla is able to go on teach the Word. She settles in an area near Selucia where it is believed that she lived out her life discipling new believers. The shrine which developed there speaks of her significance for archaeological evidence shows that the water systems there were built to handle up to 3000 people at a time. Her life of faith became so famous that by the fourth century it was not uncommon for Christians to name their little girls "Thecla."

#### **Application:**

- Why do you think you've never heard of Thecla before?
- Who do we name people for today and why?

*Reflection Questions: Have students share in pairs and then bring their ideas to the whole class.*

### **Lecture: Macrina**

(10 minutes)

*Resource 8-4*

*Someone more magnificent in form and appearance than a human manifested himself, addressing that child she was carrying by the name "Thecla," for there was a Thecla considered important among the virgins. Having done this three times, he disappeared from before her eyes and eased the pain, so that she awoke from her sleep and saw her dream become reality. Thus "Thecla" was her [Macrina's] secret name. -- Gregory of Nyssa, Life of Macrina.*

In the fourth century we discover an incredibly influential family headed by a matriarch who is known

to us as Macrina the Elder. She lived from 270-340 and was a very devoted follower of Jesus Christ. She and her husband had lived in the wilderness for seven years during the persecutions and had studied under a man known as Gregory the Wonderworker. Macrina the Elder became a figure in the household of her son and his wife, Basil and Emily. Basil and Emily had ten children, nine of whom reached adulthood and known as "an army of Saints." The quote above comes from scene in which Emily is about to give birth to her first-born child. This girl was to be named for her grandmother and therefore is known to us as Macrina the Younger, but her secret name was to be Thecla. This naming was a foreshadowing of the woman that she was to become.

Macrina grew up as the oldest of all the siblings and together with her brothers she was taught by her grandmother. Day in and day out the children were taught about the Scriptures and Macrina showed great aptitude in memorizing long passages, especially of the Psalms. Her days were filled with studying, learning and teaching others what she was absorbing. This little girl became passionate about her love for God.

She was known as a very beautiful young girl and her father knew that it would be important to find the right spouse for her. It was soon arranged that a fine young lawyer would become her husband. The two of them were betrothed to one another and the plans for the upcoming nuptials were being made. During the time of their engagement the young man suddenly died leaving Macrina and the family in a quandary. Actually the family was in more of a quandary than Macrina. Her great desire was to fulfill the prophesy on her life – to be a woman like Thecla. Macrina desired to live life as a virgin fully devoted to God and teaching others to know him too. Her family wanted her to find another suitor but she insisted that she wanted to live her life alone in service to God and that she would consider her betrothal as her earthly marriage. Her family finally consented to her demands and she was allowed to seek the life that she desired with God.

From that moment in time Macrina's life began to change. She had asserted herself in her desire for God and now she began to assert herself in the home as well. She became the primary teacher for all of the younger siblings that were in the home. Day after day she taught them from the word of God but not only did they learn the word, but they desired to live by the word. Macrina began to believe that God was calling them to a much more simple life, a dramatic change from their current life of wealth in the city of Caesarea in Cappadocia. After their father died, Macrina took

over leadership within the family and her mother Emily became her disciple. The household in Caesarea was liquidated and the family along with all of their servants moved out to the country home in Pontus where they could give themselves wholeheartedly in service to God. Every member of the household, servants and masters were placed on the same level. Macrina could be found baking bread beside someone who had previously been her servant. Together they became a household monastery – a community of believers together who lived in simplicity, were seeking God and served the community in which they lived. At the head of it all was Macrina.

Two of Macrina's brothers went on to become quite famous in church history, St. Basil the Great, and St. Gregory of Nyssa. These two men were some of the greatest theologians the Church has ever encountered and they provided Christianity with some much needed theological brawn at a time when certain heresies had the potential of driving a wedge in this fledgling faith. While her brothers have been remembered throughout history because of their voluminous writings, one can't forget Macrina. She wasn't sending letters throughout the Empire in a desire to defend the faith and therefore her words may not be recorded....or are they? Gregory of Nyssa writes a document called, "On the Soul and the Resurrection" in which he has a dialogue with the Teacher. He makes it quite clear that Macrina is the Teacher. It becomes obvious that she had a powerful influence on Gregory, his development and on his ability to articulate issues related to the faith. Gregory also writes her biography known as "The Life of Saint Macrina."

The household monastery on the family Estate at Annesi becomes a model for early monasticism. Many consider Macrina the founder of female monasticism and yet there was so much more happening at Annesi. Basil writes the Long and Short Rules for monastic living and we believe that it is Macrina's monastery that provides the template for his instructions. Basilian monasticism is still alive today and it is believed that it was Basil's rules which provided the outline for the later orders created by Saint Benedict.

Finally it was Gregory of Nyssa and the family friend, Gregory of Nazianzus who represented all of them at the Council of Constantinople in 381. They were influential in the affirmation of the Nicene Creed which we have today, a creed which helped to define Christianity to a world that was in the midst of rapid change. Both Macrina and Basil had died in the few years prior to this council meeting but how much of

their influence was truly present? The influence of a young lady wholeheartedly dedicated to serving God can be found even today in the words of the Creed we recite today.

**Application:**

- What are examples of ways in which God has used the lives of women to have influence in the Church when the official structures have not given her position?
- What women have influenced your church, or you personally.

*Reflection Questions: Have students share in pairs and then bring their ideas to the whole class.*

**Lecture: A Female Pope?**

(10 minutes)

Resource 8-5

*John Anglicus, born at Mainz, was Pope for two years, seven months and four days, and died in Rome, after which there was a vacancy in the Papacy of one month. It is claimed that this John was a woman, who as a girl had been led to Athens dressed in the clothes of a man by a certain lover of hers. There she became proficient in a diversity of branches of knowledge, until she had no equal, and, afterward in Rome, she taught the liberal arts and had great masters among her students and audience. A high opinion of her life and learning arose in the city; and she was chosen for Pope. While Pope, however, she became pregnant by her companion. Through ignorance of the exact time when the birth was expected, she was delivered of a child while in procession from St. Peter's to the Lateran, in a lane once named Via Sacra (the sacred way) but now known as the "shunned street" between the Colosseum and St Clement's church. After her death, it is said she was buried in that same place. The Lord Pope always turns aside from the street, and it is believed by many that this is done because of abhorrence of the event. Nor is she placed on the list of the Holy Pontiffs, both because of her female sex and on account of the foulness of the matter.*

—Martin of Opava, *Chronicon Pontificum et Imperatorum*

This is one of the legends of Church History – one which cannot be proven one way or another, but was

there a female Pope who died in 1099? The significance of this story is not simply her influence but the fact that she rose to a position of power within the Church. Let's imagine for a moment this story could be true and examine the different factors at play. First of all, she had great skill and ability as a student. As long as she hid her gender she had many masters and students who would come and listen to her teachings. There must have been more than just teachings but also a life which commanded respect. There are other accounts of her life which can be read and suggest a few other details. The respect for her was so high that she was selected as Pope almost immediately at the deathbed of the previous Pope.

Another document suggests that the father of the child was her secretary and traveling companion. What a shock it would have been to this man to discover the Pope was a woman, but the two of them would have been thrown into a position of continual close contact. Maybe they simply fell in love and were living as husband and wife – but how could anyone be told? Not to condone their actions but it

***Reflection Questions: Have students share in pairs and then bring their ideas to the whole class.***

certainly would have been an awkward situation.

The final statement of the author above gives us some

pause because he gives explanation as to why she is not listed in the official record or list of Holy Pontiffs, "both because of her female sex and on account of the foulness of the matter." The "foulness of the matter" is probably understood but what about the first portion "because of her female sex?" Just imagine that the story is true and there was a woman who was skilled, educated, articulate and able to be a leader – who was a leader – and whose name was stricken because of her gender. This story is simply a reminder that there are reasons, both spoken and unspoken, why some people do not appear within the history books. It doesn't mean that they didn't exist or make a difference in the world, but those with the power make decisions about whose stories will be told and whose will not.

**Application**

- Why would it have been so hideous thing to have had a female Pope?
- Who makes decisions today about whose stories will be told and whose will not?
- People of power can choose whether to allow individuals without power to have a voice or not. What does that mean for us as followers of Jesus Christ?

## Lesson Close

(10 minutes)

### Small Group Discussion: Hildegard von Bingen and Teresa of Avila

(10 minutes)

Resource 8-6

#### Hildegard von Bingen

*I had been conscious from earliest girlhood of a power of insight, and visions of hidden and wonderful things...I kept it hidden by silence until God in his grace willed to have it made manifest. Scivias Book 1, Hildegard von Bingen*

In the 11<sup>th</sup> century we find another remarkable woman. Of course, we must realize that there continued to be remarkable women throughout history, even if their stories were not told. However, these days we are discovering more and more of their stories and their histories are becoming apparent and the ways in which they influenced the world and the Church is becoming more and more evident.

Hildegard von Bingen served the Church but also wrote voluminously and left us with an entire volume of *Patrologia Latina* filled with her works. She began her religious life as a little girl when she moved to live with her aunt who was a recluse. By the time she turned fourteen she decided to become a nun. As she grew and matured she became a powerful administrator in the convent and often traveled great distances in support of the work. It was during this time that she was the most prolific in her writing, many of which were letters to ordinary people. Joan Ferrante says that Hildegard was a type of Dear Abby of her day. However, her prophetic writings were taken very seriously by others in ministry including the pope and St. Bernard of Clairvaux. She is a very gifted visionary but her writings also reveals a mix of self-confidence as well as humility which is common to the writings of women.

As a child Hildegard was uncomfortable with telling people about her "visions." However this become

the unique character of her writings. She makes it clear that these are not dreams but that they come from the interior life of a female mystic. Within the church community she receives great support to write about what she sees and hears. It has been said of her:

*Hildegard of Bingen, prodigiously gifted in many directions, scientific, mystical, and poetic, composed a cycle of Latin liturgical lyric – hymns and sequences, antiphons and responses – in which such fusion of images is taken to an unparalleled visionary extreme. In its forms and melodies, as in its poetic techniques, this 'symphony of the harmony of heavenly revelations,' as she called it, stands apart from all other religious, lyric, Latin or vernacular, of its time. – Peter Dronke, The Medieval Lyric*

Hildegard transcended the limitations of the Church at the time because, typically, women would not have been allowed to be involved in interpretation of the Scripture. Not only did she interpret Scripture but she preached publically. This would have been virtually unknown in her day when a woman, even an abbess, would have only been allowed to preach within her monastery. Hildegard went on to conduct at least four public preaching tours throughout Germany.

### **Lecture: Teresa of Avila**

*In all that I shall say in this Book, I submit to what is taught by Our Mother, the Holy Roman Church; if there is anything in it contrary to this, it will be without my knowledge. Therefore, for the love of Our Lord, I beg the learned men who are to revise it to look at it very carefully and to amend any faults of this nature which there may be in it and the many others which it will have of other kinds. If there is anything good in it, let this be to the glory and honor of God and in the service of His most sacred Mother, our Patroness and Lady, whose habit, though all unworthily, I wear. – St. Teresa of Avila, Way of Perfection*

In Teresa of Avila another mystic mixing visionary language and with humility and becoming a prophetic in the voice of the Roman Catholic Church. She is born into a rather tumultuous time within the life of the Church as the Reformation is beginning to take shape. Just as Hildegard, Teresa is a spiritual visionary. At first people aren't sure what to make of her but her visions come from a life dedicated to a deeper spiritual walk with God. Teresa had suffered under poor healthcare and spent many months lying in bed and there learned how to pray out to God in ways she had never before experienced.

Teresa was concerned with the spiritual state of the order in which served and she desired to bring about reform. Eventually she formed her own order which became known as *Discalced* or shoeless Carmelites. It was during this time of establishing this order that she wrote both *the Way of Perfection* and *Meditations on the Canticle*. Teresa died in 1582 at the age of 63. Under her ministry many new convents had been founded and her literary works remain to challenge us into a deeper walk with God.

### Application

*Break into Small Groups and discuss these questions. Have one person report to the whole group the major points made by the small group discussion*

- If these materials written by women are available to us, why do you think they are not often read?
- What have you learned today from these women, or about them?

### Recommended Reading

Pederson, Rena. *The Lost Apostle: Searching for the Truth About Junia*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 200

## Assign Homework

### Required Reading/Resources

**Re-read Bassett's paper on *Ordination of Women*** (Lesson 2) and found at:

<https://www.whdl.org/ordination-women-ministry-church-nazarene>

**Write a 1 page essay** in your journal reflecting on: What do you already know about women in ministry from the time of Wesley through the Church of the Nazarene today? What would you like to know? How does (or should) this aspect of tradition influence our understanding today?

### Recommended Reading:

John Wesley, *The Works of Rev. John Wesley*, ed. Thomas Jackson, 14 vols. (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson Publishers, Inc. 1984), 7:125-26

Nancy Hardesty, *Women Called to Witness, : Evangelical Feminism in the 19th Century* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1984), p. 83.

Richard Wheatley, *The Life and Letters of Mrs. Phoebe*

*Palmer* (New York: W.C. Palmer, 1876), p. 66

Zechariah Taft, *Biographical Sketches of the Lives and Public Ministry of Various Holy Women, Whose Eminent Usefulness and Successful Labours in the Church of Christ, Have Entitled Them to Be Enrolled Among the Great Benefactors of Mankind*. 2 vols. (London: Mr. Kershaw, 1825), vol 1, p. 36.

Supportive Material: See Diane Leclerc, "Introduction," in *I am Not Ashamed: Sermons by Wesleyan-Holiness Women* (San Diego, CA: Point Loma Press, 2005).

Supportive Article See:

[http://wesley.nnu.edu/fileadmin/imported\\_site/wesleyjournal/1989-wtj-24.pdf](http://wesley.nnu.edu/fileadmin/imported_site/wesleyjournal/1989-wtj-24.pdf)



## *Lesson 9*

# **Women Church Leaders from Wesley through the Modern Period**

## *Lesson Overview*

### **Schedule**

Start Time	Task or Topic	Learning Activity	Materials Needed
0:00	Introduction	Orientation	Student Guide
0:10	Women Preachers	Lecture Part 1	Resource 9-1 Resource 9-2
0:25	Leaders in the Wesleyan-Holiness Movement	Lecture Part 2	Resource 9-3 Resource 9-4
0:40	Nazarene Women Clergy	Small Group Activity	Homework for the Day
0:55	Lesson Close	Review, Assign	Student Guide

# Lesson Introduction

(10 minutes)

## Orientation

*Student Guide: The Focus*

### The Big Idea:

John Wesley modified his view to affirm women preachers, and planted the seeds for the ordination of women in the denominations of the Holiness Movement, including the Church of the Nazarene.

Nazarene women clergy represent a long tradition of women preachers in the movement known as “Wesleyan-Holiness.” Methodist women preached shortly after Methodism was born. Holiness women preached when the Holiness Movement was born. And Wesleyan-Holiness women have preached ever since. This is often overlooked by broader Christian historians and ecclesiastical analysts, who mistakenly see women preachers and female ordination as a later 20<sup>th</sup>-century phenomenon, which rode the *second* wave of feminism.

The Holiness Movement was squarely in the middle of the *first* wave of feminism in the 19<sup>th</sup> century. It was socially vocal and active on issues of equality such as abolitionism, the rights of non-whites and immigrants, the rights of the poor, and the rights of women. Nearly all of the denominations that arose from the Holiness Movement affirmed the full equality of women, including rights to ordination, from their inception, including the Church of the Nazarene. It is greatly unfortunate, however, that so many people now associated with such denominations do not know this history, or have lost the Wesleyan-Holiness theology on which human equality is founded. As a result, women have recently found it necessary to defend their right to preach, in denominations that have *never* officially questioned such a right.

## Learner Objectives

*Instruct students to locate objectives in the Student Guide.*

*State the objectives for the learners.*

Upon completion of Lesson Nine, learners should be able to:

- Be able to articulate how John Wesley supported women preachers
- Be able to articulate the influence of Phoebe Palmer's support of women preachers, and how her theology of holiness fosters such a position
- Be able to articulate broadly the history of women clergy in the Church of the Nazarene

## Accountability:

*Review the questions for reflection with the class. If there is a large class, have them share answers in small groups and then appoint someone to share the main points from the group with the whole class.*

### Homework:

#### Required Reading/Resources

Re-read Bassett's paper on *Ordination of Women* (Lesson 2) and found at:

<https://www.whdl.org/ordination-women-ministry-church-nazarene>.

Place the class in small groups. They have read the article by Paul Bassett before coming to class. Have them produce an outline of the major points and important figures from the article

**Write** a 1 page essay reflecting on: What do you already know about women in ministry from the time of Wesley through the Church of the Nazarene today? What would you like to know? How does (or should) this aspect of tradition influence our understanding today?

# Lesson Body

## Lecture Part 1: Wesley on Women and Church Leadership

(15 minutes)

Resource 9-1

### **Women Preachers in the Holiness Movement:**

Methodism in the second half of the 18th century, under the leadership of John Wesley, reveals a growing acceptance of the giftedness of the women of the movement. This giftedness included the leadership of bands and societies, pastoral care of the sick and dying, public prayer and testimony, and eventually "preaching" due to the recognition by Wesley of the extraordinary call of many extraordinary women.

*"in the evangelical revival under the Wesleys, the waters of reform and renewal would once again sweep through the ever-widening channel of human equality, women riding the crest of the wave."<sup>1</sup>*

John Wesley was influenced by women throughout his life, beginning, of course, with his mother Susanna. She was a strong figure in his spiritual development, but she also modeled leadership in the larger ecclesiastical setting. Having had his mother model women's potential for spiritual leadership, he early made it a part of his own pastoral practice. After beginning the revival in England, Wesley discovered that a very high percentage of the members of the societies were women. He very quickly allowed women to lead bands, and then societies, even when men were members. Chilcote aptly remarks, "Women who were otherwise disenfranchised in a world dominated by men, began to develop a new sense of self-esteem and purpose."<sup>2</sup> In the setting of the societies, women were encouraged to pray publicly, to offer personal testimony, and to exhort the other members, often using scripture as the basis for such exhortation. The steps toward public preaching were being made by numerous women across England.

Wesley offers an overtly positive response to women assuming ministerial roles. From a sermon entitled "On Visiting the Sick" we find these bold words: Herein there is no difference; "there is neither male nor female in Christ Jesus." Indeed it has long passed for the maxim with many that "women are only to be seen, not heard." And accordingly many of them are brought up in such a manner as if they were only designed for

agreeable playthings! But is this doing honour to the sex? or is it a real kindness to them? No; it is the deepest unkindness; it is horrid cruelty; it is mere Turkish barbarity. And I know not how any woman of sense and spirit can submit to it. Let all you that have it in your power assert the right which God of nature has given you. Yield not to that vile bondage any longer! You, as well as men, are rational creatures. You, like them, were made in the image of God; you are equally candidates for immortality; you too are called of God... Be 'not disobedient to the heavenly calling.'<sup>3</sup>

Resource 9-2

### **Wesley and Women Preachers:**

Sarah Crosby, considered to be the first of the women preachers of early Methodism, experienced glimpses of true equality as she exercised her gifts with ever increasing freedom and with an increasing approval by Wesley. As time went on, John Wesley encouraged her ministry of preaching with ever increasing confidence. Sarah (also called Sally) Crosby was born on November 7, 1729 in Leeds. She was made a class leader by 1751; although she felt inadequate for the task, she was very effective as a leader and devoted much of her time to the society. In 1757, she professed to an experience of entire sanctification which became central to her ministry and her preaching throughout her life. She also experienced another vivid incident that she records in a letter to Wesley:

Not long after this as I was praying, my soul was overwhelmed with the power of God; I seemed to see the Lord Jesus before me, and said, "Lord, I am ready to follow thee, not only to prison, but to death, if thou wilt give me strength;" and he spake these words to my heart, "feed my sheep."<sup>4</sup>

That calling would never leave her, and would expand in meaning through the years. By 1771 Wesley seems to move beyond the pragmatic benefit to women preachers and begins to wrestle with the idea theologically, as he reflects on the whole nature of the movement called Methodism. On June 13, 1771 he writes to Sarah.

I think the strength of the cause rests here; on your having an extraordinary call. So I am persuaded has every one of our lay preachers;

otherwise, I could not countenance his preaching at all. It is plain to me, that the whole work of God termed Methodism is an extraordinary dispensation of his providence. Therefore, I do not wonder if several things occur therein which do not fall under ordinary rules of discipline. St. Paul's ordinary rule was "I permit not a woman to speak in the congregation." Yet in extraordinary cases, he made a few exceptions; at Corinth in particular.<sup>5</sup>

It is during this decade that Sarah Crosby became a traveling itinerant preacher, at times traveling with Wesley himself. "Sarah Crosby's reputation as a remarkable preacher soon preceded her wherever she went [as did] her indefatigable public labors."<sup>6</sup>

We see a development in his thought. While ideals of equality were in place early in his life, his relationship with these women would force him to hone his ideology with ever increasing clarity. Early in his career he interpreted the difficult passages concerning women rather rigidly. But through his experiences with women such as Sarah, he would come to see that there were circumstances where it was appropriate to set aside these injunctions for a higher purpose. He finally made preaching by women the official position of Methodism (as we see most clearly in the case of Sarah Mallet, who was *officially* sanctioned to preach).

Women preachers have an extraordinary call that fits the extraordinary calling of the people called Methodists. Wesley's concept of an "extraordinary dispensation" allowed him to condone and encourage the place of lay preachers in the movement, despite criticism from the Anglican Church. This same dispensation allowed him to recognize the role of women. Women preachers were not cross-purposed, but fit readily into Wesley's pragmatic ideology of the meaning and means of Methodism; it is clear that Wesley was able to deal with women individually in such a way that they were always affirmed and encouraged to reach their full spiritual potential. He recognized their contribution to his beloved movement.

## Lecture Part 2: Women in the Holiness Movement

(15 minutes)

Resource 9-3

### Leaders in the Wesleyan-Holiness Movement:

As Susie Stanley's exceptional book, *Holy Boldness: Women Preacher's Autobiographies and the Sanctified Self*,<sup>7</sup> shows, hundreds of women are preaching with an empowered sense of self and calling in what will come to be known as the Holiness Movement. Phoebe Palmer was a key figure. Palmer has been cited as an important contributor to the 19<sup>th</sup>-century debate concerning the role of women in the church. In the words of Donald Dayton:

It was... the denominations produced by the mid-nineteenth century 'holiness revival' that most consistently raised feminism to a central principle of church life. This movement largely emerged from the work of Phoebe Palmer.<sup>8</sup>

Indeed, Palmer's *The Promise of the Father*, a defense of women in ministry written in 1859, anticipates many of the interpretative moves of 20th-century feminist exegetes. But it is unlikely that the isolated literary pronouncements of even such a revered founding figure as Phoebe Palmer would of themselves be enough to induce an entire religious movement to take such a decisive and controversial stand on the issue of women's roles. Rather, the Holiness Movement's consistently strong endorsement of the equality of women is rooted not only in Palmer's exegesis in *Promise of the Father*, but more profoundly in her far more influential articulation of the distinctive Holiness doctrine of entire sanctification. To put it simply, Phoebe Palmer made it possible for women to understand themselves as "entirely sanctified" and thereby as encouraged to adopt new roles in radical disjunction with their pasts. Nancy Hardesty articulates this disjunction:

[Palmer] affirmed that Christians were not only justified before God but were also regenerate, reborn, made new, capable of being restored to the Edenic state. For women it made possible the sweeping away of centuries of patriarchal,

misogynist culture in the instant... The argument that 'this is the way we've always done it,' holds no power for someone for whom 'all things have been made new.'<sup>9</sup>

This was the primary message of Palmer's theology. She developed a comprehensive theological vision across her writings and preaching that was, and is, especially liberating for women. Palmer's own experience of entire sanctification led her to develop a theological scheme that modified Wesley. The theological modifications she espoused, which resulted from the innovative merging of holiness doctrine with the fervor of American revivalism, catalyzed Palmer to break traditional roles herself, and to emphasize women's unrestricted potential in her preaching and writing.

### **Palmer's Holiness Theology:**

Palmer's synthesis of holiness theology with revivalism can be seen clearly in her emphasis on the instantaneousness of sanctification. Palmer also modifies Wesley in her adoption of John Fletcher's linkage of entire sanctification with "the baptism of the Holy Spirit," by taking the image and popularizing it. Arising out of the utilization of Baptism language is the linking of holiness with Pentecostal power. Persons who experienced entire sanctification were empowered to accomplish what was beyond their own human limitations. It is not by chance that Palmer's primary text in support of women's ordination in *The Promise of the Father* is Acts 2.

Through such Pentecostal empowerment and "unhindered" freedom, women in particular were then enabled to progress in their spiritual journeys as never before. In Palmer's scheme, women have equal access to the "Pentecostal power" available through the Holy Spirit. And thus women are equally capable to be "Pentecostal witnesses" to what God can do in a life that is entirely devoted. Richard Wheatley, writing shortly after Palmer's death, tells an interesting anecdote:

In Tully [New York] Mrs. Palmer's loving instructions were blest, to the entire sanctification of a minister's wife, who was changed from a timid, shrinking, silent Christian, into a tearful, modest one, but one filled Pentecostal power, and who afterwards spoke in public with remarkable effect.<sup>10</sup>

Resource 9-4

To be empowered through sanctifying grace meant to be empowered for something specifically, often including the power to speak and preach. Palmer's holiness theology, particularly as it finds expression in the language of Pentecost, emphasizes the unlimited potential of the believer. "Palmer's 'Way of Holiness' more than any other Christian doctrine available during the first half of the nineteenth-century brought the Romantic vision of inner autonomy and unlimited personal growth to middle-class women, in itself a highly significant development."<sup>11</sup>

Persons such as Catherine Booth (Salvation Army) and B.T. Roberts (Free Methodism) also wrote treatises on women's right to preach. B.T. Roberts wrote *Ordination of Women* in 1891. Booth published her work in 1861. Cofounder of the Salvation Army, reformer, writer, and preacher, Catherine Mumford was born to a Methodist family in England in the early 19<sup>th</sup> century. At an early age, the family moved to Boston, where they were heavily involved in the Temperance Movement. She returned to London at the age of 15, where she started attending Methodist class meetings. In 1851, Catherine was expelled from the Methodist connection because she favored a group interested in Methodist reform. William Booth was a member of this group. Catherine married him at the age of 36 and had eight children. Influenced by the Phoebe Palmer, Catherine published *Female Ministry* in 1859 where she called women to accept and seek all areas of Christian ministry, including preaching; she herself began to preach the following year. With her husband, Catherine established a new branch of the Holiness Movement: the Salvation Army, with the doctrine of Christian Perfection central to its theology. Out of such theology, the social imperative of reform became central to its religious practice that included the rights of women.

**And so**, women across America, Canada, and Great Britain, began to testify in public, standing in mixed assemblies to proclaim God's sanctifying power. Women speaking in public was more common as the century wore on, but Palmer challenged women to testify soon after her own experience in 1837, when public speaking by a woman would have been

considered scandalous. Palmer stressed that if a woman was entirely devoted to God, she would be willing to do what God asked of her, even if it went against social norms or protocol. Following this model, the Holiness Movement would allow women to fulfill this special requirement of God. Preaching was the next inevitable step after testimony, ordination the next step after preaching. All of this is based on a belief in equality that arises from more than socio-historical factors. Wesleyan-Holiness theology gave rise to practical application. Wesleyan-Holiness women preached, and continue to preach today.

### Lesson Endnotes

<sup>1</sup>Paul Wesley Chilcote, *She Offered Them Christ* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1993), p. 21.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid. p. 34.

<sup>3</sup>John Wesley, *The Works of Rev. John Wesley*, ed. Thomas Jackson, 14 vols. (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson Publishers, Inc. 1984), 7:125-26.

<sup>4</sup>Zechariah Taft, *Biographical Sketches of the Lives and Public Ministry of Various Holy Women, Whose Eminent Usefulness and Successful Labours in the Church of Christ, Have Entitled Them to Be Enrolled Among the Great Benefactors of Mankind*. 2 vols. (London: Mr. Kershaw, 1825), vol 1, p. 36.

<sup>5</sup>Leslie F. Church, *More About the Early Methodist People* (London: Epworth Press, 1949), p. 356.

<sup>6</sup>Paul W. Chilcote, *John Wesley and the Women Preachers of Early Methodism*. (Metuchen, NJ: The Scarecrow Press, 1994), p. 155.

<sup>7</sup>See Susie Stanley, *Holy Boldness: Women Preacher's Autobiographies and the Sanctified Self* (Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 2002).

<sup>8</sup>Donald W. Dayton, *Discovering an Evangelical Heritage* (New York: Harper and Row, 1976), p. 200.

<sup>9</sup>Nancy Hardesty, *Women Called to Witness, : Evangelical Feminism in the 19th Century* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1984), p. 83.

<sup>10</sup>Richard Wheatley, *The Life and Letters of Mrs. Phoebe Palmer* (New York: W.C. Palmer, 1876), p. 66.

<sup>11</sup>Harold Raser in *Phoebe Palmer: Her Life and Thought*. (Lewiston, NY.: E. Mellen Press, 1987), p. 279.

# Lesson Close

(5 minutes)

## Review

Do you have any questions or comments regarding this lesson?

## Recommended Reading

Diane Leclerc, "Introduction," in *I am Not Ashamed: Sermons by Wesleyan-Holiness Women* (San Diego, CA: Point Loma Press, 2005).

Susan Stanley, "Empowered Foremothers: Wesleyan/Holiness Women Speak to Today's Christian Feminists." *Wesleyan Theological Journal* (1989) 24:103-116

[http://wesley.nnu.edu/fileadmin/imported\\_site/wesleyjournal/1989-wtj-24.pdf](http://wesley.nnu.edu/fileadmin/imported_site/wesleyjournal/1989-wtj-24.pdf)

## Assign Homework Interview

Talk to one person from a Christian denomination outside the Wesleyan tradition. The aim of the conversation is to learn what the denomination believes and practices in the area of women in ministry, specifically, the ordination of women for preaching and pastoral ministry.

### Tips:

- Avoid discussing/arguing about differences in opinion. Your role is to listen, record and report back to the class.
- The interview should be no longer than 30 minutes.
- Make the appointment ahead of time.
- Spend a few minutes in small talk; establish a friendly interchange of ideas.
- Explain why you want to ask these questions.

### Here are some sample questions:

1. Does your church ordain women?
2. Why does/doesn't your church ordain women?
3. What ministries in your church are open to women?
4. Is your church's position on women in ministry included in any official documents? Is there a website I can look at for more information?



## Lesson 10

# Wesleyan Theology and Gender Mutuality

## Lesson Overview

### Schedule

Start Time	Task or Topic	Learning Activity	Materials Needed
0:00	Introduction	Orientation and Accountability	Student Guide
0:10	Theology & Women in Ministry	Class Activity	Homework assignment
0:20	Gender Mutuality & the Wesleyan Approach to Theology	Lecture/Group Discussion	Resource 10-1 Resource 10-2 Resource 10-3
0:45	A Theology of Fellowship	Lecture	Resource 10-4
1:10	Gender Mutuality in Congregational Life	Group Discussion	Resource 10-5
1:25	Lesson Close	Review, Assign	Student Guide

# Lesson Introduction

(10 minutes)

## Accountability

*For homework, students were asked to interview a believer from outside the Wesleyan tradition.*

*Students will share their answers in small groups. Once this activity is completed, collect the homework for evaluation.*

## Interview

Talk to one person from a Christian denomination outside the Wesleyan tradition. The aim of the conversation is to learn what the denomination believes and practices in the area of women in ministry, specifically, the ordination of women for preaching and pastoral ministry.

### Tips:

- Avoid discussing/arguing about differences in opinion. Your role is to listen, record and report back to the class.
- The interview should be no longer than 30 minutes.
- Make the appointment ahead of time.
- Spend a few minutes in small talk; establish a friendly interchange of ideas.
- Explain why you want to ask these questions.

### Here are some sample questions:

1. Does your church ordain women?
2. Why does/doesn't your church ordain women?
3. What ministries in your church are open to women?
4. Is your church's position on women in ministry included in any official documents? Is there a website I can look at for more information?

## Orientation

*In the first few minutes of the class, briefly introduce the topic and trajectory of the class. Refer students to the schedule.*

**Throughout this module, we have been thinking about women in ministry.** We have explored the biblical and historical basis for affirming that God calls women and men into ordained ministry. Today, we want to think about Wesleyan theology and gender mutuality.

Here is the question: "How does Wesleyan theology substantiate and affirm gender mutuality?"

Today's session helps us think through this question and identify concrete ways that our answers can shape our perspective and our ministry.

## Learner Objectives

*Instruct students to locate objectives in the Student Guide.*

*State the objectives for the learners.*

- By the end of this lesson, participants should
- Understand the meaning of the terms “Wesleyan theology” and “gender mutuality” and their relation
  - Identify in the core principle and methodology of Wesleyan theology adequate grounds to affirm gender mutuality in Christian ministry
  - Understand that gender mutuality is inherent to the content of Wesleyan theology
  - Identify specific ways to practice the affirmation of gender mutuality in church practice and life-style

## Lesson Body

### Class Activity: Theology and women in ministry

(10 minutes)

*Refer to Homework instructions in the Student Guide, which students had to complete for homework.*

*This activity can be completed in small groups, or, with the class as a whole. The aim of the assignment was to help students discern the theological bases of divergent views on women in ministry. Wrap up by answering the question, “Why is theology significant for the issue of gender mutuality?”*

To start off, let’s talk about why today’s question is important. Part of your homework assignment was to interview one person from another Christian denomination. You were asked to find out their church practice regarding the ordination of women, and women in ministry in general. Let’s share our answers.

To wrap up the conversation: “We can see from these findings that our theological bases influence our approach to gender mutuality and its expression in Christian ministry.”

### Lecture: Gender Mutuality & the Wesleyan Approach to Theology

(25 minutes)

*Refer to Resource 10-1 in the Student Guide.*

*Suggestions:  
Write these key concepts on the board.*

#### The Big Picture

Today we will discover the ways in which Wesleyan theology substantiates and affirms gender mutuality. First, let’s define gender mutuality. Dawn M. Nothwehr defines mutuality as **“the sharing of ‘power-with’ by and among all parties in a relationship in a way**

Approach this section in conversation mode. Allow students to think with you and pause to let them respond.

Dawn M. Nothwehr, "Mutuality and Mission: A No 'Other' Way," *Mission Studies* 21.2 (2004), 254.

**that recognizes the wholeness and particular experience of each participant toward the end of optimum flourishing of all."** This definition identifies the elements of mutuality -- sharing in the uniqueness and individuality of persons and appreciating diversity as a source of enrichment.

Based on the meaning of mutuality, we can understand gender mutuality as shared respect, appreciation and responsibility between men and women. Can we make this our working definition of gender mutuality: "Relationships that recognize share and express the value, uniqueness and giftedness of all persons, both male and female?" As we think about gender mutuality, our focus is primarily, although not exclusively, on the theological basis for the ordination of women and the ministries associated with credentialing, especially pastoring and preaching. Second, let's notice the aspects of theology -- sources, core principle and content. Sources are the strands of knowledge that contribute to theological expression of biblical truth. The core principle is the theme that runs through and connects the main doctrines. Content refers to the articulation of our beliefs. In today's session, we will focus on five of the main Christian doctrines -- God, creation, humanity, salvation and church.

Now our discussion will explore the connection between Wesleyan theology and gender mutuality.

### **The Wesleyan Quadrilateral**

Randy Maddox remarks that Wesleyan theology "self-consciously admits the role that experience, reason and tradition play in our reading of Scripture...." In other words, we recognize that we read scripture through the lens of tradition, by way of reason and experience. The Wesleyan quadrilateral refers to the inter-relation of Scripture, tradition, reason and experience in articulating what we believe, teach and confess as the truth of Jesus Christ.

**Scripture** is the authoritative source of theology. The *Manual* of the Church of the Nazarene states: **We believe in the plenary inspiration of the Holy Scriptures, by which we understand the 66 books of the Old and New Testaments, given by divine inspiration, inerrantly revealing the will of God concerning us in all things necessary to our salvation, so that whatever is not contained therein is not to be enjoined as an article of faith.** It follows that Scripture tells us what is true concerning God's plan of salvation. God reveals Himself through Scripture. In short, Scripture tells us what we must believe. The other dimensions of the quadrilateral influence our understanding and appropriation of

Randy L. Maddox, "Wesleyan Theology and the Christian Feminist Critique," *Wesleyan Theological Journal* 22(1987):102.

*Manual, Church of the Nazarene, Article IV, "The Holy Scriptures."*

Refer to Resource 10-2 in the Student Guide

*Use this resource to walk students through the elements of the Wesleyan Quadrilateral, and their inter-relation. Draw attention to the work of the Holy Spirit as the central element of this dynamic.*

*These questions might help students think through these ideas. They may be thrown out to the whole class as you lecture, or they may be used for small group discussion.*

*How does tradition influence our understanding of scripture?*

*How do we use reason to understand scripture?*

*How does experience help us to understand scripture; how does scripture help us to understand experience?*

*How does the Holy Spirit guide us as we read scripture?*

scripture.

**Tradition** refers to what the church has believed, taught and confessed throughout its history. We have access to tradition through the body of knowledge formalized in the received creeds and dogmas of the Church catholic. These documents give us insight into how scripture guided the church's formulation of its doctrines and development of its faith practices and liturgy. This kind of knowledge helps us to interpret scripture in harmony (even if not always in full agreement) with the consensus of the tradition. We use our **rational faculties** to understand the scope and tenor of scripture. The theme of scripture is salvation. Our reflection centers on this theme as we consider specific texts. Moreover, we take into account the socio-cultural context, the literary intent of the writer, and other factors that help us understand the biblical principles of faith, salvation and holy living. Our personal **experience**, as well as the shared experience of the Christian community, gives us insight regarding our fellowship with God and with one another. Experience is the locus of appropriating biblical truth. We read scripture in terms of our experience, and scripture provides us with God's standard for the valuation of our experience.

**The Holy Spirit** is the "author" of scripture -- He inspired the human writers, supervised the selection of the canon, and reveals truth to our hearts through scripture.

Thus, we can see that the Wesleyan approach to scripture and theology takes into account a range of factors. For this reason, we are not bound by a "proof text" method, nor do we develop doctrine based on isolated texts. Instead, we emphasize fundamental biblical themes, we consider the contribution of tradition, and we are attentive to the life of the church. Above all, we strive to live in awareness of the presence and action of the Holy Spirit in the church. As a result, we can affirm that gender mutuality is inherent to Wesleyan theology:

As we discovered earlier in this course, the tenor of scripture is that God values both women and men, and He calls both men and women into His service. Christian tradition witnesses to the leadership role of women in the church. Experience tells us that God imparts gifts and calls into ministry women as well as men. These important considerations have led the Wesleyan tradition to affirm gender mutuality. An important expression of this stance is the ordination of women for Christian ministry.

Refer to Resource 10-3 in the Student Guide.

Suggestion:

Before continuing with this section of the lecture, allow 8-10 minutes for small group discussion. The class can form three groups, with each group discussing one of the questions in Resource 10-3. Each group may share their thoughts with the whole class.

Questions:

What is your understanding of relationality?

Why do you think relationality is central to Wesleyan theology?

How does relationality help us understand the significance of gender mutuality?

**Ephesians 2:4-10 (NIV)**

*But because of his great love for us, God, who is rich in mercy, made us alive with Christ even when we were dead in transgressions—it is by grace you have been saved. And God raised us up with Christ and seated us with him in the heavenly realms in Christ Jesus, in order that in the coming ages he might show the incomparable riches of his grace, expressed in his kindness to us in Christ Jesus. For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith—and this is not from yourselves, it is the gift of God—not by works, so that no one can boast. For we are God’s handiwork, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do.*

**Relationality: The Core Principle of Wesleyan Theology**

Wesleyan theology is fundamentally relational in conceptualization. Relationality refers to themes such as fellowship, relationship and sharing. Wesleyan theology is relational because its central theme is love -- God is love; He loves us; He calls us into loving relationship with Himself, and with one another.

Wesleyan theology emphasizes love as the cause and purpose of salvation. God expresses His love to us in His offer of redemptive fellowship through Jesus Christ. In fellowship with God, we are restored to spiritual life and empowered to fulfill His unique purpose for us (Ephesians 2:4-10). Clearly, God values each individual and his/her contribution to fulfilling His mission. Our intrinsic worth as persons loved by God is by far the most important consideration in the way we relate to one another. Thus, we affirm that both men and women have worth and purpose in God’s eyes, and must therefore be given the opportunity to know God and carry out His purpose for our lives.

**Wrap-Up**

To sum up: The Quadrilateral approach -- the tenor of scripture affirms the value of women and men in fulfilling God’s purpose. This is affirmed in Christian tradition as well as in experience. Women continue to testify to and demonstrate the call of God upon their lives. Reason tells us that there is no essential limitation in women that would render them inept in ministry and leadership.

Relationality--Wesleyan theology affirms gender mutuality as one dimension of relationality—as one expression of the church’s mandate to include all persons in redemptive relationships and purpose.

## Lecture: A Theology of Fellowship

(25 minutes)

Refer to Resource 10-4 in the Student Guide.

We have now seen that the Wesleyan approach to theology substantiates gender mutuality as an expression of God's design for redemptive relationships and redemptive purpose for all persons.

What about the content of Wesleyan theology? Given the relational character of Wesleyan theology, we may understand Wesleyan theology as a theology of fellowship. Such a theology suggests that gender mutuality is intrinsic to God's vision of human relationships, particularly in the Body of Christ. Now we consider some of the major doctrines in relation to gender mutuality.

H. Ray Dunning, *Grace, Faith and Holiness: A Wesleyan Systematic Theology*. Kansas City, MO: Beacon Hill Press, 1998, 232.

H. Orton Wiley, *Christian Theology*. Kansas City, MO: Nazarene Publishing House, 1940, 1:435.

### The Doctrine of God

God exists in eternal fellowship of holy love, in the mutual indwelling (perichoresis) of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. *Perichoresis* is a Greek term, used by the Eastern Fathers, to describe a fellowship so close, that God is One. H. Ray Dunning explains that the three Persons of the Godhead "are in no sense independent but in fact coinhere one another." H. Orton Wiley remarks that the divine Persons permeate one another and exist in and through one another. Mutual love, self-giving and sharing are intrinsic to the life of God. As persons created in His image, and called to reflect His image, we seek to mirror the holy fellowship of God in the way we relate to one another in the church. We can see that gender mutuality is an essential expression of our faith in the Triune God.

Rebecca Laird, *A brief theology of women in ministry: Four reasons women should teach, preach, and minister*. GROW, 46-50 (<http://www.wesleyanholinesswomenclergy.org/five-reasons-women-should-teach-preach-and-minister/>).

### The Doctrine of Creation

When God created human persons, he established a male-female relationship of reciprocity and shared responsibility. Rebecca Laird explains, "What the creation accounts teach is that women and men were created equally good with shared responsibilities and the task of helping one another care for every living thing, If this is the teaching of creation, then women share with men the divine nature and responsibility for the church. Women are men's counterparts and peers in ministry. The one who does the decision-making and preaching is more a matter of aptitude and calling than of gender."

Dunning, *Grace, Faith & Holiness*, 278-79.

Refer to Resource 10-5 in the Student Guide.  
This activity allows students to consider situations in which gender mutuality might be an issue in congregational life.

*Suggestion*  
You can monitor and participate in group discussions, or regroup the class and have students share their responses with the whole class. Either way, be attentive to how students incorporate class material into their responses. Clarify aspects of the lecture as needed.

### **The Doctrine of Humanity**

As we've already noted, humanity is created in the image of God (*imago dei*). This is the basis of the value of all persons. According to H. Ray Dunning, the concept, *imago dei*, refers to our right relation to God and one another. True human-ness is the "right-ness" of these relations. "Right-ness" refers to the extent to which the way we relate reflects God's nature of holiness and love. God loves in freedom, in true openness to the other. Thus, Dunning describes the "right-ness" of human relationships in terms of "freedom" and "openness." **Freedom is the capacity to be open to God and to one another. It is the expression of the *imago dei* in human personhood.** Moreover, the creation story elevates male-female mutuality as the first example of the freedom and openness that characterize the relationship between God's image bearers. The doctrine of humanity provides us with a robust basis for valuing gender-mutuality as an expression of our humanity in God's image.

### **The Doctrine of Sin**

The openness that initially characterized the divine-human and male-female relationships was destroyed by humanity's voluntary denial of the integrity of God, or unbelief. The result of unbelief was disobedience, and subsequently, separation from God and one another. Instead of being open to God, the man and the woman hid from Him. Instead of being open to one another, they hid themselves from one another. Ever since, all persons, except the incarnate Christ, have lived in rebellion and unbelief, in enmity to God. In fact, sin is the cause of our incapacity to be in right relation to God and to one another. Willful disobedience to God is the expression of humanity's denial of His Lordship and integrity. Every person is accountable to God for turning away from Him. And turning away from Him, we are not free for "right-ness" towards one another.

What are the implications of the concept of sin for gender mutuality? First, God does not ascribe accountability for sin to one gender. Instead, both male and female are personally responsible for willful acts of disobedience. This universal accountability indicates clearly that God does not ascribe dominance to any one gender. Second, we must recognize that sin distorts our perception of one another. We tend to disrespect and fear one another, and introduce barriers to mutuality. The church is called to enact redemptive relationships, to model the kind of male-female mutuality that is God's design for humanity.

### **The Doctrine of Salvation**

Even as all persons have wronged God, He has extended His gracious offer of fellowship to all persons. God's mission towards us is His downward reach through Jesus Christ, to rescue us from the dominion of sin. The particularity of the Wesleyan view of salvation is that it affirms transformative grace. God transforms the heart fully by forgiving us of our sins, by enabling us to live a holy life through the Holy Spirit, and by freeing us from the tendency to deny His lordship and doubt His integrity (a tendency that finds its roots in the first rupture between God and humanity). This transformation restores our capacity for right relation to God and to one another. The freedom we receive through faith in Jesus Christ is freedom from sin, and freedom for fellowship --with God, and with one another. It follows that personal knowledge of Jesus Christ through the Holy Spirit empowers us to establish male-female relationships as originally intended, relationships of mutual reciprocity and shared responsibility. To deny that such relationships are possible is to deny an important truth about the nature of the salvation as it is made known in the Bible. As Rebecca Laird remarks, "Christ came to restore a right relationship between God and humanity. Christ also came to restore a right relationship between human beings, Jew and Greek, slave and free, male and female."

### **The Doctrine of the Church**

The Day of Pentecost marked the beginning of the church. It was the day the Holy Spirit was poured out upon the followers of Jesus and they began to preach the Good News. Not long after, they assembled in groups for prayer, fellowship and worship. The Holy Spirit united them in fellowship as the Body of Christ. The presence and action of the Holy Spirit is still the primary characteristic of the church. Ephesians 4:1-14 describes the fellowship and ministry of the church under the leadership of the Spirit. We notice, first, the nature of ecclesial fellowship—mutual love, respect, and unity. John Wesley, remarking on this passage of scripture describes the quality of the relationships that should characterize the Body of Christ:

**The true members of the Church of Christ "endeavor," with all possible diligence, with all care and pains, with unwearied patience, (and all will be little enough) to 'keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace;' to preserve inviolate the same spirit of lowliness and meekness, of longsuffering, mutual forbearance, and love; and all these cemented and knit together by that sacred tie, -- the peace of God filling the heart.**

**Thus only can we be and continue living members of that Church which is the body of Christ.**

Underlying ecclesial fellowship is the one Spirit who Himself constitutes and sustains the church in its unity and in its connection to Christ as the Head. Notice that all members of the Body are admonished and enabled to maintain unity. Gender mutuality, as an expression of unity, is required and enabled under the leadership of the Holy Spirit in the church.

Notice also the origin of leadership and ministry gifts: They originate in Christ and are administered by the Holy Spirit. We can't help but notice that the gifts for ministry are not gender specific. The purpose of these gifts is for works of service, for unity, for maturity. All believers share the responsibility for service, unity and growth. Since it is God who imparts gifts to individual members of the Body of Christ, the church must submit to the lordship of the Holy Spirit by recognizing the gifts He has given to women, and by allowing them to fulfill their God-given responsibilities.

We have considered the ways in which Wesleyan theology affirms and substantiates gender mutuality, specifically as it relates to the life of the church and the leadership role of women.

*Resource 10-5*

Now we have an opportunity to use these ideas in teaching moments.

Resource 10-5 gives us two scenarios. In your group, discuss one of these situations (provide detailed instructions).

## *Lesson Close*

(5 minutes)

### **Review**

*Return to Resource 10-1  
While there may not be time to review all elements of the visual, answers allow you to informally assess student learning.*

Ask students to give one-sentence answers to the question main question of today's lesson. For example, "How does the Quadrilateral approach **substantiate and affirm gender mutuality?**" etc.

Possible answer: "It allows us to consider the broad principles in the scope and tenor of scripture, rather than isolated texts."

## Assign Homework

*Direct students to the Homework Assignments in the Student Guide.*

**Read through the definitions in Resources 11.1, 11.2, and 11.3 to familiarize yourself with the content of the upcoming lesson.**

**Journal: Write in your journal and come prepared to share in class:** Think of your own family of origin (the family in which you were raised). How were gender roles defined? Did the mother and girls do certain tasks and the father and boys do others or an egalitarian view, where tasks were assigned on the basis of need to be done or skill rather than gender. Who cooked? Who washed the dishes? Who took out the trash? Who handled the finances? How does this compare or contrast to the roles in your current household? Which of the roles do you see as socially constructed (constructionist) and which are fixed gender responsibilities (essentialism)? Which are God-determined or related to holy living?

**Chart on Women and Marginalized from the Gospel of Luke** (See Resource 11-5 in the next lesson): Read the Gospel of Luke and fill in the Chart provided in the next lesson.

**Reflection paper** “Why I do/do not agree that God has a “preferential option” for the poor.”

### **Required Reading/Resources**

<http://www.ats.edu/Resources/PublicationsPresentations/Documents/AnnualDataTables/2010-11AnnualDataTables.pdf>

<http://www.economist.com/node/15174418>



# Lesson 11

## Gender Roles and Liberation in God

### Lesson Overview

#### Schedule

Start Time	Task or Topic	Learning Activity	Materials Needed
0:00	Introduction	Review Definitions of Liberation Theology and Gender Roles	Student Guide Resources 11-1, 11-2 and 11-3
0:05	Journal Sharing	Ask students to share from their journals in pairs	Student Guide Resource 11-4 and responses
0:15	The Liberating Gospel and Gender Roles	Lectures	Resources 11-1,11-2 and 11-3
0:45	Applying the Lesson to Life	Return to Pairs for Life Application Questions (found below)	Life Application Questions written out for students or projected
0:55	Lesson Close	Review, Assign	

# Lesson Introduction

(5 minutes)

## Orientation

*Review Definitions of Liberation Theology and Gender Roles from Student Resources 11-1, 11-2, 11-3*

## Accountability

**Homework Due: Read through the definitions in Resources 11.1, 11.2, and 11.3 to familiarize yourself with the content of the upcoming lesson.**

**Journal:** Ask students to share from their journals in pairs.

**Write in your journal and come prepared to share in class:** Think of your own family of origin (the family in which you were raised). How were gender roles defined? Did the mother and girls do certain tasks and the father and boys do others or an egalitarian view, where tasks were assigned on the basis of need to be done or skill rather than gender. Who cooked? Who washed the dishes? Who took out the trash? Who handled the finances? How does this compare or contrast to the roles in your current household? Which of the roles do you see as socially constructed (constructionist) and which are fixed gender responsibilities (essentialism)? Which are God-determined or related to holy living?

**Chart on Women and Marginalized from the Gospel of Luke** (See Resource 11-4 in the next lesson): Read the Gospel of Luke and fill in the Chart provided in the next lesson.

**Reflection paper** "Why I do/do not agree that God has a "preferential option" for the poor."

## Required Reading/Resources

<http://www.ats.edu/Resources/PublicationsPresentations/Documents/AnnualDataTables/2010-11AnnualDataTables.pdf>

<http://www.economist.com/node/15174418>

**Focus:**

God's desire for all people is that we live out the freedom we have in Christ using our gifts to reflect the glory of God. This requires an ability to reflect theologically on the Biblical teaching in its original contexts as well as our own.

What authority does the Bible have over life and practice? Who can interpret the Bible? What and who may determine how women and men are to actively love God and their neighbors? These questions have been at the forefront of theological and gender studies in the past century. The abolition and suffrage movements of the 19th century that led to the end of slavery and granted the vote to women to vote in the United Kingdom and United States and the late 20th century anti-apartheid movement in South Africa were rooted in the liberating themes of Exodus and the vision all being one in Christ Jesus found in Galatians 3: 28: "There is no male nor female, Jew no Greek, slave nor free, all are one in Christ Jesus." The same God who sent Moses to tell Pharaoh: "Let my people, go!" was understood to be calling for the freedom of all people to be who they were created to be without the oppressive restrictions imposed by cruel overlords or exclusive policies.

The 20th Century saw the rise of many liberation theologies—"second wave" feminism, Black theology, Womanist theology, Mujerista theology"—women and people of color who had not had voice in the public discourse about God's activity, organized and began to read and interpret the Bible and claim its promises for themselves. Often the personal and social freedoms they sought clashed with the interpretations of established church authorities or traditional practice. No longer is there one authority who owns the right to interpret the Bible.

People may rely on their pastors and formal leaders for help and guidance yet the Bible can accessed on computers and smart phones in most world languages. Groups across the globe freely discuss and interpret the Bible for faith and practice in their own specific times and cultures. There is a great dialogue going on about how God speaks and guides through Scripture and through spirit. Ours is a time to speak up, listen, and prayerfully join in the task of "rightly dividing the word of God." (2 Tim 2:15)

## Learner Objectives

*Instruct students to locate objectives in the Student Guide.*

*State the objectives for the learners.*

Upon completion of Lesson Eleven, learners should be able to:

- Recognize the significant shifts in biblical interpretation and theology in the 20<sup>th</sup> century
- Understand the influence of culture on understanding gender roles
- Identify one's theological questions and perspective about what men and women are called to be and do in ministry.

# Lesson Body

## Lecture: The Liberating Gospel

(15 minutes)

Resource 11-1

### Challenges in Biblical Interpretation

In the early 1900s questions of how to interpret the Bible began to cause clear divisions among Christians. "Modernism," a short-hand word used to encompass all the scientific, technological and industrial changes taking place, brought new ideas and methods to Biblical study at the same time the theory of evolution began to be taught in public schools. These scientific and theological challenges worried many who wondered how science and new ideas about the historical and literary study of the Bible would change traditional views of the Bible as the unquestioned standard of authority.

Around 1910 two oil tycoons from California, Lyman and Milton, Stewart, funded the publication of a series of 12 pamphlets called, "The Fundamentals," which advocated for 5 points of fundamentalism: biblical inerrancy, the virgin birth, Christ's atonement and resurrection, reality of miracles, and a system of biblical interpretation, known as "dispensationalism" that emphasized eras of Christian history and declared that society was in the last days and Christians should ready for Christ to return. They taught that Christians would be raptured and the rest of the world would be judged and punished. These pamphlets became the rallying point that began to clearly separate "fundamentalists" from "modernists or liberals."

### Wesleyans in the Middle

Wesleyan and holiness people did not fit well in either the fundamentalist or modernist group. The optimism of grace in Wesleyan theology that fuels our concern for social reform, personal transformation, and spirit-led ministry remains at odds with the social pessimism of dispensational theology. Simultaneously, our trust in the full (plenary) inspiration of scripture in matters of faith and practice for full salvation and holy living made treating the Bible as just another historical text impossible. As society became more and more divided into theologically and culturally conservative and liberal camps, Wesleyan-holiness groups and local congregation began to lean one direction or the other rather than following the "via media," the "middle way"

of John Wesley and Nazarene founder Phineas Bresee both of whom sought to preach transforming grace rather than emphasizing law over freedom or freedom over law. Both repeated the Augustinian refrain of seeking unity in essential beliefs and liberty in the non-essentials.

### **Resurgence in Wesleyan-Holiness Studies**

By the latter part of the 20th Century as the culture wars became even more polarizing, many Nazarenes began to explore our Wesleyan roots as the need to articulate values and methods that might help us work from our own theological tradition rather than be incorporated or unduly influenced by the conservative/liberal divide. A resurgence of compassionate ministries, a reemphasis on small group accountability (a hallmark of Wesleyan practice), the establishment of Wesleyan centers on several Nazarene University campuses, and the organization of groups like Nazarenes in Social Work and the Wesleyan Holiness Women Clergy Conference Wesleyan began to equip Nazarenes to better understand our distinctive theological views and approach to ministry in the world.

### **Worldwide shifts in Theological Authority**

During the later part of the 20<sup>th</sup> century as issues of how to study and interpret the Bible were being debated in the United States, global indigenous leaders in the church began to rightly assume leadership from missionaries and become spokespersons and interpreters of the Bible in their own contexts. Theological studies began to describe the harm done through the colonial period and local leaders began to increasingly write and interpret texts from a non-Western perspective.

In the United States demographics also began to shift significantly. Following the immigration act of 1965 in the United States, many local congregations became multi-cultural or planted among immigrant populations. No single voice, view or authority could speak for all Christians even those within a single denomination. [Before moving to second half of lecture show cartoon and make a transition statement like: One of the most impactful liberation theologies has been feminist theology. We are now turning our attention to the way feminist theology and gender studies have challenged traditional views of women's roles in society and the church. I know this may be a touchy subject for some of you so I ask you to cultivate a sense of humor and openness as we learn together.]

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## Lecture: Gender Roles

(15 minutes)

Resource 11-2

The struggles over how to interpret the Bible paralleled significant cultural shifts in women's roles during the 20<sup>th</sup> century. No longer are men the only theologically trained leaders. (Today one-third of students in American theological schools are women.)<sup>1</sup> No longer are men "breadwinners" and women "homemakers." In 2009, 50% of all Americans in the workforce were female.<sup>1</sup>

All cultures have socially constructed gender roles. Travel outside of one's own hometown and social group readily reveals the variety of roles women and men fulfill. In the late 20<sup>th</sup> and early 21<sup>st</sup> centuries significant academic study differentiating between "sex", the biological and reproductive differences between men and women and "gender," the changeable social roles and expectations for men and women have highlighted the influence of cultural gender roles in determining acceptable activity for women and men. For instance, in 1910 only 5% of licensed car drivers in the United States were women as it was seen unseemly for women to operate complex machinery as that was a task reserved for men. Today as young people reach the state-mandated driving age a majority of teenagers are given a permit and taught to drive. Gender is not an issue. Likewise, until the middle part of the 20<sup>th</sup> century men rarely witnessed the birth of their children. It was assumed

they would wait outside in the waiting room. Today many fathers are expected to be present at the moment of birth.

These social challenges have impacted the church. Two main views of gender roles are operative in the church today. The first is often called the “complementarian view” and it emphasizes the distinct role of male and female in marriage and life and grants men authority over women and children as a God-given part of the created order. Women are given a submissive and helper role located primarily in the home and in the moral education of children. The second is often labeled the “egalitarian view” and it emphasizes that men and women are co-created to fulfill the mandate to tend and till and be fruitful as joint heirs in Christ. Men and women are given spiritual gifts and these gifts are not determined by gender but are given by the spirit for full use in the church and the world. Both views of gender make biblical claims often claiming many of the same texts!

Some critics of the egalitarian view want to dismiss it as something new that arose out of the secular women’s movement of the second half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Groups like *Christians for Biblical Equality*, *Wesleyan/Holiness Women Clergy* and hundreds of books on women and the Bible and Church history and tradition written in the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> century refute this claim. There is no doubt that theology, the ways we think about and study God, have been greatly impacted by the women’s movement and other liberation movements in the world. During the last half of a century there has been a thorough revolution in how the Bible is read and interpreted. Scholars have a voice as do preachers but so do the laity in all geographies. Take a look at any Christian bookstore or at the online blogs dealing with biblical interpretation. There are many voices.

### **Some Influential Writers and Ideas**

In 1895, Elizabeth Cady Stanton, one of the early Suffragettes published the first volume of *The Woman’s Bible* to highlight the ways the Bible was used to deny women their free rights. In the ensuing century, feminist theology and women’s studies have grown exponentially. In 1974 the book, *All We Are Meant to Be: Biblical Feminism for Today* by Nancy Hardesty and Letha Scanzoni, initiated the flood of volumes that would be published in the subsequent decades for and against women in public leadership in the evangelical part of American religious life. *Women Called to Witness: Evangelical Feminism in the*

*Nineteenth Century* also by Nancy Hardesty began to reintroduce Wesleyans to their preaching foremothers, Phoebe Palmer the internationally known woman-evangelist and urban minister from New York City, Frances Willard, the leader of the temperance movement and Amanda Berry Smith, a well-travelled and honored African American woman evangelist who spoke in Nazarene founder, Phineas F. Bresee's Los Angeles church.

One of the most influential books on feminist Biblical interpretation appeared in English in 1983. German-born scholar Elizabeth Schussler-Fiorenza's *In Memory of Her: A Feminist Theological Reconstruction of Christian Origins, a manifesto*, outlined the four major approaches to biblical interpretation that must be overly simplified to be summarized 1) doctrinal interpretation asserts the divine authority of scripture is ahistorical and authoritative across cultures. 2) historical/critical interpretation enables interpreters to objectively and independently read the texts without imposing their own cultural assumptions onto the text. 3) Dialogical interpretation affirms that both the context of the original biblical text and the interpreter's context are essential to theological inquiry and pastoral response and 4) Liberation theology reminds the interpreter that there is no value neutral interpretation. All theology either uplifts the oppressed or keeps the oppressed of the world in their downtrodden situation. Schussler-Fiorenza, then revisits the New Testament exposing the way the early Jesus Movement sought to live out the *baseleia*, the kingdom of God, in ways that allowed women and other oppressed groups to seek wholeness and often leadership in ways that challenge the larger culture and kept mediating leaders, like the Apostle Paul, seeking ways to guard the early Christian church from external criticism and conflict.

**Summary :**

The Wesleyan Holiness tradition has long taught that God's spirit transforms, gifts and frees for service. We affirm that God created women and men in the divine image and that as male and female, we all sin (Genesis 1-3) and fall short of the glory of God. All persons need God's prevenient (wooing), justifying, and sanctifying grace to become joint heirs with Christ in proclaiming the transforming love of God in word and deed. We affirm that gifts are given by the Spirit irrespective of gender. Wesleyan-holiness people are free, male and female, irrespective of country of origin or station in society, to be all we were created to be in the service of God. Early in the 18<sup>th</sup> Century Methodist revivals, some women began to publically testify to the work of God in their lives, effectively lead society meetings, and increasingly take leadership in the Methodist movement. This was not without controversy yet many women were ultimately affirmed for their spirit-led leadership and the ministry of women became one of the hallmarks of the British Wesleyan and later the American holiness movement. The Church of the Nazarene was founded with all offices of the church, including the preaching and sacramental ministries, to be open to both men and women.

At Pilot Point, Texas in 1908, nearly 25% of the ordained clergy were women. Due to social factors and cultural resistance that percentage dropped to less than 6% in the later part of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century. In the Wesleyan Holiness tradition, the feminist movement created a backlash against women in leadership as many in the Nazarene church embraced non-Wesleyan views championed by other Evangelical or Fundamentalists writers and leaders. In recent decades more women have pursued a call to ordained ministry and the church now counts 8% of its clergy as women fully prepared and ordained for ministry. Many more women fill the other essential, non-ordained leadership roles in the church. For more than 110 years, all positions of leadership in the Church of the Nazarene have been open to both women and men for theological reasons. We believe God saves, calls, gifts and sends.

## Self-Assessment: Applying Lessons to Life

**(10 minutes)**

*Life Application Questions written out for students or projected*

As a way of applying the learning of this lesson to your development, spend a few moments answering the following questions with a partner.

1. When you visualize someone in the following vocations what is the picture of the person you have in your mind? What are they doing? How are they dressed? Is the person male or female?
  - a. Your pastor
  - b. Your favorite teacher
  - c. Your doctor
  - d. Your spiritual mentor
  - e. The holiest person you know

Discuss how your own experience impacts your mental pictures and assumptions of who fills various roles in your life and in society. Compare and contrast your experiences and responses.

2. Think of your local church. How are gender roles defined? Who takes the offering? Who teaches the children? Who teaches the adults? Who preaches? Who directs the choir? Who preaches? Who pays the bills? Who prophesies and names the issues of the day which Christians need be involved? Which of these roles do you see as socially constructed and which are fixed gender responsibilities? Does the Bible define these tasks and assign them to specific genders? Are certain spiritual gifts gendered i.e. is service a gift that women do best? How do these gender roles help or hinder children to grow, to discover and use their gifts?
3. The Church of the Nazarene became a denomination in 1908 virtually the same period that "The Fundamentals" were published. Imagine you are able to write a letter to the early Nazarenes about the way

culture has changed. What would you want to tell them about 1) the role of women in the church? 2) the cultural/theological divides of our times. 3) the benefits and challenges of liberation theology to the church? What would you want to thank them for that has helped you in your life of faith and ministry?

As a class, ask each pair to share their short letter to the early Nazarenes with the whole group.

## Lesson Close

(5 minutes)

### Review

Do you have any questions or comments concerning this lesson?

### Assign Homework

*Direct students to the Homework Assignments in the Student Guide.*

*C. H. Spurgeon, Lectures to My Students, Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1954, 32.*

#### Homework for Lesson 12:

Read: I Samuel 8, Esther, John 10, Acts 6:1-7. Write out some examples from life and Scripture which illustrate power as a negative or positive force. Write your responses on separate sheets of paper.

Write in your journal.

- Reflect on the quote from C. H. Spurgeon: "We must feel that woe is unto us if we preach not the gospel; the word of God must be unto us as a fire in our bones, otherwise, if we undertake the ministry, we shall be unhappy in it, shall be unable to bear the self-denials in it, and shall be of little service to those among whom we serve."
- Reflect on the Focus for Lesson 12.





## *Lesson 12*

# Power Dynamics

## *Lesson Overview*

### **Schedule**

Start Time	Task or Topic	Learning Activity	Materials Needed
0:00	Introduction	Orient	Student Guide
0:10	The Bible's Message for Power Dynamics	Class Activity	Resource 12-1
0:20	Basics of Power Dynamics	Lecture	Resource 12-2
0:45	Applying Lessons to Life	Self-Assessment	Resource 12-3
0:55	Lesson Close	Review, Assign	Student Guide

# Lesson Introduction

(10 minutes)

## Accountability

*In pairs, have the students share and critique each other's homework assignments.*

*Collect homework for evaluation.*

*All homework should be evaluated with constructive comments to help the student with his or her growth. Evaluation does not mean granting a grade, as grades will not be assigned as the measure of completing the module.*

*Completion is based on achieving competence in the abilities as stated in the Outcomes, attendance, and completion of all homework assignments.*

*Journals will not be collected or evaluated until the last lesson.*

## Assigned Homework:

*Read:* I Samuel 8, Esther, John 10, Acts 6:1-7.

*Write out some examples from life and Scripture which illustrate power as a negative or positive force.*

*Write your responses on separate sheets of paper.*

*Write in your journal.*

- Reflect on the quote from C. H. Spurgeon: "We must feel that woe is unto us if we preach not the gospel; the word of God must be unto us as a fire in our bones, otherwise, if we undertake the ministry, we shall be unhappy in it, shall be unable to bear the self-denials in it, and shall be of little service to those among whom we serve."
- Reflect on Focus for Lesson 12.

## Orientation

*Before class write "The Big Idea" on a poster, overhead, or board.*

**Focus:** There are multiple power dynamics at play in the life of the pastor. Healthy leadership practices demand significant self-reflection, confession, humility and submission to enable leadership power to be expressed in healthy and life giving ways.

Power can be positive or negative in the ways it is displayed and practiced. The positive power to live the life of God's calling is to first be one who lives in assurance of redemption and the ongoing transformative presence of God in our lives. There is life-giving power when men and women are free to manifest their gifts and graces as leaders in the church.

There is also power that is inherent in position, gender and/or privilege. We recognize power when we reflect over how power is used in our lives and how it affects the lives of others. In our own journey of reflection, we must recognize how we have received power through the Holy Spirit and how we have known power through informal and formal position and privilege.

We do not seek power for our own sakes, but with a humble commitment to use whatever power is ours in service to God, submitted to God's will, and with the goal of empowering the people of our church to love God and neighbor.

## Learner Objectives

*Instruct students to locate objectives in the Student Guide.*

*State the objectives for the learners.*

- By the end of this lesson, participants should
- Understand the corruptible nature of power
  - Explore gender and privilege power dynamics in the church and society
  - Reflect on leadership styles in the church and society

## Lesson Body

### Class Activity: The Bible's Message for Power Dynamics

(10 minutes)

*Refer to Resource 12-1 in the Student Guide.*

You will have about 5 minutes to read Philippians 2:5-11 and then the study on Resource 12-1. What does this passage teach us about power? Which of Jesus' examples of use of power is the most important in your opinion? Why? We will then share together what you have learned.

### Lecture: Basics of Power Dynamics

(25 minutes)

*Refer to Resource 12-2 in the Student Guide.*

*During this lecture give personal examples where appropriate.*

#### The Corruptible Nature of Power

There are hidden power dynamics in many relationships. These power dynamics can be formal or informal. Formalized power is through position by profession or leadership role. Informal power dynamics are at work through economics, race, gender and/or familial or friendship connections in a system.

### **Our Stories are Powerful**

Each of us has a personal story which includes our experiences shaped by race, gender and socio-economic background. This can wreak havoc in the ways we hear each other and react to each other. We have all encountered group settings where one member may be an equal among others but he/ she carries an emotional weight and persuasive power that can overwhelm and rule the group decision process. This person might not have positional power, but somewhere they have learned how to use relational power. Personal resources can be used as weapons. The controlled resources include; financial, emotional, psychological and spiritual. For any of us in leadership to understand how power is used and abused, we need to continue to grow in our understanding of what assumptions we bring from our life experiences. In every encounter, we bring all of our family systems and histories with us.

### **Healthy Self Examination**

Peter Scazzero was leading a dynamic, multicultural, growing church but found his leadership was almost the death of him until he began to find ways to encourage emotional health in himself and his leaders. "Something is desperately wrong with most churches today. We have many people who are passionate for God and his work, yet who are unconnected to their own emotions or those around them. The combination is deadly, both for the church and the leaders' personal life."<sup>1</sup>

This disconnect from our interior lives often means the toxic side of power goes unchecked. A person in leadership must create time for personal reflection on many of the challenges to a healthy emotional life. Reflecting on the power dynamics of their home life, the use of power in their present relationships, and the meaning of power would all be important exercises to protect themselves from the more toxic side of power.

J. Oswald Sanders talks about several perils of leadership in his classic study on Christian Leadership. Sanders finds that the temptation of pride for the leader has important connections to the misuse of power. To prevent misuse, he provides three questions for the leader to use as a personal review.

"How do we react when another is selected for the position we expected to have or wanted to fill?"

How do we feel when others identify admitted problems and weaknesses in us?

Does criticism lead to immediate resentment and self-justification?"

## **Gender and Privilege Power Dynamics**

The toxic nature of power is a clever poison which we can swallow unknowingly. Often if the person has always been a member of the ruling majority, they do not know how much their inherent power is at work in their lives. In a study measuring the ability of people to take the perspective of another, the findings confirmed the inability of powerful people to understand the world view and experience of those without power.<sup>1</sup> The authors conclude; "Across four experiments, we found that power was associated with a reduced tendency to comprehend how other individuals see the world, think about the world, and feel about the world."<sup>1</sup>

Studies have consistently shown that the underclass knows and understands much more about the lives and workings of those who have power than those with power understand them. This knowledge is a basic necessity for the underclass' survival. For those in power, understanding the perspective of others was never necessary and therefore a highly underdeveloped skill. This limitation creates great difficulty in correctly perceiving power dynamics at work in particular situations.

People with power will even be oblivious to the potential reactions of those without power to their verbal and non-verbal communication. When confronted by misused power dynamics the response is often defensiveness and denial.

### **Personal Reflection**

*Give your own personal reflection about a time when you may have felt that your gender, race, economic status, etc. impacted your power dynamics.*

### **Leadership Styles in the Church and Society**

A plethora of books on leadership exist in both the secular and Christian market. Leadership has been defined in various ways. The descriptions of leaders often have a functional focus, such as leaders are people who get things done, who communicate a clear

vision, and who are able to galvanize followers to a common goal (Stanley, Maxwell, Galloway; Drucker).

These functions may be important aspects of effective leadership, but Jim Collins encouraged business leaders to look at the deeper exploration of character qualities that are fundamental to good leadership. Furthermore, any consideration of church leadership must also probe the particular demands that Christian self-identity makes on the way leadership is carried out.

Christian leaders have, at times, ignored business models of leadership due to the assumption that the information would be unrelated to church leadership. At other times, they have embraced business models that primarily view the pastor as a CEO. Various authors and pastors are attempting to discover a middle ground that incorporates business skills with theological reflection.

Books by Blackaby and J. Oswald Sanders, both entitled Spiritual Leadership, explore the unique characteristics of Christian leadership. Viewing leadership from this perspective gleans from business models and examines the application of those models through the filter of a commitment to a Christological understanding of servant leadership. Themes that often seem to arise in models of leadership are Christ's humility as well as the power of His calling.

### **Servant Leadership**

When looking at the model of Christ's incarnation, life, death, and resurrection, there is a model of humility and power. The primary characteristic of servant leadership is the love leaders have for their people. Love is what drives a servant leader to look for the higher good rather than personal gain. Humility is what keeps this love and nurture from becoming overly paternal/maternal. This leader values people, cares for them and also understands them as gifted and able.

This love creates an atmosphere of trust for those who follow as they understand the leader is not focused on building a personal kingdom. When the leader acts out of personal knowledge of God's love, the team is energized; they are not working for someone else's dream but for something greater. Servant leaders who love will invest in the lives of those who work with them. Servant leaders will encourage the professional development of their workers while working with those who are in the wrong jobs and underachieving. They will also want their workers' lives to be balanced and healthy.

## Self-Assessment: Applying Lessons to Life

(10 minutes)

*Refer to Resource 12-3 in the Student Guide.*

*Give students about 5 minutes to work on this assessment.*

*At the end of 5 minutes ask students if there is something they would like to share with the class.*

*Care should be taken that no one feels pushed to tell others what is going on inside them unless they wish to do so.*

*Turn the sharing time to the definite steps of improvement persons are planning to make.*

As a way of applying this lesson to your development, draw the diagram as directed in the student resource 12-3. Then write yourself a prescription to improve this area of your life.

Reflection Questions:

- How do our stories informed by gender, race, economic status and other life experiences create tensions or alignments between people?
- Are there ways you as a leader can help create healthier power dynamics?
- Do you perceive differences in power due to gender, race or economic status?
- How might you as a leader address those dynamics?

Please write a short prescription to help remedy your weakness.

## Lesson Close

(5 minutes)

### Review

*Do you have any questions or comments concerning this lesson?*

### Assign Homework for Lesson 13:

#### **Write in your journal.**

Include your reflections, reactions, and insights on the material presented in class. What are the common characteristics of the positive examples of people in power? What are the common characteristics of the negative examples of people in power?



## Lesson 13

# So That All Can Hear; So That All Can Speak

## Lesson Overview

### Schedule

Start Time	Task or Topic	Learning Activity	Materials Needed
0:00	Deaf and Mute: An Exercise in Hearing and Listening	Small Group Discussion	Class Focus in Student Guide
0:10	The Power of a Single Story	Video: The Power of a Single Story	
0:35	Gender Inclusive Language	Lecture and Brainstorming	Resource 13-1
0:50	Nurturing the Call in Women	Lecture	Resource 13-2
0:60	Lesson Close	Letter-writing assignment	

# Lesson Introduction

(10 minutes)

## Orientation

*Small group discussion of: Deaf and Mute*

### The Focus

#### **Times when We Could Not Hear**

We have all experienced situations where we could not hear clearly what was being said. We have all experienced situations where either we or someone else doubted our voice, so that we could not speak.

Think of a time in your life when you could not hear what was being said. Did someone speak with vocabulary you could not understand? Did someone speak a language you could not grasp fully? Were you the odd one in the crowd and the language made you feel like you should not be there?

Have each person describe one of these times. List them on the board.

Now take a step back and look at what you have listed. What is common to these experiences? What brought you to the point you could not hear? How did this feel? What responses (cognitive, emotional, and even physical) did such an experience evoke in you?

#### **Times when We Could Not Speak**

Do the exercise again, this time naming a time when you knew you needed to speak on an issue but either (1) someone else prevented your voice from being heard or (2) you doubted your own voice so much that you experienced a kind of paralysis and you did not speak up.

Once again take a step back and look at the experiences that have been shared? What is common to these experiences? What responses did this evoke? Particularly note if there is a difference in the stories told and the emotions expressed between women and men in the room.

## Learner Objectives

*Instruct students to locate objectives in the Student Guide.*

*State the objectives for the learners.*

Upon completion of Lesson One, learners should be able to:

- Find renewed motivation to portray God and the Gospel in ways that can be heard as Good News by all
- Understand the importance of various types of mentoring in nurturing the call of women and others
- Take practical steps in ministry and mentoring to draw out both the richness of the Gospel and the voices of women and others

## Lesson Body

### Video and Discussion: The Power of a Single Story

(25 minutes)

#### Video

If you are teaching this lesson in English, take time to watch the video, "The Danger of a Single Story," [http://www.ted.com/talks/chimamanda\\_adichie\\_the\\_danger\\_of\\_a\\_single\\_story.html](http://www.ted.com/talks/chimamanda_adichie_the_danger_of_a_single_story.html) .

This video is not about women in ministry, but it is about what happens when only one story is told over and over again and the fullness of truth that is missed when this happens. The author tells about the stereotypes that people have of Africa because of the one-sided stories that have been told. The video is almost 19 minutes long, so you may wish to choose a small portion of it, although the entire video is powerful.

#### Discussion

Gather initial responses to what Chimamanda Adichie has to say. Then move the discussion to how the power of a single story might be affecting people in our churches with regard to the Story of God and of the people of God.

## Lecture: Why Inclusive Language

(15 minutes)

Refer to Resource 13-1 in the Student Guide.

### What is Inclusive Language?

What is inclusive language? Some of us think inclusive language only means using female language for God. And some of us feel an immediate resistance to even the suggestion of that, because of the way we have been taught all our lives. We have heard a single story of God, and we are convinced God is male, and that those who would like to tell the Story differently are taking liberties to create an entirely new story. Therefore, the discussion of inclusive language is written off from the beginning as misplaced.

Inclusive language is not just about pronouns for God. **It is about using language in such a way that it can tell the whole story and be heard by all the hearers.** It is about the stories we tell—or perhaps more accurately, the stories we don't tell. Ask a group of church members to retell the story of David and Goliath, and they will do a fairly good job. Ask the same group to retell the story of Jael and Sisera, and they will most likely struggle. (If time permits, you might ask the students to tell both stories.) These narratives are remarkably similar and both powerful stories, but the one about a woman has simply not been told. In every learning situation, there is a null curriculum -- what is NOT taught, and it affects everything.

**Inclusive language means telling the whole story of God and God's people and being aware of the impact made on both genders when only certain stories are told or when the stories are told in certain ways.**

### God and Gender

God is neither male nor female. The Trinitarian God is a community of relatedness. In the creation account, it took male and female together to reflect the image of God because God is relationship. Every culture tends to describe God in the language of their social setting, so language about God in Scripture and elsewhere has been predominantly male as most cultures down through time have favored men, but God cannot be fully described when only male designations are used. The subversive stories of Scripture show us that when cultures have looked down on women, God has not.

The fullness of the Gospel cannot be understood by either males or females when language about God is confined to gender-based language or when stories about men in relationship with God are the ones which we emphasize.

Henri Nouwen was deeply moved by Rembrandt's painting, *The Return of the Prodigal*. As he sat before it for hours on end in the Hermitage museum in St. Petersburg, Russia, something stirred deep inside his soul. Suddenly he realized something about the hands of the Father that embraced the returned prodigal. One of the hands was strong, protective, and masculine. One was gentler, more feminine, more nurturing. For Henri Nouwen, reflecting on these various dimensions of the character of God shaped him significantly. It is not only women who benefit by hearing about a God who is multidimensional, beyond gender, and in-relationship.

Exclusively male images for God do not paint a true picture of God, but neither do exclusively female images of God. Some women, in pendulum swing reaction to the null curriculum of their upbringing and the ways it has left them empty, have moved out of orthodoxy and begun to worship only the "sacred feminine." This reaction may seem extreme, but in actuality this response suffers from the exact same flaw as using exclusively male images for God. God, who is neither male nor female, cannot be described well using either set of images exclusively. Either extreme tends toward worship of one the genders rather than of a God who is defined by relationship.

How can we begin to make small changes in our language that make a big difference in the way God is understood by all? Resource 13-1 gives us some initial suggestions.

- Use gender neutral language for God whenever possible, for instance, "God and God's People" rather than "God and His people."
- In public prayers, responsive readings, and litanies, draw in the names of women and men of God and their stories.
- Examine the language in the hymns you sing. It is a strange dynamic for a woman to sing that she is God's "true son." Often a minor change to the words can take away this awkwardness and allow everyone to hear the truth of a song in a new way.

- Look for some of the startling images in Scripture that show us very feminine nurturing images of God. Jesus speaks of himself as a mother hen when he comments how often he would have gathered Jerusalem under his wings and protected them there.
- Tell a balance of stories from Scripture. If the balance of stories about men and women has been off for a long time, do a whole series about women of God in order to shift perceptions.
- In sermons, bring out illustrations of women (as well as men) throughout history who have followed God. An excellent resource for the stories we have often omitted from church history is Ruth Tucker's *Daughters of the Church*.

## Lecture: Nurturing the Call in Women

(10 minutes)

*Resource 13-2*

We have spent most of today's session talking about how to help both genders hear the Gospel more fully by not confining God or the stories of the people of God with a gender bias. It is truly important that we set everyone free to hear the whole Gospel.

Before we leave today's lesson, though, we need to move the discussion beyond hearing without gender bias. We need to talk about how to help women to find their own voice in ministry.

### **Women's Voices**

It is part of the history of oppression everywhere in the world. Those who have been oppressed, those who have been left out of the stories, often lose their voice. They learn not to speak. Oppression takes away the ability to have one's voice heard. The oppressed learn to doubt their own voices, and even when they are finally given a chance to speak, speaking up does not come naturally.

It is an unfortunate part of the experience of women in ministry that many doubt their own voices. As we seek to help them hear the Gospel in ways that set them free, there is a parallel movement that needs to happen to help these women find their voices and learn to speak out confidently when the Spirit moves through them.

This experience of needing to find and develop a woman's voice is not unique to women in ministry. Developmental theorists such as Mary Field Belenky (*Woman's Ways of Knowing*) have stressed this idea that women's voices have been silenced and that ending the silence is a chief obstacle to the development of women, not just occupationally but personally at deep levels. It is important for those in ministry, both men and women, to realize this crucial objective in mentoring women as they move into God-called ministry. The ancient Christian practice of hospitality gives us some hints as how this might be accomplished.

### **Christian Hospitality and the Woman Minister**

One function of truly Christian hospitality, of the subversive nature of Christian welcome, is that the tables are turned upside down. Rather than just giving handouts to the poor, in the Christian community, the

poor find their voice and become contributing members of the body of Christ. The power of recognition, of being treated as true participants in the community, breaks loose something that has been long trapped. Such radical inclusion heals the effects of oppression/ In Christian hospitality, we learn that every single person brings a gift to the community—even the stranger, even the poorest of the poor ---maybe even especially the stranger and the poorest of the poor. They bring a gift, and the most beautiful thing we can do for them is not to give them a handout, but to draw out the gift that they bring.

This same concept applies to the mentoring of women in ministry. Women doubt their voices, and those who would practice true Christian hospitality will find ways to draw out the gifts that they bring.

As we come to understand Christian hospitality applied to mentoring women in ministry, a couple of things become clear. There are some roles that can be filled by other women in mentoring women, but there are also roles, especially in drawing out the voices of women, that can be uniquely played by men.

Women in ministry are often asked to mentor women in ministry. What roles can women play in the development of other women?

- There is a certain encouragement in seeing another woman further down the path who is serving in Christian ministry.
- Such women can nurture the imagination of the woman in ministry.
- They can encourage.

Unfortunately, there can be a down side to women mentoring women. Women, who still feel their voices are not heard, may tend to commiserate with the women they mentor. The conversation may turn to telling the stories of how women are treated. This adds nothing powerful or new to the mentoring of women. Rather, it reinforces oppression.

And this is where the role of men comes in. Men, who truly believe that women are anointed for ministry, can mentor women in ways that speak powerfully into the heart and soul of those women. Christian hospitality derives its powerful, subversive nature by the fact that people extend welcome and draw out the voice of one who is entirely other. It is one thing for an African American to encourage the voice of an African American. It is another thing altogether for that

African American to have their voice drawn out by a white middle class American male in power in a denomination which has tended to keep African Americans in their place. Something truly powerful happens when someone “other” recognizes gifting in you.

Men in ministry serve a unique role in the lives of women.

## Lesson Close

(5 minutes)

### Review

Do you have any questions or comments concerning this lesson?

### Assign Homework

*Direct students to the Homework Assignments in the Student Guide*

Men –write a letter to a particular woman in ministry, the young women of your congregation, or to future women you will mentor. What do you purpose to do well as a result of today’s lesson both in the language and stories used in the congregation and in the mentoring of women?

Women – Write a letter to a man who has drawn out your voice in ministry. Tell this person HOW they helped you.

Bring your letters to the next class session to share.

Read the article by Olivia Metcalf, “Co-pastoring: Shaping a Creative Ministry and Marriage,” in *Holiness Today*, March/April 2010, available online at [www.ncnnews.com/nphweb/html/ht/article.jsp?id=10009069](http://www.ncnnews.com/nphweb/html/ht/article.jsp?id=10009069) .



# Lesson 14

## Practical Issues

### *Lesson Overview*

#### Schedule

Start Time	Task or Topic	Learning Activity	Materials Needed
0:00	Introduction	Orientation and Accountability	Resource 14-1
0:05	Self-Evaluation	Class Activity	Resource 14-2
0:10	Navigating Cross-gender Staff Issues	Lecture	Resources 14-3, 4, 5, 8, 7, 8, 9
0:35	Discussion	Class Activity	Resource 14-10
1:40	Leadership and Family Issues; Co-pastoring	Lecture	Resources 14-11, 12
0:50	Re-Evaluation	Class Activity	Resource 14-13

# Lesson Introduction

(5 minutes)

## Accountability

*Homework for this lesson will support discussion at the end of the lesson.*

*All homework should be evaluated with constructive comments to help the student with his or her growth. Evaluation does not mean granting a grade, as grades will not be assigned as the measure of completing the module.*

*Completion is based on achieving competence in the abilities as stated in the Outcomes, attendance, and completion of all homework assignments.*

*Journals will not be collected or evaluated until the last lesson.*

*Before class write "Focus" on a poster, overhead, or board.*

Men – write a letter to a particular woman in ministry, the young women of your congregation, or to future women you will mentor. What do you purpose to do well as a result of today's lesson both in the language and stories used in the congregation and in the mentoring of women?

Women – Write a letter to a man who has drawn out your voice in ministry. Tell this person HOW they helped you.

Bring your letters to the next class session to share.

Read the article by Olivia Metcalf, "Co-pastoring: Shaping a Creative Ministry and Marriage," in *Holiness Today*, March/April 2010, available online at [www.ncnnews.com/nphweb/html/ht/article.jsp?id=10009069](http://www.ncnnews.com/nphweb/html/ht/article.jsp?id=10009069).

**Focus:** God has ordained that we work together in ministry. It is vitally important to the work of the Kingdom that women and men learn how to lead together effectively.

How do we navigate the issues that arise when men and women work together in ministry? This lesson will deal with cross-gender staff issues, issues for couples when the wife and/or mother is called into ministry, and issues of co-pastoring (when men and women, or husbands and wives share the duties of lead pastor).

Women and men have been ministering together since the beginning of the Christian Church. God clearly calls both women and men into pastoral ministry and the Body of Christ needs the ministry of both genders. Some women will serve as lead pastors but others will serve in ministries of various kinds as part of a pastoral staff. Unfortunately, we hear all too often of those in ministry who have experienced moral failure with a congregant or a church staff member. These kinds of incidents have had many negative results. In addition to the tragic consequences for a congregation are the consequences for women in ministry.

Many male lead pastors have decided that cross-gender staffs are just too risky and restrict their staffs to men only. Others place so many restrictions on cross-gender staff contact that the female staff members are not allowed to become full members of the pastoral team. Still others assume that a woman cannot be a full partner in ministry, readily available to the congregation, and still fulfill her roles as wife and/or mother. Other issues for women in ministry arise around the expectations congregations and other staff members have for their spouses.

Finally, although there are many successful co-pastoring teams (or couples), our denomination has yet to fully support this model of shared leadership. We cannot address these practical "issues" for women and men in ministry until we examine them fully in ourselves and in our churches.

## Learner Objectives

*Instruct students to locate objectives in the Student Guide.*

*State the objectives for the learners.*

By the end of this lesson students will

- Recognize the issues inherent in cross-gender staff settings.
- Learn biblically and socially appropriate ways to interact with the other gender in a church staff setting.
- Learn methods for developing healthy cross-gender staff relationships.
- Recognize how issues of family leadership and headship affect cross-gender staff members.
- Appreciate the viability and the value of co-pastoring in the local church setting.
- Evaluate and re-evaluate their own pre-conceived notions and/or prejudices with regard to cross-gender staffs, leadership and family issues, and co-pastoring.

# Lesson Body

## Class Activity: Self-Evaluation

(5 minutes)

*Refer to Resource 14-1 in the Student Guide.*

Depending on class size, divide class members into groups of two or three and have them briefly discuss the following questions:

1. What experiences have you had with cross-gender staffs (either as a congregant or as a staff member)?
2. What pre-conceived notions do you have about the "risks" of men and women working together in a church staff?
3. What "rules" or guidelines do you have with regard to cross-gender staff interactions?
4. Do you have concerns or issues about the intersection of a woman's role at home and her role as a pastor?
5. How do you view the co-pastoring model of local church leadership?

## Lecture: Navigating Cross-gender Staff Issues

(25 minutes)

*Refer to Resource 14-2 in the Student Guide.*

*During this lecture give personal examples where appropriate or use the illustrations given (which are included in the Student Guide).*

### Getting Hired

To deal with cross-gender staff issues, one has to become a part of a cross-gender staff. As we noted in the Introduction, some lead pastors avoid the difficulties of cross-gender staffs by keeping their staff all one gender. One intention of this module is to "warm the climate" for women in ministry and increase the opportunities for women called of God to find places of ministry. Even if he isn't able to hire a woman on his own staff, a man in ministry can be an advocate for women in other places of ministry by offering a letter of recommendation, or making a phone call in support of a woman with whose qualities he is familiar. The support of male colleagues is crucial to the success of women in ministry, and that support needs to begin with the hiring process.

Women who are seeking to be hired for a staff position need to be patient, confident in their calling, and ready to explain not only how their gifts and skills will benefit a staff and a congregation, but the tremendous value of a cross-gender staff to the local congregation. It is important that women not sound defensive, or take a posture that assumes that they will not be given a fair opportunity to be hired. It is also important to thoroughly investigate any potential staff position and recognize when the working climate for a female might be intolerable.

### **Illustration**

A large and successful Nazarene church was looking for a new Children's Pastor. They had had "difficulties" with the last two Children's Pastors who were both asked to leave. So, for this new hire, they decided that they would only consider male candidates! It is doubtful that if their last two lead pastors hadn't "worked out," that they would have only considered women candidates for lead pastor from then on. This is an example of the hiring dilemmas women in ministry face. Qualified women candidates for a position typically filled by women were not considered because of the failures of their predecessors. Now, the pastoral staff in this church of approximately 1,000 is completely male. The unvoiced assumption in this situation was, "These individuals didn't succeed because they are women." It is important to recognize and challenge these false assumptions in ourselves and in others. Gender equity within the Church is everyone's issue.

*Resource 14-3*

### **Becoming an Equal Partner in Ministry**

Once a woman is hired, she faces the task of not just fulfilling her job requirements but of becoming a full partner in ministry along with other staff members. Often, assumed or explicit relationship boundaries will keep women from becoming full ministry partners. Other roadblocks to full partnership must be recognized and dealt with as well. Men may assume that the woman pastor(s) will fulfill the "helper" role on the staff and will always make the coffee or always take notes in staff meetings. Male pastors may hold assumptions, of which they may or may not be aware, that women are suited only to certain types of ministry. Just like in a volleyball game where a male might reach over and return a ball for a fully capable female player, a male pastor may "take over" those pastoral duties he sees as less suited to a female, e.g. serving Communion, baptizing, purchasing equipment, supervising a work day, leading a building project. The assumptions that lead to such actions, assumptions that keep women from being full ministry partners, are based on stereotypical gender roles, not giftedness. The gifts of the Spirit are not divided by gender. In Ephesians 4:11-12, we are told, "So Christ himself gave the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, the pastors and teachers, to equip his people for works of service, so that the body of Christ may be built up." There is no mention that these gifts are given based upon gender. False assumptions, veiled and unexamined, can keep women from exercising their God-given gifts in a staff ministry setting.

It's not just men who keep women from

Paul, Mary Rearick. *Women Who Lead: The Call of Women in Ministry* (Kansas City: Beacon Hill Press), 2011.

becoming full partners in ministry. Women can “shoot themselves in the foot” when it comes to full partnership because of their own unexamined assumptions. A defensive spirit can hinder a woman from becoming an equal partner in staff ministry (see **Illustration** below). Many women have been taught to use their power indirectly to get their way (there are way too many sitcoms relevant to this point to list here!). Mary Rearick Paul addresses this problem in her book, *Women Who Lead: The Call of Women in Ministry*.

The complexity of issues surrounding power has caused some women leaders to assume an indirect power. They can lean on their strong relationship skills and use them in manipulative ways as they seek a circuitous path to power. The shift into healthier leadership demands a different style.

Rather than using manipulation to get her way, the adult woman must learn to speak with authority, establish boundaries, and develop a healthy understanding of self. This obviously does not mean she gets her own way every time. Instead, this leadership demands real discussion over ideas, philosophy, implications, and ultimately a practice of mutual submission with other decision-makers (p. 117).

Male staff members who sense they are being manipulated will resist accepting a woman colleague as a full team member. Other staff members, male or female, will also resist granting full partnership to a female colleague who is too bossy or overly demanding. This often occurs when a woman believes that if she is too timid, she will be overlooked or marginalized. Women need to see these tendencies in themselves, and other staff members need to gently “speak the truth in love” to assure them that they will be heard and valued because of their inherent worth, not because of their demands. A woman who is too timid can also keep herself from being seen as a co-equal team member. Many women have been taught, or have assumed, that their “job” is to support the men around them, to keep the peace, to downplay their own opinions in favor of others’. A woman who doesn’t speak up or doesn’t enter fully into staff conversations and issues will fail to function as a full partner in ministry. Timid women often need encouragement from the other staff members to share their thoughts or concerns. All staff members, male and female, must take the initiative to make sure every other staff member is heard and valued.

**Illustration**

A woman on a large church staff has alienated many of her colleagues because she often makes remarks about what she perceives as her lower status. "Well, I guess the teens are more important than the children since you got a new computer and I didn't," is characteristic of her comments. Her underlying assumption is that she isn't equally valued by the church leadership and the other staff members because she is a woman working with children. Whether her complaints have merit or not, her obvious self-pity and defensive posture have lowered her credibility with the other staff members and kept her from becoming a full team member.

*Resource 14-4*

**Relating Successfully and Appropriately with Staff Members of the Other Gender**

What are the guidelines men and women need to follow to relate appropriately in ministry? An overriding theme for successful cross-gender staffs is communication. Every other element of authentic staff ministry depends upon good communication and lots of it. In churches large enough to support multiple staffs, there is often a tendency to create ministry "silos" where the staff member in charge of a particular area just manages her or his own area and only interacts with other staff members on a "need to know" basis. When staff meetings and interactions are just about coordinating calendars, then there is simply not enough communication going on to create a successful staff, cross-gender or single gender. A short once-a-month meeting with the lead pastor is not enough to build a relationship of mutual trust and understanding. Based upon this foundation of the necessity of good communication, we will explore the interrelated areas of mutual support, relationship boundaries, and dealing with conflict.

The climate of **mutual support** must be set and insisted upon by the lead pastor. No staff can operate successfully without the underlying assumption among all its members that "you have my back and I have yours." Staff members must be intentional in their support of each other in private and in public, within the staff and to the congregation. How do we create this climate of mutual support? By getting to know each other, building trust, and committing to an essential unity. Ephesians 4:1-3 says it beautifully: "As a prisoner for the Lord, then, I urge you to live a life worthy of the calling you have received. Be completely humble and gentle; be patient, bearing with one another in love. Make every

effort to keep the unity of the Spirit through the bond of peace.” We cannot authentically preach these words to our congregations without committing to living them out within our staff settings. Staff members get to know each other by spending time together, having conversations, sharing their lives and concerns with each other, praying together, having fun together, and learning about each other through things like personality tests. We come to trust and accept people as we get to know them. A staff that is backbiting or operates with cliques is a poor example of the Kingdom to a congregation. Inappropriate teasing, singling others out based on their gender, or words or actions that are diminishing to others are antithetical to the mutual support necessary to successful cross-gender staff relations.

The activities that are necessary to create a climate of mutual support seem easy for a single-gender staff and perhaps daunting for a cross-gender staff. Some of the greatest fears with regard to cross-gender staffs have to do with creating close, trusting relationships with members of the other gender. (Note the use of other, not “opposite” gender; women and men are much more alike than they are different.) Getting to know others involves taking a risk to become vulnerable; and it feels especially risky to become vulnerable with someone of the other gender who is not a family member or a spouse.

Reasonable **relationship boundaries** and guidelines are important; pastors should avoid behaviors that could arouse suspicions within the congregation or foster an inappropriate level of intimacy with a pastor of the other gender. Our fears of inappropriate intimacy and/or sexual temptation have caused many to establish hard and fast rules and regulations with regard to men and women working together in ministry. For example, some pastors and even some churches have established “rules” that a man will never be alone with a woman in a room or that a man and a woman will never drive anywhere alone together. These “rules,” however, can create walls that prevent the full-orbed pastoral ministry to which both men and women are called. How can a male pastor share sensitive, perhaps even time sensitive information with a female colleague if they don’t allow themselves to be in a room together alone? Does the male pastor share with the other male pastors face-to-face and the female pastor over the phone? Windows in the doors can certainly help, but there has to be a level of trust between pastors that allows for private conversations.

### **Illustration**

Mary Paul, in *Women Who Lead*, shares a personal experience about the effects of “rules” on women in ministry:

As a pastor in an Evangelical church, I was often the only woman at pastors’ meetings. I was at one meeting in which I needed to get a ride to the airport. There was this incredible awkward space of time when different men voiced their inability to help because they had a rule about being in a car alone with a woman. As this conversation unfolded, I felt a strange sense of shame arise within me. I had previously considered myself a colleague on equal footing. All of a sudden I was marked as something “other,” and even more embarrassing, a sexual threat. A male colleague was able to step in and help out, which relieved the public tension, yet the private awareness of belonging had significantly shifted. Walls do separate (p. 43).

Guidelines are preferable to rules. Must a male and a female pastor take two cars to a hospital a distance away when the presence of both is needed and no one else is available to join them? Effective ministry can’t always be regulated and is sometimes messy. There are times when the trust established between male and female staff members can keep them from legalism in relating with each other, and give them freedom for the ministry to which they both are called.

Barton, Ruth Haley. *Equal to the Task: Men & Women in Partnership at Work at Church at Home* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press), 1998.

Let’s talk specifically about sexual temptation in ministry. Ruth Haley Barton, in Chapter 3 of her book *Equal to the Task: Men and Women in Partnership*, offers an insightful perspective on this issue. She suggests that the underlying fear that prevents co-equal ministry partnerships is the fear that if men and women get close to each other they will end up in bed together. Barton asks the important question, “Are relationships ruled by fear and mistrust all we can hope for in the family of God?” (p. 52). She contends that we need to honor our sexuality, our genderedness, in our relationships with one another. Barton’s entire chapter is assigned as homework for this lesson. What follows is a summary, with some added Wesleyan elements, to encourage reflection and class discussion.

Men, and to a lesser extent women, are fearful of their sexual yearnings. Particularly in the religious world, we tend to deny or repress sexual feelings for the “wrong” person and respond to sexual thoughts or urges with fear and guilt. These fears keep us from relating to each other in healthy, mature, Christ-like ways; and they remain primary, unexamined

roadblocks to the co-equality of women in ministry. God made us as sexual beings, bodily beings, and said about us, "It is very good" (Gen. 1:31).

Barton suggests that we need to open up both our fears and our longings to God. "Because opening up our longings in the presence of God gives us the opportunity to take care of ourselves so that we will not express our sexuality in inappropriate sexual behavior. Being honest with God keeps us safe in moments when we are vulnerable" (pp. 56-57). It isn't surprising that men and women on church staffs feel ill-equipped to deal with sexual stirrings toward each other: sexuality is rarely discussed from the pulpit much less in staff meetings! The answer isn't to repress or run away from our God-created responses to each other, but to acknowledge them to our Father and let God, and perhaps a trusted spiritual mentor, help us deal with them. For men, dealing with sexual stirrings toward a female colleague often requires a radical shift away from our culture's view of women as objects toward Christ's view of women as persons and partners in the work of the kingdom. Women are not immune to cultural influences and need to listen to the Spirit's prompting, and the advice of others, so as not to send unintended sexual messages by their dress or conversation. That said, when our only response to possible sexual attraction is to run away or keep a hedge around ourselves, we show a lack of trust not only in each other but in God. In fact, repression and denial of our sexuality and its power can set us up to be ambushed by that power when we least expect it.

The good news is that the power of God is greater than the power of our sexual urges. Wesleyan-Holiness people hold firm to the belief that we are not enslaved to the power of sin or the power of our urges and desires. We will face temptation but we need not succumb! When we keep our colleagues at arm's length because of our fear that we cannot control our desires and actions, we are relying on ourselves and not the power of the Holy Spirit to keep us pure and to help us relate to each other in healthy ways. Jesus' response to the women he encountered was counter to first century culture. He consistently treated women with compassion and a comfortable intimacy that was neither inappropriate nor prudish. "The biblical mandate that men and women fully include each other in all aspects of community life requires that we face our fears about the relationship between our sexual stirrings and the spiritual passions within us" (Barton, p. 50).

Learning to deal effectively with **conflict** in church

staffs settings is the third important aspect of cross-gender staff ministry. When a group works closely together, especially if they get to know each other, share duties, plan events together, or develop a vision for the future, there will be conflict. As soon as people begin to care about each other, there is the potential for misunderstanding and hurt feelings. People with different ideas and perspectives will disagree and conflict will result. The answer is not to avoid conflict or pretend it doesn't exist. It is vitally important that church staffs learn how to deal constructively and creatively with the conflict that will inevitably arise in the course of ministry together.

The key to successful management of conflict within cross-gender staffs is effective communication, the element foundational to successful cross-gender staffs. Understanding the different ways that men and women communicate and deal with conflict can help. This is not to say that all men or all women are the same, but acknowledging some common differences between the genders can aid in conflict resolution on cross-gender staffs. For example, while men tend to be problem-solvers, women are often more interested in being understood than having their "problem" solved. Men tend to be more concerned about relational hierarchy while women tend to be more interested in relationships. Women are typically less direct in their communication than men. Men may be more interested in establishing boundaries while women are more open to intimacy. The more cross-gender staffs understand each other (individually, not just stereotypically), the better able they will be to resolve the conflicts that arise among them. Staff conflict, if it is dealt with creatively and constructively, can result in stronger staff relationships and more effective ministry. Conflict that is not resolved can have destructive consequences that reach far beyond the staff itself and into the congregation.

### **Illustration**

On a four-person pastoral staff, the male lead pastor and one of his female associates had a disagreement during a staff meeting about the kind of signage the church needed. He wanted a digital sign, which was unaffordable for the church at that time. She wanted a simpler, less expensive sign that could be erected sooner. After the two of them argued their positions for several minutes, without any apparent progress, the female staff member withdrew from the discussion. The lead pastor's forceful demeanor intimidated her; she assumed that further efforts to sway him in her direction would be fruitless. The staff

Becker, Carol E. *Becoming Colleagues: Women and Men Serving Together in Faith* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass), 2000.

meeting continued with some obvious tension. Later, the two pastors met in private where the lead pastor asked his associate not to stop talking in those situations; he would rather she tell him he was being stubborn than to cut off discussion. Both pastors learned something that day: he learned the importance of listening and not being so forceful; she learned to speak up rather than withdraw. The effect was to strengthen their relationship and prepare them to deal more successfully with future conflict.

Carol Becker, in her book, *Becoming Colleagues: Women and Men Serving Together in Faith*, lists some specific things men and women can do to promote better communication, avoid unnecessary conflict, and deal with conflict when it arises. The following paragraphs briefly summarize pp. 296-304 from her book.

Men can learn to listen better, to take the time to really hear their female colleagues' opinions and concerns. They can create a "place" for women by making it safe for them to speak and intentionally giving them visibility within the staff and the congregation. Men can share power with their female colleagues and commit to collaborative decision-making. Men can create an atmosphere of acceptance that communicates to their female colleagues that their contributions and their leadership are valued. Women can decide to be powerful—this doesn't mean power over men, but power equal with men. They can learn from men how to use their power more effectively. Women can learn to speak up, to be more direct in their communication, to ask for what they want and need. Women also need to persevere, to "hang in there" with their male colleagues, continually working to understand and be understood through the inevitable conflicts and stresses of cross-gender staff ministry.

## **Class Activity: Discussion**

(5 minutes)

Refer to Resource 14-5 in the Student Guide.

1. What are some ways that you have observed that men or women prevent female staff members from becoming full partners in ministry?
2. Do you agree that the fear of sexual tension or the threat of sexual involvement keep women from full participation in ministry?
3. What are some rules or guidelines that you have observed or heard about for men and women working together on a church staff, which may have prevented women from being equal partners in ministry?

4. How have you seen conflict dealt with (successfully or unsuccessfully) on a cross-gender staff?

## Lecture: Leadership and Family Issues; Co-pastoring

(10 minutes)

*Refer to Resources 14-6 and 14-7 in the Student Guide.*

This module and this lesson affirm the equality of women in ministry, the legitimate place of women in pastoral leadership. But, issues of male and female equality must start at home. Mutual submission (Eph. 5:21) must be in place between a husband and wife if it is ever going to work between female and male colleagues in the Church. The Church of the Nazarene has resisted (not always successfully) the pull of Fundamentalism, which continues to insist, based on its particular brand of biblical interpretation, that the man is the head of the household. This idea of male "headship," has permeated evangelical Christianity and especially raises issues for women in ministry.

A woman's call to ministry cannot help but affect her husband and her children and the family life they share. The Church of the Nazarene has gotten away, to a large extent, from its former expectations that female spouses of pastors must be able to play the piano or constantly entertain guests in their home. Our American economy dictates that the majority of women work outside the home and that often includes pastors' wives. It is still assumed, however, that a pastor's wife will have the "secondary" career and that she will follow her husband to the church where he is called and find employment in her field (or something similar) at the new location.

What are the expectations for the male spouses of female pastors? To what extent should they be involved in the church in which their wife is a pastor? And should they be expected to have the "secondary" career and be willing to move to where their wife is called to pastor? Many husbands of women pastors have found their niche in the church where their wife serves and have been willing to adjust their own career plans to allow their wives to fulfill their call to ministry. Others have chafed under the obligations "forced" upon them by their wife's choices and have failed to find a comfortable place of ministry or employment as the male spouse of a female pastor. These two ends of the spectrum have undoubtedly been experienced by female spouses of male pastors for many years. The practical issues and questions surrounding the families of women in ministry are not easy ones to answer, but they become easier when the woman pastor and her husband have settled the issue of headship and have come to the conclusion

Plantiga, Cornelius, Jr. "You're Right Dear—or how to handle headship," *The Reformed Journal* (May-June 1990), 15-20.

that submission to Christ, and mutual submission to each other, are required of all Christian couples.

Dr. Cornelius Plantiga Jr. was President of Calvin Theological Seminary until 2011. His article, "You're right, Dear—or how to handle headship," is full of wonderful quotes about the biblical imperative for egalitarian marriage:

Partnership in marriage is a wonderful novelty of Jesus Christ, a splendid restoration of the one-flesh mutuality of Paradise after centuries of hardness of heart. Feminists are wrong: good marriage does not remove subordination of wives. But Christian feminists are right: good marriage does require equal subordination of husbands. Of course, in the day-to-day reality of contemporary marriage, the patterns of deference need to be worked out and periodically adjusted. Our generation of dual-profession marriages is learning what it means to have two relatively inflexible schedules to keep: the question to whom we defer on, say, sick-child care in the middle of a workweek does not spontaneously suggest its own answer, and spouses have to make arrangements.

Still, when they are properly yoked and pulling together evenly, the question, "Who's boss?" arises only as a lovely joke (p. 18).

Although co-pastoring is becoming more accepted in the Church at large as well as the Nazarene Church, it is far from common, and the concerns surrounding it have continued to keep women from being able to fulfill the call of God upon their lives. Co-pastors are often married couples but may be two men or a man and a woman who are not married. The question most often asked of co-pastors is some form of, "Who is really in charge?" or "Who has the final word if there is a disagreement?" Questions about how to divide the duties of ministry is another question that comes up, but the issue of final authority is the one that is at the heart of resistance to co-pastoring by District Superintendents, church boards, and congregations. According to those who do co-pastor, the question of "Who is in charge?" is answered with, "We are equally in charge," or "It never comes up." Co-pastors make important decisions together. Just like in a good marriage, it is rare when a decision must be made about which the co-pastors cannot come to an agreement. If complete agreement cannot be reached, one will defer, or "submit" to the

other based upon expertise or whoever feels stronger about the issue. This is a fluid, back and forth, ongoing process.

Most co-pastors divide the duties of pastoring based on giftedness—perhaps one has musical gifts for planning the worship service and the other has the gifts necessary for the financial management of the church. Other duties may be divided equally, like preaching and pastoral care. For successful co-pastors, the headship of Christ is always in view; they can serve and lead together as co-equal partners when they are submitting first to Christ and secondly to each other (Eph. 5:21).

A case could be made that men and women have been co-pastoring for years. Prior to the days when women commonly worked outside the home, many pastors' wives served closely with their husbands in ministry—most of them just didn't preach. Men and women co-pastoring together is a viable and valuable mode of ministry can serve as a model not only for women called to ministry but as a model for co-equal Christian marriage in the Body of Christ.

# Lesson Close

(10 minutes)

## Class Activity: Re-Evaluation

Refer to Resource 14-8 in the Student Guide

Depending on class size, divide the members into groups of two or three and have them briefly discuss the following questions:

1. As a result of this lesson, have you become more aware of the issues inherent in cross-gender staff settings and the potential difficulties for women staff members?
2. Have you learned any new information about how men and women can interact appropriately in church staff settings?
3. Would you consider adjusting your own "rules" or guidelines with regard to cross-gender staff interactions, as a result of this lesson?
4. Did you gain any new insights about how to deal with conflict on a cross-gender staff?
5. Have you become aware of any prejudices or pre-conceived notions you have had about family and leadership issues or co-pastoring?

## Assign Homework

Direct students to the Homework Assignment in the Student Guide.

- Read Chapter 3, "The Discipline of Honoring Sexuality," pp. 49-62, in Ruth Barton's book, *Equal to the Task: Men & Women in Partnership*, available online at <http://www.amazon.com/Equal-Task-Men-Women-Partnership/dp/0830813578>.
- Write a one-page response paper on the chapter to bring to the next class session.
- Read the chapter in *Resource 15-1*, "Creating a Climate for Women in Ministry," and be prepared to discuss and utilize the information in a class activity.
- Read the article in *Resource 15-2*, "Team-Based Leadership" and be prepared to discuss and utilize the information in a class activity.





## *Lesson 15*

# Mentoring Decision Makers and Modeling Gender Mutuality

## *Lesson Overview*

### **Schedule**

Start Time	Task or Topic	Learning Activity	Materials Needed
0:00	Introduction	Orientation and Accountability	Student Guide
0:05	Creating a Climate for Women in Leadership	Small Group Discussion	Resource 15-1, 15-2, 15-3 (15-4 optional)
0:20	Mentoring and Modeling	Lecture with Activity	Resource 15-5, 15-6
0:50	Lesson Close	Closing Quote & Prayer Assign any cumulative assessment for the module.	Resource 15-7

# Lesson Introduction

(5 minutes)

## Orientation

Read the "Focus"

**Focus:** Every member of an organization, especially every member of the living organism called The Body of Christ, is responsible to mentor (disciple) current and future decision makers on key issues. Peer mentoring is often necessary for putting appropriate "peer pressure" on those reluctant, unaware, or unskilled in certain areas. We sometimes find ourselves in a position of needing to "upward mentor" or "manage the boss" as is often said in business circles. This can be done with both grace and appropriate power. Lastly, we must be cognizant and intentional about what we are teaching and modeling for future generations.

## Learner Objectives

*Instruct students to locate objectives in the Student Guide.*

*State the objectives for the learners.*

Upon completion of this lesson, learners should be able to:

- Understand the need for 360 degree mentoring as we seek to influence decision makers: peer mentoring, upward mentoring, and downward mentoring.
- Reflect on ways to mentor decision makers with an appropriate balance of grace and power
- Affirm the tremendous value of gender-balanced leadership teams and their power as a key strategy for modeling gender mutuality

## Accountability:

### Homework Due:

- Read Chapter 3, "The Discipline of Honoring Sexuality," pp. 49-62, in Ruth Barton's book, *Equal to the Task: Men & Women in Partnership*, available online at <http://www.amazon.com/Equal-Task-Men-Women-Partnership/dp/0830813578>. Write a one-page response paper on the chapter to bring to the next class session.
- Read the chapter in *Resource 15-1*, "Creating a Climate for Women in Ministry," and be prepared to discuss and utilize the information in a class activity.
- Read the article in *Resource 15-2*, "Team-Based Leadership" and be prepared to discuss and utilize the information in a class activity.

## Lesson Body

### **Class Activity:**

(15 minutes)

*Read Resource 15-1 and 15-2 in the Student Guide and prepare to lead a discussion on the key points of the articles, drawing out appropriate responses to each of the questions in Resource 15-3*

Lead a discussion on the Key points of articles 15-1 and 15-2. Have the students answer these questions in light of the article:

1. Create a shared list of additional positive examples from our various experience:
2. You also read a story with a tragic ending. What happens if our ministerial leaders are intentional, but there is resistance among the laity and/or church boards?
3. Brainstorm specific ways that each of us, from where we currently sit in our ministry role assignment or position, can act intentionally to level the playing field for women:
4. What specific action can you commit to take tomorrow, this week, this month, this year?

### **Class Activity:**

Optional/Supplemental  
(10 minutes)

*Resource 15-4*

In her research, Dr. Judy Schwanz, professor of Pastoral Care and Counseling at Nazarene Theological Seminary, found that successful women in ministry identified three different types of people critical to their success:

1. Peer support and present-day role models are needed to let them know they are not the "only one" doing what they do.
2. Women in past history who have paved the way, modeling and opening doors for the next generation.
3. Champions in their lives, often men, who have encouraged and sacrificed to create open spaces for them to serve.

Have the women in the class personally reflect on the significance of each of these and report back to the rest of the class.

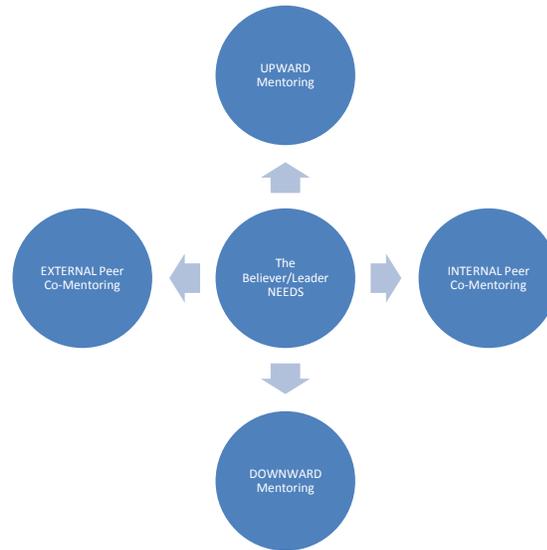
Mentoring and modeling are two key strategies we must employ to intentionally shape the culture of our organizations. A growing leader needs a relational network that embraces mentors, peers, and emerging

**Lecture:** (10 minutes)

Material adapted from Paul D. Stanley and J. Robert Clinton's book *Connecting: The Mentoring Relationships You Need to Succeed in Life* (1992, NavPress)

leaders in order to ensure healthy development and perspective. 360 degree mentoring is a circle of mentoring relationships...a full range of mentoring. We need all dimensions.

Explain the following diagram:



**Adapted from: *Connecting: The Mentoring Relationships You Need to Succeed in Life* by Paul D. Stanley and J. Robert Clinton. (NavPress, 1992, p. 162)**

Vertical Dimension

Beginning at the top of the diagram, every leader needs Upward Mentoring from someone who has gone before and can give direction and perspective. Downward Mentoring completes the vertical dimension. All of us need to be concerned for those who are coming up behind us. Downward mentoring is a primary means for helping develop the capacity, commitment, and values that will enable the next generation to serve God faithfully.

Lateral Dimension

Peer relationships are the vital lateral dimension to the model. Our peers make great co-mentors because we share so much common experience. We need to be mentored by peers both within and outside our organization. If we have no mentoring outside of our own organization, we tend to be insular in our thinking.

A principle of mentoring that we should all follow throughout our lifetime at every stage is this: Have a mentor, be a mentor.

*You will notice that the vertical axis and horizontal axis of the above diagram have been tilted to form a giant "+" on the blank paper. This makes it a simple exercise to replicate anytime, anywhere. People can be instructed to simply create a giant "+" on their paper and imagine themselves at the center point of the "+". In the upper circle, have participants list the people that they currently look to as Upward Mentors. In the lower circle, have them list the people that they are currently actively mentoring...or perhaps should be. In the circle on the right side of the page, have the participants list those internal peers within their organization with whom they feel they have a co-mentoring relationship or would desire one. In the circle on the left side of the paper, have participants list those external peers outside of their organization with whom they feel they have a co-mentoring relationship or would desire one.*

### **CLASS ACTIVITY:**

Pause now in the lecture to have participants complete their own personal "Constellation of Mentoring" found in *Resource 15-5*

*As an accountability measure, ask participants to consider how they might strengthen the relationships identified above to ensure that a greater influence takes place. Encourage them to be proactive in developing their full constellation.*

### **RESUME LECTURE:**

There is an interesting dynamic surrounding our *downward mentorees*. Most of us first approach those relationships thinking we will be the *influencers* and they will be the *influencees*. But downward mentorees have a way of shaking our complacency, renewing our convictions, refreshingly keeping us on our toes, and multiplying our ministry. They even bring us brand new learning. How many of you depend on a younger mentor to keep you abreast of new technology, especially in the exponentially multiplying world of social media? We need "younger" people in our life to keep us on the cutting edge. We are not only referring here to age, but also those younger in experience or places of position and authority. We need to be open to allowing fresh ideas and perspectives to flow UP the chain of command. In business circles this phenomenon is often referred to as "managing the boss."

In covenant communities like the church, we need to understand the concept of *shared leadership*. Out of mutual reverence for Christ our Head, we all must learn to subordinate ourselves to His mission: the mission becomes the leader, not any one of us. Leadership in

this sense is a *function*, not a position, and we all take some responsibility for the functionality of leadership.

In a culture of shared leadership, it is everyone's responsibility to mentor current and future decision makers on key issues. This is especially important when there is a need for systemic organizational change. We need opinion leaders at every level of the organization to exert proper influence in order to introduce change or shift a paradigm.

For example, to effect change regarding the attitude toward women clergy and adopting practices that support their placement and full utilization, we will need to engage the full extent of our 360 degree mentoring realm: upward, downward, and peer.

Peer mentoring will be necessary for putting appropriate "peer pressure" on those reluctant to practice proven benchmarks of excellence. Peer mentoring can provide reflective feedback for those who might simply be unaware of their engrained habits such as non-inclusive language. Peer mentoring is often a non-threatening way to teach new skills or understanding to those less adept in this area.

Obviously, we must be intentional about the downward mentoring of the next generation, shaping their thinking early in their development. It is much easier to create healthy perspectives than to change unhealthy ones. If we are successful, we might work ourselves out of the necessity of a module such as this one. We hope that one day the proper biblical, Wesleyan Holiness view of gender mutuality will be the pervasive norm in our culture. However, we must understand that culture is *caught* as much as it is *taught*. We cannot merely talk the talk, but must walk the walk. If our young people **do not see** gender mutuality in action, or if they **do see** a distinction in how female clergy are treated or utilized, then it matters not what we *tell* them! We cannot underestimate the significance of both positive and negative modeling.

Lastly, let's consider a new twist to the concept of upward mentoring. In the mentoring constellation, we named people "above" us that we look to for mentoring. We need to be mentored by them. However, it is sometimes necessary to "mentor our mentors". That is when we, the mentoree, need to challenge the thinking or actions of our upward mentor. Challenging feedback can be difficult to hear. To be well received, it must be done sensitively and with respect. We must take great care to do this with the

proper balance of grace and power.

Sometimes, we may find ourselves needing to challenge a status quo standard of thinking or operation in our entire organization. When attempting to influence that level of pervasive change, we know we must convince the top levels of leadership and then ask them to exert their power of influence.

It can be especially refreshing, when downward mentors are *invited* by upward mentors to come up to the “ivory tower” and advise them on how things are going “down in the belly of the beast” so to speak. Effective leaders periodically do this to stay in touch with their constituency, with all of their stakeholders, especially those on the front lines.

Such was the case when the Board of General Superintendents of the Church of the Nazarene invited female clergy leaders to the Global Ministry Center to educate them on the status of women clergy issues. In fact, the development of this module on our theology of Women’s Ordination is a direct result of that meeting.

It seems quite authentic and appropriate to share the content of that meeting with learners in this module. Not only will studying this presentation give insight into the organizational process that occurred as a result of many leaders at many levels working together to effect change, but it might also serve as a model/example/template that could be followed as you encounter opportunities to educate those within your own circle of mentoring: upward, downward and peer co-mentors.

Those involved in this historic, unprecedented meeting report that there was a genuine climate of warmth and high regard among all participants. The Women Clergy Leaders were encouraged that the BGS created immediate action items for themselves to be recorded in the minutes for accountability. They were committed to diligence in correcting these ills in our organization. The presenters felt heard and affirmed and confident that action would result from this meeting.

## NAZARENE WOMEN CLERGY

### ***PowerPoint Script for Presentation to Board of General Superintendents***

*The PowerPoint script is included in Resource 15-6.*

*NOTE TO MODULE INSTRUCTOR:*  
You will need to decide how best to utilize this presentation depending on how much class time you desire to devote to it.

**OPTIONS INCLUDE:**

- a. *Actually walking through the presentation together in class*
- b. *Assigning the study of it as pre-work homework and then simply leading a discussion about it*
- c. *Simply pointing it out as a supplemental resource*

**SUGGESTED DISCUSSION**

**QUESTIONS INCLUDE:**

1. *Does the tone of the presentation seem to reflect an appropriate balance of grace and power? (obviously, there were many non-verbal cues and relational interaction that cannot be assessed by merely dissecting the presentation in sterile written form)*
2. *How would you judge the effectiveness of the presentation? (If effectiveness can be judged on results, Recommendation 1 has been fulfilled by virtue of this module. Recommendation 2 was begun at the very next District Superintendent Orientation and DS Leadership Retreat. There is much more work to be done, but a new resolve has been seen and felt in the intentional actions of significant leaders...have you noticed any in particular that you could share?)*
3. *How might you be able to use this resource? Is there any Upward Mentor that you have credible relationship with that might benefit from hearing a similar adapted pitch? Is this kind of dialog needed at your local church, perhaps with Board members? Is this kind of dialog needed with*

*Title Slide:* We are so grateful for the opportunity to meet with all of you today. We recognize that these are very busy and hectic days and that you are dealing with major issues of the denomination. We want you to know that we pray for all of you and want to help to lighten the load, if that it is possible.

*Slide 2:* The issue of women clergy in the Church of the Nazarene is very unique to the Holiness movement because it comes from our theological understanding of holiness. In my doctoral research I have been amazed to discover that many feminist theologians who have done historical research have explored early Christianity and then somehow think that nothing happened until the feminist movement of the 1960's. I find it shocking that they don't recognize the incredible influence of the Great Awakening and the American Holiness movement on the development of women clergy in North America. It was from those original roots of women who were called to ministry, and who believed in the radical transformation which was possible through entire sanctification, that they went out to change the world. And change the world they did, as they fought for the abolition of slavery, for women's right to vote and became the leading advocates of the entire temperance movement.

Why is it important to understand the role of women clergy within our own movement? Because we must recognize that women clergy have always been a living and lived-out example of our theology. We do not see our place in ministry or in the life of the church as coming from a feminist political argument, but rather from our deep theological roots which are founded in the holiness movement.

*Slide 3:* Phoebe Palmer is the one who became the leader at articulating our role. In 1859 she published her book, "The Promise of the Father." It is this book which lays the foundation for our understanding of women clergy within the holiness movement. The argument is pneumatological – that is, we believe that when the Holy Spirit was poured out on the day of Pentecost – everything was changed! When Peter stood on the south steps of the temple and preached to those thousands of people that day, the prophesy of Joel was fulfilled. The Holy Spirit was poured out and God's sons and daughters began to prophesy. They could not be silent because of the outpouring of God's Holy Spirit.

*Slide 4:* A young woman in England by the name of Catherine Booth read Phoebe Palmer's book and began

your Senior Pastor or District Superintendent?

4. Overall, what can we learn from this case study?

to live with the conviction that she, too, was to be a preacher of the Word. She did not want to respond to that call. She was afraid, until finally, on a Pentecost Sunday she could no longer hold it in. She passed a note down to her husband, "I have a word." He invited her to come and share what she wanted to say, assuming it was an announcement of some kind. Instead, she mounted the steps of the pulpit and began to preach the word that God had laid on her heart. She knew she could no longer be quiet. When she was finished her husband stood beside her and announced to the congregation that they should return that evening because his wife would be preaching. And we know the rest of the story – she went on to found the Salvation Army, together with her husband.

*Slide 5: The 'Ezer and the Blessed Alliance*

Very significant to our theology is our understanding of restoration. That is, that we believe that humanity can be restored to God's original image and plan. We talk about it frequently in regard to humanity's relationship to God. That is – now that Jesus has come we, as humans, are free to have a restored relationship with God. This is not the same relationship that Adam and Eve had after the fall. However, we often fail to note that the relationship *between Adam and Eve* is meant to be restored as well. God in the act of creating humankind in "their likeness" – means that all of humanity is created with the "image of God." Men and women! That likeness is to be restored through the work of Jesus Christ.

The first human was called the "Adam" – and God said it was not good for the "Adam" to be alone. So God created a helper for the Adam. So often we think of this as the one who was simply taken from a rib – but the Hebrew here is so important to understand. God said "I will create an 'Ezer Cenegdo." Those two words in Hebrew are powerful. Let me share with you an example, we sing the song, "Here I raise my Ebenezer" (and we wonder what it means ☺). *Eben* means rock – and 'Ezer – means helper. In other words – when God has been our strong helper, we put down a rock as a reminder of the help He has given us. God is our 'Ezer. The woman was created to be the 'Ezer, and work together with the man.

Also, the word Cenegdo – means face to face. We are to work together, face to face and nose to nose! And in this we are the "image" of God – because you see, God is relational and the Holy Trinity is working together face to face and nose to nose – and God's intention for men and women in the life of the church is to work together to be a team! This team has been coined the

“Blessed Alliance.”

In the early days of the CON and in many pockets of our history, this teamwork – this “blessed alliance” was a living reality. What is the “blessed alliance?” It is God’s plan that His men and women will work together in His Kingdom. It means that when His sons and daughters work together –we are much more effective. We each bring our unique qualities and abilities to the table. We know and believe that men and women are different, but it is when these qualities are woven together that we, as a church are better and stronger. Is it a coincidence that the church in the US had its period of most rapid growth at the same time that it had its highest percentage of female ministers? Is it possible that there was a synergy within God’s plan that allowed the Holy Spirit to move and transformation to occur?

*Slide 6:* Enter fundamentalism. Little by little in the last century fundamentalism has crept into the life of *our* church – the Church of the Nazarene. Fundamentalism, in its simplest form, wants to read everything literally, and instead of believing in the recapitulation through Christ (the second Adam) – and a restoration of relationships between *God and humanity* and *men and women* – we see an emphasis on living in the fallen state, in the subordination of women to men in the world and in the church. What affect has this theology had on the Church of the Nazarene? The peak involvement of women clergy in the CON was in the 1930’s when we had over 30% female clergy. The encroachment of fundamentalism leads us to a state, where just a little over 10 years ago women clergy within the CON in the US were nearly extinct, at 4%.

*Slide 7:* Carolyn Custis James recently wrote a book called “Half the Church.” She was inspired after having read a secular book titled, “Half the Sky” from a Chinese proverb referring to the fact that women hold up *half the sky*. She asks us as a church some very serious questions.

*Slide 8:* We are living in a world that is looking at Christianity and asking whether we truly embrace our own gospel message, and whether we take action regarding that message. Muslim women who live in such repression are asking whether Christianity provides them, as women, freedom. Carolyn asks, “what message are we sending to the world by how we value and mobilize our own daughters? Will the whole church openly benefit from women’s gifts and contributions, or will the body of Christ attempt to fulfill a mission that dwarfs our resources without the full

participation of half the church? What is it costing us when half the church's gifts go untapped?" (Location 382)

*Slide 9:* This is a serious question and we may think or believe we are doing well in the CON. The truth is – we are doing much better than we were! The fact that we have made this an emphasis in the last 10 years means that things are different now, but we have not yet arrived.

As of 2009, we have 765 District Licensed and 1,167 Ordained women clergy for a total of 1,932. This represents a total of 14% of all licensed clergy. Women make up 10% of ordained clergy in the USA/Canada Church of the Nazarene. However, it seems that they are not getting positions as lead pastors. Only 6% of lead pastors are women. Over the last 10 years we have seen an increase in women receiving their licenses for the first time. In 2000 women made up 20% of those receiving licenses. In 2008 we peaked at 32%. In 2009 (the last year for which we have data) the percentage was 29%.

These are good signs but some of the "rumblings" which may be heard is that we have done a better job of encouraging people to get into the "system" but once they are in the "system" where are they to go?

*Slide 10:* Carolyn Custis James believes that this is a time of great opportunity. Sadly the strongest voices "speaking into the women's lives in the twenty-first century are Islam and feminism – systems that reside at opposite ends of the spectrum. Does the church's message for women stake out the middle ground, or does the gospel lead the way to something much better?" (Location 401) Our theology actually provides us with the opportunity to send a message to women that we are open for you to tackle new challenges! It is a message which "far outstrips the other [Muslim & feminist] voices and unlocks the untapped potential of half the church." (Location 405) Sadly, she goes on to say, "Yet instead of casting a powerful gospel vision that both validates and mobilizes women, the church's message for women is mixed at best—guarded, negative, and small at worst." (Location 470) Admittedly, she is speaking from the Reformed perspective and she is trying to speak into what she sees as concerns within the Reformed church. However, much of what she has to say is relevant to the Church as a whole.

*Slide 11:* In the US today approximately 60% of church attenders are women. In the African-American

church it is nearly 80%. Outside of the US the numbers are also higher than the 60% we find in the US, and yet, the majority of leadership within the church is male. Custis James says that “The Bible doesn’t merely leave the door ajar for some women to become leaders; it actually makes a rather emphatic case that God expects his daughters to be leaders.” (Location 957) This means that the Church will have to work intentionally for this to become a reality within the kingdom. Carolyn warns us, “there are dire global repercussions if half the church reluctantly backs away from something this important or imagines that this only concerns a select group of women and the male half of the church.” (Location 959)

*Slide 12:* We must, through our theological lens, “redefine leadership in kingdom/gospel terms.” (Location 962) Do women leaders look just like male leaders? No – that is because God created us differently. However, when men and women work together in the kingdom a type of synergy develops in which men and women are able to do more than they could have ever imagined individually. “According to Genesis 2, God never intended for men to try to survive without the spiritual ministries of women.” (Location 1480) This means that the “Blessed Alliance” is not just about “men *making room* for women and trying to tweak the system here and there to keep us happy.” (Location 1803) But rather, “the Blessed Alliance is God’s strategy for getting the job done.” (Location 1818) Finally, together with Carolyn, we state, “In light of God’s global vision for his daughters, we owe it to ourselves, to the church, and to the world to stop and reflect. Now is the time to ask ourselves—both individually and collectively—where we are on track with God’s vision both for us and for his world, where we’ve lost our way, and how we need to change and correct course. (Location 2311)

We are not here today to be critical, but rather, to say that we believe that God has a plan where we need to be proactive and work together, men and women – for *Half the Church* to be able to find and feel fulfilled in the place of ministry. In light of this we have several proposals to make that would be pro-active.....

*Slide 13:* Our distinctive theology places us, COTN, in a strategic position to define a beautiful biblical reality for women around the globe. And we don’t think for a minute that each of you does not wholeheartedly embrace this theological position. We know you do and have sensed your support in so many ways. But there is a culturally conditioned inertia that is keeping our system-wide practice from matching our beliefs.

It is going to take a strategic, systemic amount of intentionality to get us where we need to be. That is why our overarching recommendation today is that we need to adopt a clear and comprehensive strategy of intentionality. Our current lack of a systemic response to this gap in what we espouse and what we find systematically practiced across our denomination is doing at least two things:

1. First and foremost, it is hindering our mission. At the recent M11 conference, USA/Canada Regional Director, Bob Broadbooks unveiled Five Key Strategies for the future, the first of which was, "We must develop, train, and release passionate leaders with a Wesleyan-Arminian focus." The future viability of our mission depends on mobilizing the often overlooked female half of these leaders.

2. It is hurting our credibility. Dr. Graves experienced a bit of that reaction at our recent denominational meeting at the WHWC Come to the Water Conference when he was asked directly in open Q & A what we were doing systemically to address the particular disheartening stats regarding the placement of women clergy. The truth is there were no good answers for him to offer, and that problem belongs to ALL of us in this room and beyond. And that is why we came today. We want to be part of the solution. We want to offer the best collective wisdom at this point in time from the NWCC.

*Slide 14:* Appointed in 2007 by Dr. Dan Copp, Clergy Development Director. We see our mission as: "The USA/Canada Nazarene Women Clergy Council resources and educates the church, giving positive voice to unique issues facing women in vocational ministry and nurturing women called to leadership in the church."

*Slide 15:* Strategic Initiatives established November 2007:

1. To assure mentoring for called women at all phases of ministry.
2. To develop viable pathways for ministry placement of women clergy.
3. To identify funding sources to support women students and ministers.
4. To lobby for policy and legislation that ensures the systemic support of women clergy.

*Slide 16:*

5. To facilitate the development of networking

systems that effectively reach from the general to the regional to the district to the local levels for women in vocational ministry.

6. To promote a culture of value and visibility for the myriad ministry options for women and the excellent ways they are currently serving.
7. To support the production of state-of-the-art educational resources for leadership training on issues of women in ministry.
8. To influence the dialogue regarding a correct Wesleyan biblical and theological view of women in ministry.
9. To utilize all available technology and public venues to market the value of women in ministry.

*Slide 17:* It is in the spirit of these strategic initiatives that we now offer the following specific recommendations for action...

- We recommend that a requirement be added to all educational curricula for ordination preparation that ensures competency in articulating the theological and biblical foundations for women in ministry.

Rationale - We are careful to educate future elders on the distinctives of our denominational doctrine, such as Christian Holiness and Entire Sanctification. Ordaining Women is also an historic and contemporary distinctive of our denomination. Particularly because of the recent encroachment of fundamentalism, we need to be as intentional about elevating this theological and biblical stance in our ministerial preparation. In the words of Rev. Dr. JoAnn Lyon, General Superintendent in the Wesleyan Church, "There are needs for islands of particularity in the sea of inclusion." She then named Wesleyan Holiness and Women Clergy as important distinctives in the church universal.

The following quote from David Downs, DS of East Ohio, might provide anecdotal evidence that we are complacent, if not negligent, in this area of education...

*Slide 18:* After sitting through a course on the biblical theology of women in ministry taught by Rev. Tracy Ogden Johnson, he had this to say...

"Her teaching was outstanding...Until that day, I thought I had a fairly adequate understanding of this subject. On that day, I learned that I was sorely lacking. I have four religion/theology degrees from Nazarene institutions and yet I could not point to a single course or even a lecture I had experienced regarding this vital part of biblical teaching. I began to wonder how many of my colleagues, in the superintendency and the pastorate, were similarly lacking. It dawned on me that probably we had failed to provide the biblical understanding regarding women in ministry that we should have. How many girls and young women have not been properly encouraged to understand and/or to be obedient to God's call? How many were outright discouraged by well-meaning, and yet uninformed (as I was) pastors. Frankly, I'm not sure that even NTS has weighted this subject adequately in their curriculum."

*Slide 19:* Let them know of resources readily available...

- Dr. Carla Sunberg and Dr. Jeanne Serrão are currently writing proposed changes to the Learning Outcomes of the USA/Canada Course of Study to be presented at the next RCOSAC meeting. (Approved June 2012)
- Appoint a team of women and men to develop a proposed course for the Modular Course of Study. (Team developed and concept approved by USA/Canada RCOSAC in June 2011. This Module is the course that was written and approved by USA/Canada RCOSAC in June 2014.)
- Evaluate the effectiveness of this educational approach by including a question in all ordination interviews. Successful candidates for ordination must be able to articulate our position on women in ministry and provide biblical defense.

*Slide 20:* We cannot move forward unless leadership on the General and District level models language and action that promotes awareness and mutuality! It is an imperative leadership responsibility! Our poor modeling of gender-inclusive language serves to reinforce the stereotypes that marginalize and discriminate against women. May we respectfully suggest that even our General Leadership might possess blind spots in this regard? May we gently hold up the mirror for you to see? In August 2010, a beautiful gesture was made by our Board of General Superintendents to affirm and encourage pastors. A video message of pastoral appreciation was sent out to all pastors. We believe

this gesture was motivated by a heart of love and the warm intent to thank and encourage all pastors. However, there was an unfortunate, but glaring oversight. Early in the video, the term “brother,” immediately excluded a group of important pastors...the female ones. Our hearts sank as we, once again, felt left out.

Granted, the word “brother” was in a scriptural reading, Philemon 1:4-7, and the last sentence of *Manual* paragraph 903.6 does state, “Language changes shall not be applied to any scriptural quotations or references to God.” However, care should have been taken to more intentionally choose a passage or translation that did not exclude women when your intended audience was both men and women pastors. We could cite many more examples (i.e. the archaic references to “pastors and wives retreats”). We must do better than this. We need formal sensitivity training.

- We recommend that comprehensive training be provided to District Superintendents at the next available DSLDP. This training should include the theological and biblical foundations for women in ministry, as well as practical inclusive-language training and pragmatic strategies for increasing the placement of women clergy.

Lastly, this training needs to highlight models of success and give opportunity to benchmark against best practices regarding the intentional placement of women clergy. We measure what we value and we celebrate what we want to see more of. David Downs, East Ohio District, is proof positive that intentionality *does* make a significant difference

*Slide 21:* In 2001, his district had 5 women assigned (3 senior pastors and 2 associates). Today, they have 17 (6 senior/co-pastors and 11 associates). He anticipates several of the women currently serving as associates will be stepping into senior pastorates in future years. This culture change required perseverance. David says, “In one case, I had to virtually demand that a congregation receive a female pastor for their interim knowing that once they got to know her and sense the power of the Holy Spirit on her ministry that they would insist she become their pastor, and, that’s exactly what happened.” In the words of Jossie Owens, “District Superintendents must plow through the resistance to placing women. Male champions will have to sacrifice and suffer for the advancement of women.” The New England District is another example of the results of intentionality. Perhaps a panel of DSs who are models of excellence in

this specific arena can share best practices with the others in this training setting?

*Slide 22:*

- Strongly request/encourage that the District Superintendents Advisory Committee (DSAC) plan a comprehensive training program as described for the next open DSLDP.
- Create accountability measures. Evaluate the intentional follow-through of District Superintendents by including specific questions in the annual reporting mechanism.

Examples provided next slide...

*Slide 23:* Our leadership must mirror our constituency.

- Specifically *how* have you been intentional about the placement of women clergy?
  - Number of church boards you have proactively educated on the biblical and theological stance our denomination takes on women in ministry?
  - Number of women you have placed in senior pastorates?
  - Number of resumes for women clergy you have presented to churches for consideration? Number of interviews?
  - Number of women you have actively recommended to current pastors to consider as associates?
  - Number of women serving on your nominating committees?
  - Number of women included on ballots, particularly for District Advisory Board, etc.?
  - Number of women appointed to Ministry Boards and other appointed positions of leadership?

*Slide 24:*

- We need required cross-gender mentoring relationships and structured leader development programs (with intentional grooming of high potential females) to foster a climate of greater

collegiality among those called to pastoral leadership

- More women should be invited to participate in Think Tanks like Thought Partners and be appointed to all levels of leadership. We are missing a vital voice at the table. Gender-balanced leadership is good pastoral theology.
- We need our General Superintendents to use your vast influence to proactively elevate this topic; to champion the cause of women everywhere in our global denomination.

*Slide 25: Tips for Leadership:*

- Use the new video messaging tactic to influence on this issue.
- Ask our publication editors to be intentional about using female authors and highlighting the stories of women clergy.
- Take the opportunity at ordination services worldwide to make a statement about women clergy.
- Assertively lobby with District Advisory Boards about female candidates at DS election time and with DSs regarding balanced or proportionate gender representation in Nominating Committees and on ballots, particularly for General Assembly delegates. Our decision makers must mirror our constituency.

Slide 26: I encouraged outside-the-box thinking regarding ministry assignment in my chapter in *A Holy Purpose*. I want to inspire women and men to think creatively about our mission. However, there is valid expectation regarding systemic change. We must do both!

“While there is certainly valid expectation for systemic change within our current institution to warm the climate for our female ministers, I also want to encourage innovation on the part of the women clergy themselves. We need not wait for the perfect opportunity to be handed to us. No minister in the Church of the Nazarene is guaranteed a congregation, a building, a certain position, a salary or budget. If we are called of God, then we may need to be willing to preach the Gospel from every rooftop, street corner, or under every tree. We must engage in outside-the-box thinking regarding ministry roles. The Great Commission is beckoning us to get creative beyond the traditional mix. Get out there and proactively propose

new and different ministries. We need motivated self-starters to be paradigm pioneers.”

- “Go plant churches” is becoming the standard answer to the placement dilemma. Though we whole-heartedly agree that church-planting is a necessary strategy for the future, what is the strategic plan for making this happen? Without a clearly identified structure to plug into, it is a difficult leap. Women, in particular, hear this “suggestion” as a cop out. To an already disenfranchised minority, this seems like the passing of the proverbial buck.

*Slide 27: International Implications*

- Department of World Mission
  - Utilization of missionary couples on dual contract.
- Developing mission districts
  - Empowerment of women called to the ministry. Distinctives of stages of district development.

*Slide 28: In Conclusion:*

- W. Edwards Deming said that the number one job of a leader is to remove barriers and obstacles to productivity.
- Isaiah 57:14 – “Build up, build up, prepare the road! Remove the obstacles out of the way of my people.”
- Intentional leadership removes the barriers and obstacles to empowerment. Our women clergy need some boulders moved out of their pathway. We owe it to future generations.

(Rev. Dr. Carla Sunberg, by virtue of her role as President of Wesleyan Holiness Women Clergy and Rev. Dr. Rondy Smith, by virtue of her role as Chair of the Nazarene Women Clergy Council - Presented to the BGS May 2011)

## *Lesson Close*

(5 minutes)

### **Review**

*Resource 15-7*

Read the quote by Gilbert Bilizekian, found in Resource 15-7 in the Student manual, as a closing statement to the module.

Pray a Benedictory Blessing over your students!

### **Assign Homework:**

*Homework could be due to the instructor 1 week after the module is over.*

- 1) Turn in your Journal which you have kept during the module.
- 2) Write your own Biblical, Theological, Historical and Practical rationale for the role of ordained women leadership in the Church of the Nazarene.

