

Women Elders and Pastors



Jonathan Mukwiri

Copyright © 2014 by
Jonathan Mukwiri

All rights reserved.

Published by:
Warning Message
Durham, United Kingdom
www.warningmessage.org

Women Elders and Pastors

Jonathan Mukwiri

The question of whether women should serve in leadership roles of elders or pastors, whether ordained or not, is an issue in many Christian churches. Even in the Seventh-day Adventist Church, there are strong views for and against having women in leadership roles. Whilst Scripture is clear, its authority is being questioned, as a cultural interpretation of Scripture is on the increase. This has created a religious crisis, and we must not be indifferent, for we are told: “Indifference and neutrality in a religious crisis is regarded of God as a grievous crime and equal to the very worst type of hostility against God” (3T 280.2).

Worldly feminist leadership culture has long been adopted into our churches. Yet this feminist culture is not the basis of leadership in the church as ordained by Scripture. To those seeking to conform to world cultures whilst serving God, Jesus said, “No servant can serve two masters” (Luke 16:13). To such, Paul appeals: “be not conformed to this world” (Romans 12:2). To those who claim not to conform but merely befriend the world, James strongly rebukes: “Ye adulterers and adulteresses, know ye

not that the friendship of the world is enmity with God? whosoever therefore will be a friend of the world is the enemy of God” (James 4:4).

In the Biblical household family, men are fathers and women are mothers. The sexual distinction in the household family does not evaporate when you walk through the doors of a church family. A church family is an extension of the household family.

The divine order is this: God is the head of Christ, Christ the head of every man, and man the head of the woman (1 Corinthians 11:3); but the trinity error of doctrine, the root cause of women equality crisis, teaches an absolute co-equality in the divine order.

Jesus and only men apostles

In His ministry, Jesus did indeed treat women as persons of equal value to men. He admitted them into His fellowship. He took time to teach them the truths of the Kingdom of God. A woman was first with the story of the resurrection, and at least one woman (Mary) received the Holy Spirit with the others at Pentecost. Yet the fact remains that Christ called no woman to be part of the twelve apostles.

When Jesus chose the twelve Apostles, He was not accommodating the cultures of the day when He

chose only men. Those who say Jesus was following culture are in danger of preaching ‘another Jesus’ not “preached” by the apostles (2 Corinthians 11:4). Jesus was not following cultures. On the contrary, Jesus changed cultures that were repugnant to the gospel, such as rabbis not teaching women (Mary sat at Jesus’ feet to be taught). But not having women in leadership roles (such as priests or elders) was not a culture, it was Jesus’ own command (Scripture testify of Jesus: John 5:39; Jesus inspired prophets to write all Scripture: 1 Peter 1:10-11), otherwise Jesus would have changed it.

Now, if Jesus picked only male apostles because it was cultural, then everything else Jesus did was hypocritical. Christ died because He would not capitulate to the cultures, traditions and customs of the Jews. So for Him to say, ‘I do not want to ruffle the Pharisees’ feathers, so I am only going to pick men,’ would be a big stretch. Jesus was so blatantly clear about what the truth was. He would not compromise simply for culture or tradition in any area, because it would be dishonest. Those who seek to apply a cultural interpretation to what Jesus did are not only questioning the authority of Scripture, but also of Jesus Christ Himself.

Male leadership from creation

From creation, men and women were distinct. God tells us how He feels when gender lines are ignored. “The woman shall not wear that which pertaineth unto a man, neither shall a man put on a woman’s garment: for all that do so are abomination unto the LORD thy God” (Deuteronomy 22:5).

God did not create men and women in the same way. God made man out of dust, and He made woman out of man. “And the LORD God caused a deep sleep to fall upon Adam, and he slept: and he took one of his ribs, and closed up the flesh instead thereof; And the rib, which the LORD God had taken from man, made he a woman, and brought her unto the man” (Genesis 2:21, 22).

God named man, whereas man named woman. “And Adam said, This is now bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh: she shall be called Woman, because she was taken out of Man” (Genesis 2:23). “And Adam called his wife’s name Eve; because she was the mother of all living” (Genesis 3:20).

God established that husbands should be the servant-leaders of the home. “Unto the woman he said, ... thy desire shall be to thy husband, and he shall rule over thee” (Genesis 3:16). Now, we must not rush past this verse. Some have argued that the

passages regarding man's leadership role reflect the biases of a male-dominant culture. But notice that the command in Genesis 3:16 came directly from God, not from Peter, John, or Paul.

God tells us that women should not rule over men. "I suffer [permit] not a woman to teach, nor to usurp authority over the man" (1 Timothy 2:12). The only times when women ruled over God's people were when men were too fearful and weak to lead as in the case of Deborah when Barak failed his man-role (Judge 4:8-9) or in times of apostasy (Jezebel and Athaliah). It was not pleasing to God, as He lamented: "As for my people, children are their oppressors, and women rule over them. O my people, they which lead thee cause thee to err, and destroy the way of thy paths" (Isaiah 3:12).

God's Word equates the authority of man over woman with the authority of Christ over man. "But I would have you know, that the head of every man is Christ; and the head of the woman is the man; and the head of Christ is God" (1 Corinthians 11:3).

Christian wives should willingly acknowledge the headship of their husbands. "For the husband is the head of the wife, even as Christ is the head of the church: and he is the saviour of the body. Therefore as the church is subject unto Christ, so let the wives

be to their own husbands in every thing” (Ephesians 5:23, 24). “Teach the young women to be ... discreet, chaste, keepers at home, good, obedient to their own husbands, that the word of God be not blasphemed” (Titus 2:4, 5). “Even as Sarah obeyed Abraham, calling him lord: whose daughters ye are, as long as ye do well, and are not afraid with any amazement” (1 Peter 3:6).

Marriage is not a dictatorship, but a partnership where the husband fills the role as a senior partner. Husbands are to be servant-leaders in the home in the same way Jesus came to love, serve, and lead His church. “Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it” (Ephesians 5:25). It is very important to note that God’s plan for male leadership is in no way an open license for tyranny. God will judge those churlish men as He did Nabal (1 Samuel 25:3, 10, 25, 38).

The Old Testament Priesthood

In the Old Testament, women were never priests. The role of the priest was seen in the Bible as representing the head of the household. During patriarchal times the male head of the household or tribe functioned as the priest, representing his

household to God (Genesis 8:20; 22:13; Job 1:5). Later, for collective representation, God appointed the tribe of Levi as priests for the entire congregation of the children of Israel (Numbers 3:6-13).

Nonetheless, the Old Testament presents women as full participants with men in the religious and social life of the church. In the fifth year of Jeremiah's prophetic ministry, the priests went to Huldah the prophetess for counsel (2 Kings 22:13-14). Women served as musicians and attendants at the tabernacle and temple (1 Samuel 2:22, 1 Chronicles 25:5-6, Psalms 68:24-25).

However, women did not serve as priests in the Old Testament (Exodus 28:1, Numbers 3:1-13).

The Old Testament priesthood goes way back. Ever since sin entered into the world there have been priests. "In the beginning the head of each family was considered ruler and priest of his own household" (SR 50.3). A man who had the leadership responsibility in his family fulfilled this headship role, for "every man was the priest of his own household" (PP 350.1).

This patriarchal order continued until the time of the Exodus when God delivered His chosen people Israel from slavery in Egypt. At that time the Lord sanctified the first-born males for His service

(Exodus 13:1, 2, 12). Then He brought Israel to mount Sinai where He instituted a covenant with His people based on the sanctuary services. God here covenanted with Israel that they were to be a “kingdom of priests” (Exodus 19:5, 6).

But this covenant did not allow every Israelite, man and woman, to function as a priest in the sanctuary services. The responsibility to officiate as priest was at first limited to the first-born (Numbers 3:12, 8:1-18), but after the golden calf idolatry it was assigned to the males of the family of Aaron of the tribe of Levi (Exodus 28:1, 41, 43; Numbers 3:10). Yet Israel continued to be a “kingdom of priests” even though not every person officiated as a priest, because those who performed as priests represented the families and the nation.

In this “kingdom of priests,” responsibilities for serving God’s people were divided among the priests, elders, rulers, prophets, and later on judges and kings. The priests led out in the religious matters, performing the sanctuary services and providing religious teaching. The elders, males occupying positions of leadership, assisted with governing the nation (Exodus 24:1, 9, 14; Numbers 11:16; Nehemiah 13:29), along with rulers who were responsible for groups of thousands, hundreds and

tens (Deuteronomy 1:15). Then there were the prophets, both male and female, specially called by God as messengers to speak His word, counsels, warnings, and judgments. Later, judges and kings were chosen to lead the whole nation in civil matters.

Despite these various service roles, the nation of Israel remained a “kingdom of priests” because of the covenant God had made with His people. The covenant continued to be relevant throughout the Old Testament era (Judges 2:30; 1 Kings 19:14; 2 Kings 17:15, 35, 36; Nehemiah 13:19).

During the 4000-year history of the Old Testament, despite times of great apostasy, God was directing and guiding His people. Under His wise leadership men were designated as the leaders in religious and political affairs, with the exception of the roles of prophet and judge, which could be occupied by God-fearing women as well as men.

The New Testament Priesthood

The New Testament continued this concept, appointing representative males as elders or pastors. The New Testament practice ran contrary to the culture of the time, since most pagan religions had priestesses as well as priests. The New

Testament practice was based on the divine revelation in the Old Testament (see 1 Timothy 2:12-13), pointing to a headship role established at creation for man to fulfill in the household family and in the church family (the extension of the home).

The New Testament teaching on the role of women in the church is expressed in theological terms, basing it on interpretation of earlier Bible passages. It is presented as part of God's law and as a command of the Lord (1 Corinthians 14:34, 37). If such a Biblical teaching is regarded as limited to the culture of Paul's time, the same could be said of Biblical teachings regarding creation, Sabbath keeping, baptism, foot washing, returning offerings and tithing, etc. The authority of Scripture as a whole would thus be undermined and discredited.

The death of Jesus Christ abolished the sacrificial system with its sanctuary services in the Jerusalem temple and the work of the priests (Dan 9:27). Israel's continued rejection of Christ's sacrifice for humanity and its determined persecution of His followers ended the nation's special covenant relationship in AD 34, at the conclusion of the prophetic seventy week period. At that time the Lord took away His kingdom from them and established the covenant with a new nation, called spiritual Israel

(Matthew 22:33-44). This spiritual kingdom no longer had the offices of priest, high priest, or king, for Christ had become their Priest, High Priest, and King.

After the crucifixion, however, God's covenant promise under the Old Testament continued to be valid, but now its blessings were bestowed on spiritual Israel. Peter emphasised this by stating that the new believers were a "royal priesthood, a holy nation" (1 Peter 2:9).

Others have sought to say that because Peter refers to Spiritual Israel as a "royal priesthood" (1 Peter 2:9) then both men and women are priests and can take the role of elders or pastors. But the terminology of "priesthood" begun from the Old Testament when ancient Israel was regarded as a "kingdom of priests" (Exodus 19:5, 6), Peter is simply quoting from there, and there were never women priests in the Old Testament. But you may still ask: what kind of priesthood and spiritual nation did God establish after the cross?

First, the New Testament announces that Jesus Christ, our Lord, is our Priest (Hebrews 5:6; 7:11, 15; 8:4) instead of the Levitical priesthood. Christ is our High Priest (Hebrews 2:17; 3:1; 4:14, 15; 9:11), representing us before the Father. Instead of an

earthly priest interceding for us, there is now one Mediator, Jesus Christ, who pleads our cases. In the judgment He determines whether our names will remain in the book of life or will be blotted out (Revelation 3:5). He ministers not in an earthly sanctuary but in a sanctuary in heaven. There, in the presence of His Father, He applies His blood shed at Calvary as the Lamb of God for our sins, presenting His precious righteousness for repentant sinners.

Second, the New Testament calls God's people a royal priesthood and a holy nation (1 Peter 2:9). The new believers represent their Lord Jesus Christ and function as priests by delivering the gospel message to the entire world. This new priesthood is to lead people to the heavenly High Priest through the gospel.

To enable His people to fulfil the great commission, Christ promised to give special gifts to this royal priesthood – to every member of His church – so believers could flourish in their divinely assigned roles. Some would receive the gift of wisdom, others gifts of faith, healing, working of miracles, prophecy, discerning of spirits, languages, helps, or administration (1 Corinthians 12:8-10, 28). Others would receive gifts of ministry, exhortation,

leadership, liberality, or mercy (Romans 12:6- 8). In the line of service, some were to be “apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, and some pastors and teachers” (Ephesians 4:11).

But this was not all Christ did. He also provided a plan for a most efficient model of organization to protect the church against heresies, prevent confusion, and integrate the various gifts He has given church members to make the church into a powerful, well-organized army to invade the kingdom of Satan. This New Testament model of leadership continues to use the Old Testament office of elder but gives it a more spiritual character.

This biblical leadership model, designating only men as the elders or pastors, is the issue some are questioning. Those who support women as elders or pastors want us to believe that now all role distinctions between male and female in the gospel ministry are abolished. But such assertion there is no Scriptural basis. The qualifications of an Elder or Pastor is clear.

Having clearly pointed out that it is not God’s plan for women to have the leadership authority of the church, Paul tells us who would qualify for this position: an elder or pastor who is responsible to oversee the operations of the church.

In his letters, Paul presents two lists of qualifications for elders or pastors. One list is addressed to Timothy, who is to appoint the leadership in the church of Ephesus, and the other is addressed to Titus, who is to select leaders in the church in Crete. Both lists state that the leadership position of elder or pastors is assigned to men, not women. Scripture plainly states that an elder must be “the husband of one wife” (1 Timothy 3:2; Titus 1:6); it does not say the woman of one husband.

Nonetheless, the New Testament presents women as full participants with men in the religious and social life of the church. Women prayed aloud and prophesied in the church (1 Corinthians 11:5). They laboured side by side with Paul and other workers in the gospel (Philippians 4:3). In the closing chapter of Romans, Paul begins his greetings and commendations with women, and he includes several other women subsequently in the chapter (16:1-5, 6, 12, 13, 15). Widows (Acts 9:39) may have been an organised body for service in the New Testament church.

However, women did not serve in the leadership role of elder or pastor in the New Testament (1 Timothy 2:11-14; 3:1-7; Titus 1:5-9; 1 Corinthians 14:33-36).

Indeed, the New Testament clearly excludes women from serving in the leadership role of elders or pastors. Paul says, I permit no woman to teach or to have authority over men; she is to keep silent (1 Timothy 2:12). He says, if anyone aspires to the office of bishop, he desires a noble task; that a bishop must be above reproach, the husband of one wife, . . . an apt teacher (1 Timothy 3:1-2). He says, this is why I left you in Crete, that you might amend what was defective, and appoint elders in every town as I directed you, if any man is blameless, the husband of one wife (Titus 1:5-6). He further says, as in all the churches of the saints, the women should keep silent in the churches; For they are not permitted to speak, but should be subordinate, as even the law says ... If any one thinks that he is a prophet, or spiritual, he should acknowledge that what I am writing to you is a command of the Lord (1 Corinthians 14:33-37).

Note however, Paul is not here prohibiting all kinds of speaking by women in church, since a few chapters earlier he speaks kindly of any woman who prays or prophesies, provided only that she dresses modestly (1 Corinthians 11:5). The key phrase that qualifies the kind of women's speaking Paul had in mind is, but should be subordinate (verse 34). This

phrase suggests that the speech denied to women was speech that was seen as inappropriate to them as women or wives. Such speech may have included speaking up in the church as authoritative teachers of the congregation, or as critics of the prophets, elders or even their own husbands. It may also have included any form of questioning viewed as challenging church leadership. In other words, it probably included all forms of women's speech that reflected lack of subordination to their husbands and/or to the church leaders.

The Bible clearly teaches that elders should be men and not women. In the lists of qualifications for an elder in 1 Timothy 3:1-7 and Titus 1:5-9, specific reference is made, among other things, to the fact that an elder must be a husband of one wife. The elder, then, is to be a married man loyal to his wife. Whether we like it or not, the specifications require males.

Moreover, some men, not only women, are disqualified from being elders. "A bishop then must be blameless, the husband of one wife...." 1 Timothy 3:2. "If any be blameless, the husband of one wife...." Titus 1:6. Note: the terms for bishops and elders were interchangeable. Here, Paul did not say that just any man could be a bishop, even as in the

Old Testament not just any son of Aaron could be a priest. The office has always been limited. Paul spoke of must be 'blameless' and married, 'vigilant, sober, of good behavior,' etc. There is a long list of requirements that eventually eliminates most men and leaves only a very few eligible men. Women are not the only ones who are ineligible; so are most of the men.

Biblical foundations of leadership

When Paul was faced with a leadership conflict, under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit he spelled out how Christians "ought to conduct" themselves within the church (1 Timothy 3:15). Paul warns that he cannot permit a woman "to usurp authority" over a man (1 Timothy 2:13). He supports his admonition with two biblical events that took place at the very beginning of the human family. First, he appeals to God's order in creating the human race. Then he points to the order of transgression at the fall.

First, the New Testament's reason for male leadership in the church is that "Adam was formed first, then Eve" (1 Timothy 2:13). God's order in the way He created men and women is not without significance. After creating Adam, God taught him

the importance of absolute obedience, forbidding him to eat from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil upon the penalty of death. In naming the animals Adam discovered that “there was not found an help meet for him” (Genesis 2:20). Now Adam became aware that he was created to be a “social being” who “without companionship” would fail to achieve “perfect happiness” (PP 46.1).

So God made a “help meet for him” (Genesis 2:18). Here we get a glimpse of the role of the woman. She functions as Adam’s companion and provides support by assisting him in the execution of his responsibilities. In this role she did not function as an inferior but was to be treated as an equal without doing away with Adam’s unique headship.

We see the special relationship between the sexes in the way God created the woman. She was formed from Adam’s rib (Genesis 2:21), indicating that she was “not to control him as the head, nor to be trampled under his feet as an inferior, but to stand by his side as an equal, to be loved and protected by him” (PP 46.2). The difference in physical features between them accentuated Adam’s role as protector. We are told: “Eve was not quite as tall as Adam. Her head reached a little above his shoulders” (SR 20.2; see also PP 45.3).

After Eve's creation Adam fulfilled his role as protector and leader. As God had instructed him at the very beginning not to eat of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil (Genesis 2:16, 17), it would only be natural that Adam in his role as protector would instruct Eve that safety was in obeying God's command.

Second, the New Testament's reason for God choosing male leadership comes from the fall and is connected to the transgression order. "Adam was not deceived, but the woman being deceived, fell into transgression" (1 Timothy 2:14). The woman, the first to leave her God-appointed sphere and leading the way into transgression, could again be accepted by God by taking her original God-assigned supportive role (1 Timothy 2:15).

As to further insight into the reason why Eve left her God-ordained sphere, we are told: "Eve had been perfectly happy by her husband's side in her Eden home; but, like restless modern Eves, she was flattered with the hope of entering a higher sphere than that which God had assigned her. In attempting to rise above her original position, she fell far below it" (PP 59.1).

Sadly, many have repeated Eve's experience of not willing to recognise God's plan in the distinct role

differences between men and women. Tragically, the result of discarding God's plan will be the same. We are told: "A similar result will be reached by all who are unwilling to take up cheerfully their life duties in accordance with God's plan. In their efforts to reach positions for which He has not fitted them, many are leaving vacant the place where they might be a blessing. In their desire for a higher sphere, many have sacrificed true womanly dignity and nobility of character, and have left undone the very work that Heaven appointed them" (PP 59.1).

The experience of the fall affirms Adam's role as leader. After Eve had sinned, he realised his failure as her protector. "He mourned that he had permitted Eve to wander from his side" (PP 56.2). Further, God recognised Adam's leadership responsibilities. Although Eve sinned first, the Creator held Adam accountable. After the couple had eaten of the forbidden fruit, God called Adam, not Eve, to accountability as the leader (Genesis 3:9-11).

Adam loved Eve more than God and lacked faith. "Adam regretted that Eve had left his side ... He must be separated from her ... His love for Eve was strong ... he resolved to share her fate ... He lacked faith ... He did not think that God, who had formed him out of the dust of the ground into a living,

beautiful form, and had created Eve to be his companion, could supply her place” (SR 36.2; PP 56.2). Love for Eves must not defy divine headship.

Turning now to every Christian, in the Bible, every Christian is called to minister in some capacity, but not in every capacity. “And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers; For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ” (Ephesians 4:11, 12).

It was God’s plan, of course, that every individual should be a priest in Old Testament times (Exodus 19:6) as in our own times (1 Peter 2:9; Revelation 1:6), but this was as individuals in our individual relationship to God, not as ordained priests representing the community.

The fact that men and women have equal rights to salvation does not mean there is no submission to leadership in the home or in church. The divine order is laid out in Scripture: “The head of every man is Christ; and the head of the woman is the man; and the head of Christ is God” (1 Corinthians 11:3).

Miriam, a prophetess, Moses’ sister, coveted his leadership role. Moses’ wife Zipporah had spoken to her father Jethro that Moses’ leadership “burdens were wearing away his strength” (PP 384.1), Jethro

advised him, “Moses chose able men” (Ex 18:25); with Moses and able men leading, Miriam coveted leading, she charged: “Hath the Lord indeed spoken only by Moses? Hath he not spoken also by us? And the LORD heard it”; and “the LORD ... departed” and “Miriam became leprous” (Numbers 12:2, 9-10). “This manifestation of the Lord’s displeasure was designed to be a warning to all Israel, to check the growing spirit of discontent and insubordination” (PP 385.1). Women elders and pastors resign and repent or God will depart and you become spiritual lepers!

Ellen G White not in leadership role

Ellen G White was never ordained as a minister. Having served the church for many years, she indicated in 1909 (when she was in her eighties) that she had never been ordained (Arthur L White, *Spectrum*, 4, 2 [Spring, 1972]: 7). Nor did she ever exercise the special functions of ordained minister.

Further, the authority of Ellen G White was in the messages God gave her rather than in any position the church gave her. She specifically rejected the idea of a leadership position in the church. She said: “It is not right for you to suppose that I am striving to be first, striving for leadership ... I want it

to be understood that I have no ambition to have the name of leader, or any other name that may be given me, except that of a messenger of God; I claim no other name or position" (Letter 320, 1905; 5MR 439.1). She also said: "I am not to appear before the people as holding any other position than that of a messenger with a message" (8T 237.4).

Women can carry out gospel work; that is not the same as being elders or pastors. If they so labour, they should be paid and treated fairly. Addressing the question of appropriate pay for women workers, Ellen G White said: "This question is not for men to settle; The Lord has settled it; You are to do your duty to the women who labor in the gospel, whose work testifies that they are essential to carrying the truth into families" (Ev 493.2). Women do not have to be elders or pastors to carry out gospel work.

Trinity and women equality crisis

We need to discern the great truth of true equality as it is in Jesus, for He is our great example. The Jews of His day said Jesus made "himself equal with God" (John 5:18) by saying that God was His Father. Jesus was equal with God His Father because He "received all things" from His Father (John 13:3, 35;

Matthew 11:27; 1 Corinthians 15:24, 27). All things: His life (John 5:26; 6:57), His name (Hebrews 1:4; Philippians 2:9; Exodus 23:21-23), His glory (John 17:22), His throne (Revelation 3:21), and His power of authority (John 10:18; Matthew 28:18). All things, Christ has received from God the Father "the great Source of all" (DA 21.2). The Son of God is equal with God because God is His Father and therefore "by inheritance" (Hebrews 1:4) Christ has the same divine nature, "being in the form of God" He is "equal with God" (Philippians 2:6). So also, men and women are equal in human nature; they are "one flesh" (Genesis 2:24). And just as "the head of the woman is the man" so also "the head of Christ is God" (1 Corinthians 11:3). Men are to give all things to the women they love except the headship decided by God. We question God if we deny men headship.

The root cause of women's ordination and equality crisis is the natural result of accepting the absolute co-equality of a triune deity which must deny the true Father and the true literal Son. The trinity doctrine that teaches the error of absolute co-equality between the Father and the Son is the root cause of women ordination crisis. The equality crisis started in heaven when Satan, knowing fully well that Christ was the literal Son of God and that Christ

had no absolute co-equality with His Father, knowing the Father only is without beginning, Satan despised the equal authority of Christ his creator and Son of God. We are told how the matter was resolved:

"The Father then made known that it was ordained by Himself that Christ, His Son, should be equal with Himself; so that wherever was the presence of His Son, it was as His own presence. The word of the Son was to be obeyed as readily as the word of the Father. His Son He had invested with authority to command the heavenly host. Especially was His Son to work in union with Himself in the anticipated creation of the earth and every living thing that should exist upon the earth. His Son would carry out His will and His purposes but would do nothing of Himself alone. The Father's will would be fulfilled in Him" (LHU 18.3).

Prior to the crisis in heaven, the order of heaven was this: first in authority was God the Father, next was the Son, and next was Satan. "The Son of God was next in authority to the great Lawgiver" (2SP 9.1; LHU 24.2). "Satan's position in heaven had been next to the Son of God. He was first among the angels" (1SM 341.4). "Satan, the chief of the fallen angels, once had an exalted position in Heaven. He was next in honor to Christ" (RH, 24 February 1874).

Christ was next in authority behind His Father, and the third highest being was none other than Satan himself. To maintain his third position, Satan has since created the trinity, and to "be like the most High" (Isaiah 14:14) Satan has declared an absolute co-equality of a triune deity which must role-play the Father and Son.

Having distorted the true order of divinity, by the error of absolute co-equality between Father and Son, Satan has distorted the true order of humanity by the same error of absolute co-equality between man and woman. As Seventh-day Adventists, we accepted this error through the trinity. The absolute co-equality of the trinity rejects the headship of the Father to His Son, and downhill we reject the headship of man to woman. We are seeing the predictable consequences of rejecting our original Fundamental Principles (RH 22 August 1912, Par 4) in favour of new beliefs (now include the trinity).

We thought the new beliefs that make the Son and Father of the same co-equal age of existence with absolute co-equality, despite Jesus Himself having said plainly "my Father is greater than I" (John 14:28), would provide us with more acceptable position with the rest of the Christian world. But this absolute co-equality we bestowed upon "another

Jesus" (2 Corinthians 11:4) has resonated with women to also demand absolute co-equality in headship offices contrary to the design of God that "the head of the woman is the man" as "the head of Christ is God" (1 Corinthians 11:3). With the women ordination crisis splitting the unity of the church, we are now reaping what we have sown. It is not yet too late to recognise "the way the Lord has led us, and His teaching in our past history" (LDE 72.1).

It is time we discern that our trinity belief, which makes the phrases Father and Son only symbolic and mere arrangements rather than fact of relationship between God and our Lord Jesus Christ, lies at the root of the women ordination crisis, and the unity of the church will continue downhill until watchmen on the gates of Zion will begin to contend for the faith that was once delivered to the saints (Jude 3), and begin to reason from cause to effect regarding discarding of our Fundamental Principles (see RH 22 August 1912) which rightly recognised the true equality between God and His literal begotten Son Jesus Christ our Creator and Saviour.

There are sincere men in leadership positions of our church who are fighting the women ordination crisis, but sadly they are simply cutting the branches off the tree. If they are serious, they need to ask

God to show them how to tackle the women ordination crisis from its roots. If they refuse to lay the axe at the root of the women ordination crisis, God is raising up a people who will call for true revival and true reformation, and they risk not being among the faithful servants who will finish the work, and worse more, as for their own self as living trees "the axe is laid unto the root of the trees: therefore every tree which bringeth not forth good fruit is hewn down, and cast into the fire" (Matthew 3:10). By the grace of God, let every man in leadership position deal with the root cause of the religious crisis in our Seventh-day Adventist churches around the world.

Conclusion

Women ordination is not Biblical. Jesus was following His own Word by ordaining only men. The women equality crisis can be traced from rebellion of Satan in heaven before the earth was created to our acceptance of the error of the trinity doctrine that distorts the divine order. Women elders and pastors must resign and repent or become spiritual lepers!

Finally, "Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter: Fear God, and keep His commandments: for this is the whole duty of man" (Ecclesiastes 12:13).

This and other booklets are available from

Warning Message

Check them out online at
www.warningmessage.org

Warning Message is a company registered in England and Wales, to advance the gospel of Jesus Christ in the context of the three angels' messages of Revelation 14 and to pursue such other purposes that may advance the Christian faith.

Visit our online Library today at
www.warningmessage.org



www.warningmessage.org