

The Harvester



Preparing Souls

To Serve The Lord



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“Do You Understand The Biblical Value of Women?”

A Review of Our 2011 Lectureship Book

By Brian R. Kenyon

The Biblical value of women is immediately apparent on the sixth day of creation, when God created mankind in His own “image” and “likeness” (Gen. 1:26-27). These verses show that men and women are inherently equal to one another. God made “them” *both* in “his own image,” and he gave *both* of “them...dominion” over the created world! *Both* of “them” are image bearers of God! Additionally, *both* men and women have a soul for which Jesus died to redeem. *Both* men and women are saved by obedience to the same Gospel plan of salvation (cf. Gal. 3:26-29).

Though men and women are inherently equal, God did give each of them different instrumental roles. Men are to lead (cf. Eph. 5:22-24; 1 Tim. 2:8), and women are to be in subjection (cf. 1 Cor. 14:34; 1 Tim. 2:12). Through the years, however, some have wrongly concluded that because women are to be in subjection to men in certain areas, women must be inferior to men. Such an idea, of course, is far from the truth, as a proper understanding of the passages cited above indicates.

We often hear in sermons and/or read in publications what women cannot do in service to the Lord. While that instruction is certainly needed and profitable, this lectureship book examines the positive aspects of what women can do and the good influence they can have in their service to the Lord. Of course, the study necessarily involves some of the negative aspects, but the primary goal is to focus on the positive.

Women have played an important role not only in

the history of humanity, but especially, as it relates to the subject of this book, in the history of God’s people. Much can be learned from the women mentioned in the Bible, whether they lived in the Patriarchal, Mosaic, or Christian ages. These women provide great encouragement for those of us living today. For example, note the direct references to women in what we often consider faith’s hall of fame: Sara (Heb. 11:11); Moses’ mother (Heb. 11:23); Rahab (Heb. 11:31); and unnamed “women [who] received their dead raised to life again” (Heb. 11:35a). All these women, and many more, again confirm that faith is the victory!

The majority of the lectureship book contains the sermon manuscripts that were preached January 17-20, 2011. The first section focuses on valued Biblical principles relating to women and the role and impact that God has planned for them. The second section examines valued

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Biblical examples of women as they served the Lord and his cause. Specific examples are given for our learning and admonition (cf. Rom. 15:4). The third section contains our afternoon forums, which studied the impact of women on society, as well as women as companions, mothers, and church workers. The remaining section is an appendix that contains articles that were not presented orally at the lectureship but relate to the Biblical value of women.

This book is a unique, refreshing resource on the Biblical study of women. In a society where gender roles and responsibilities are vague at best and downright twisted at worst, a book such as this is needed to untangle the confusion of this present earthly age. The only way one can correctly understand the true value of women is to learn and apply what God says on the subject through His inspired word, the Bible. To this end has this lectureship book been prepared. We thank God for valuing women! Below are a few excerpts from the major sections of the book that will give our readers a taste of the Biblical value of women and of this lectureship book.

Valued Biblical Principles

God valued women and had a plan for them before He created this universe (cf. Tit. 1:2). Throughout the pages of inspiration, the revealed mind of God is clear as to the necessity of women in His plan. In his chapter "Women in the Mind of God," Jackie Stearsman writes,

When I reflect on the topic assigned, the first thought that comes to mind is that God in his infinite wisdom recognized that man needed help, and help that is suitable to him could not be found in the created order thus far

(Gen. 2:18-20). Therefore, God brought woman into being so that in her, man might have the perfect counterpart to fulfill his deepest longings and needs (Gen. 2:21-24).

Jackie Stearsman also states,

We have a defective view of man if we try to think of the male without the female," and "Likewise, we

have a perverted view of woman if we fail to consider her in relationship to the male...(1 Cor. 11:11-12).

In this section of the book, we have a chapter on "Godly Women's Character," in which Gene Burgett focused on two key Bible passages: First Peter 3:1-6 and Proverbs 31:10-31. As brother Burgett draws near the conclusion of his chapter, he writes,

It is, however, not enough to merely recognize the value of godly women. It is also necessary to express one's appreciation for that kind of woman. We live in an age where lewd behavior is exalted. Look at the clothing and gyrations of some female singers today. Society says, "Behave like that and we will put your picture on the cover of every magazine in the grocery store checkout line." How many magazines exist to applaud a submissive woman who finds joy in elevating the status of her husband in the gates? It is up to godly men to honor godly woman. Godly men must let their godly wives know they appreciate their virtue. Godly men must say, "Many daughters have done well, But you excel them all" (Pr. 31:29)!

Melvin Otey concludes this section, with his chapter, "There Is Neither Male Nor Female." He points out,

The Christian elevation of women above gross, centuries-long degradation was radical. In some parts of the world, and in the hearts of some, equality of the sexes still seems radical. The precept that there is neither male nor female with respect to value in the eyes of God provided, and still does provide, the foundation for lifting women out of discrimination and maltreatment.

Valued Biblical Women

In this section, we study the Biblical examples of some women. We examine Hagar and Rachel, Miriam, Mary Magdalene, Pilate's wife, Tabitha, Lydia, and women in Romans 16, along with a chapter titled, "His Mother's Name Was..." and a four chapter study on women in Christ's genealogy: Tamar, Rahab, Ruth, and Mary.

In his study on Rahab, George Beals addresses the question of whether her harlotry or lying was commended by the Hebrews writer. He answers,

No. When Hebrews 11 commends a faithful person, it commends the person's faithful actions, not his or her unfaithful activities that may be recorded for us...Hebrews is not referring to her harlotry or lying but to her time of faithfulness.

Raymond Sieg, in his chapter on Mary Magdalene, sets the record straight, when he writes,

Mary Magdalene is one of the many virtuous women we read about in the Bible. Unfortunately, some things have

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been written and said about Mary that are not based on Scripture....To learn the truth about her identity and character we must search the Scriptures for reliable information.... A thorough study of Mary's identity requires us to deal with two fictitious matters. For one thing, even though there is absolutely no Scriptural basis for it, there is a commonly held belief that Mary was a prostitute.... Sadly, some members of the church view Mary as an immoral woman....Another fictitious matter is that Mary had a sexual relationship with Jesus [popularized by the book, *The Da Vinci Code*].... One can only wonder about how many Biblically illiterate people have been influenced by such irreverence.

Forum Topics on Women

This section of the book corresponds to the forums held each afternoon. These forums at the lectureship were followed by a question and answer period. Though the questions and answers are not contained in the book, each lesson presented is. "Women In Society" focuses on Deborah, Esther, and the widow of Zarephath. "Women as Companions" focuses on Sarah, Jochebed, and Manoah's wife. "Women as Mothers" focuses on Lemuel's mother, Hannah, and Lois and Eunice. "Women as Church Workers" focuses on Priscilla, Phoebe, and Euodia and Syntyche. These are practical lessons that encourage all.

Concerning a mother's instruction to her son, Will Vann writes,

If women top the list of things that keep men out of heaven [cf. Pr. 31:3], then alcohol is right up there with them. Of the second warning that Lemuel's mother gives him, she pulls no punches. She does not say that drinking in moderation is okay or that social drinking is acceptable when in the company of those who drink. She makes it very clear how Lemuel should regard the use of alcohol.

Concerning Phoebe, Stephen Atnip, after a detailed study of the original language, writes,

Remembering that Phoebe's *diakonos* is of the same kind as Paul's in the immediately preceding verses (because of the *kai* construction), we come to the conclusion that Phoebe, like Paul, was not serving in an official deacon capacity for the Cenchranean church, but rather was performing a temporary envoy errand for that congregation; an errand that either culminated in Rome or caused her to pass through Rome in fulfillment of that errand. The nature of that errand may be bound up in the further fact that she had been a "succorer [helper, NKJ, from *prostatis*] of many and of myself also" (Rom. 16:2)...at no point is either Paul's (and, therefore, Phoebe's) labor a titled office in any local congregation.

Appendix Articles

The appendix allows us to include articles from faithful Christian women, who, of course, do not preach at the lectureship. In her chapter on women "Being Successful," Joyce Stearsman writes,

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Children who grow up in a loving home will know how to make a loving home. Countless generations will be influenced by our life. Are we leading them toward a heavenly home or into unending suffering in hell? Are we striving to be rich in the eyes of men, with material possessions, while leaving God out of our life or the lives of our children? If so, our soul is poor indeed. To be successful in God's eyes, we must place our priorities and values on spiritual things.

This "snap shot" of our lectureship book lets you know the approach we have taken in this study of women. As already mentioned, this book would be a valuable addition to any person's library, especially those who want to learn the Biblical value of women! If you have not purchased a copy, we encourage you to do so by contacting the school. You may also want to give a copy to the preacher or elders of the congregation with whom you are a member! 



Grubb Mission Report...Live! John Grubb, missionary to Taiwan, China, Malaysia, Indonesia, and other parts of Asia, informed and encouraged students and staff in chapel with his work report and a period of questions and answers. Pictured front row from left: Wilken Roger, John Grubb, Jackson Bonnet, and Thomas Wise. Back row: Alex Antenor, Steve Walling, James Egolf, Derek Long, and Brian Kenyon.



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