

THE JOURNAL FOR BIBLICAL

J B M W

MANHOOD & WOMANHOOD

ARTICLES INCLUDE:

From Him, through Him, to Him
Nancy Leigh DeMoss

**Christ's Functional Subordination in Philippians 2:6
A Grammatical Note with Trinitarian Implications**
Denny Burk

A Review of *Half the Church* by Carolyn Custis James
Todd L. Miles

A Review of *Which Trinity? Whose Monotheism?*
Bruce A. Ware

**THE JOURNAL FOR
BIBLICAL MANHOOD
AND WOMANHOOD**

is a biannual publication of the
**Council on Biblical
Manhood and Womanhood**
ISSN: 1544-5143

**CBMW
President**

J. Ligon Duncan, III

Senior Fellow
Randy Stinson

**JBMW STAFF
Editor**

Denny Burk

Associate Editor
Christopher W. Cowan

Assistant Editor
Dawn Jones

Senior Consulting Editors
J. Ligon Duncan, III
Wayne Grudem
Rebecca Jones
Peter R. Schemm Jr.
Bruce A. Ware

Peer Review Board
Everett Berry
Jason DeRouchie
Jim Hamilton
Barry Joslin
Heath Lambert
Rob Lister
Jason Meyer
Scott Swain

Layout and Design
Barbara Rogers

Contributors
R. Albert Mohler Jr.
Russell D. Moore
Nancy Leigh DeMoss

Editorial Correspondence
journaleditor@cbmw.org

Subscription Correspondence
journal@cbmw.org

Contact CBMW for institutional rates.
2825 Lexington Road • Box 926
Louisville, Kentucky 40280
502.897.4065 (voice)
502.897.4061 (fax)
office@cbmw.org (e-mail)
www.cbmw.org (web)

©2011 CBMW. The mission of the
Council on Biblical Manhood and
Womanhood is to set forth the teachings
of the Bible about the complementary
differences between men and women,
created equal in the image of God,
because these teachings are essential for
obedience to Scripture and for the health
of the family and the Church.

CBMW is a member of the Evangelical
Council for Financial Accountability.

Table of Contents

STANDARD FARE

- 2 Editorial
- 5 Odds & Ends

ESSAYS & PERSPECTIVES

- 9 **Confusing a Covenant with a Contract:
The Deeper Problem behind Pat Robertson's Bad Advice**
Timothy Paul Jones
- 12 **Play the Man**
Kevin DeYoung
- 14 **Love the One You're With**
Jeremy Pierre
- 16 **From Him, through Him, to Him**
Nancy Leigh DeMoss

STUDIES

- 25 **Christ's Functional Subordination in Philippians 2:6:
A Grammatical Note with Trinitarian Implications**
Denny Burk

GENDER STUDIES IN REVIEW

- 38 **A Prejudicial Treatment of the Issues
A Review of Carolyn Custis James, *Half the Church***
Todd L. Miles
- 42 **Alleging Heresy Where There Is None
A Review of Thomas H. McCall, *Which Trinity? Whose Monotheism?***
Bruce A. Ware
- 47 **Well-Intended Goal, Misguided Process
A Review of Bruce Morton, *Deceiving Winds***
Timothy Paul Jones
- 49 **The (Abstract) Art of Manliness
A Review of Brett and Kate McKay, *The Art of Manliness***
Phillip Bethancourt
- 51 **Another Middle Way that Doesn't Exist
A Review of Jim and Sarah Sumner, *Just How Married
Do You Want to Be?***
Jason C. Meyer

Editorial: A Response to the NIV Translators

Denny Burk

Editor, Journal for Biblical Manhood & Womanhood

Associate Professor of Biblical Studies

The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary

Louisville, Kentucky

Last Spring, CBMW released an in-depth review of the translation of gender terminology in the 2011 revision of the NIV.¹ Last June, the translators of the NIV released a two-page response on the NIV website.² The translators raise several important issues in their paper, so I will summarize their concerns here and offer a brief response to each.

(1) CBMW has a theological agenda that has skewed their analysis of the NIV, but the NIV translators have no such agenda.

There are two main problems with this objection. First, it is not true the NIV translators have no theological point of view. In fact, the letter itself says that the translators “mirror the spectrum of evangelicalism” and include both “complementarians and egalitarians.” It may be the case that the committee is not monolithic in its theological point of view, but make no mistake that the translators do individually have a point of view. To say that those points of view have no influence over their translation decisions seems a rather extraordinary claim.

We do not know the internal discussions that went on within the NIV’s Committee on Bible Translation (CBT) over gender language, but it is well known that some CBT members have published strong defenses of an egalitarian position. It is certainly possible that their viewpoints had a strong influence on the CBT’s decisions.

Second, CBMW’s theological point of view does not necessarily invalidate the substance of the critique. CBMW’s review brings together a tremendous amount of data, and the data is cited time and again as the basis of the evaluation. At this point, it falls to the translators to engage CBMW’s handling of the data. Simply citing CBMW’s theological point of view is not a compelling response.

(2) CBMW fails to take into account the Collins Report data which proves that NIV translators made decisions that reflect the state of modern English.

CBMW offered two reviews. One is a white paper released through CMBW’s website, and the other is a review I published in the Spring 2011

COUNCIL MEMBERS	Daniel Heimbach	Russell D. Moore	Nancy Leigh DeMoss	Charles S. & Rhonda H. Kelley	J. Stanley Oakes	Joseph M. Stowell III
Daniel L. Akin	H. Wayne House	Dorothy Patterson	Lane T. Dennis	Beverly LaHaye	Raymond C. Ortlund Jr.	Larry Walker
Donald Balasa	Susan Hunt	John Piper	Thomas R. Edgar	Gordon R. Lewis	J. I. Packer	Stu Weber
James Borland	Elliott Johnson	James Stahr	John Frame	Robert Lewis	Paige Patterson	William Weinrich
Austin Chapman	Peter Jones	K. Erik Thoennes	Paul Gardner	Crawford & Karen Loritts	Dennis & Barbara Rainey	Luder Whitlock
Jack Cottrell	Rebecca Jones	Bruce A. Ware	W. Robert Godfrey	Erwin Lutzer	Robert Saucy	Peter Williamson
J. Ligon Duncan III	Mary Kassian		Bill H. Haynes	John F. MacArthur Jr.	James Sauer	
Steve Farrar	George W. Knight III	BOARD OF REFERENCE	David M. Howard Sr.	Connie Marshner	Siegfried Schatzmann	
Mary Farrar	C. J. Mahaney	S. M. Baugh	R. Kent Hughes	Richard L. Mayhue	Thomas R. Schreiner	
Wayne A. Grudem	R. Albert Mohler Jr.	Wallace Benn	James B. Hurley	Marty Minton	F. LaGard Smith	
Joshua Harris	Heather Moore	Tal Brooke	Paul Karleen	J. P. Moreland	R. C. Sproul	

issue of *JBMW*.³ There is considerable overlap between the reviews, but the second one goes into greater detail on some finer points. The *JBMW* review does, in fact, deal with the Collins data and shows that the Collins Report does not prove what the translators think it proves. The translators erroneously conclude that a decline in usage of a certain idiom must also mean a decline in understandability. But this is not true as is evidenced by the fact that the NIV itself on many occasions continues to use generic masculine pronouns.

Vern Poythress's recent article in *Westminster Theological Journal* deals extensively with the relevance of the Collins Report data, and he gets to the heart of the matter:

People can recognize vocabulary items that they never use in their own speech. They can read and understand sentences that they themselves would never think of producing. Similarly, people can recognize and understand generic "he" even if they do not use it themselves.... The translators must consider whether readers will understand what the translators write, not primarily whether readers use the very same language in their own speech. Constructions that are less common, but still natural and intelligible, can safely be employed in communication. And then the conclusion follows: these less common constructions *need* to be employed whenever their employment *results in greater accuracy*.⁴

(3) CBMW's criticism of NIV's rendering of 1 Tim 2:12 is based on "guilt-by-association" with Philip Payne, but in actuality the NIV rendering is adopted widely by both egalitarians and complementarians.

Both reviews from CBMW argue that "assume authority" is an egalitarian rendering. The NIV translators, however, argue that the rendering is neutral, despite the fact that this rendering was favored in print by a leading egalitarian scholar before the publication of the NIV. The translators are saying that Philip Payne's work (including his 2008 article in *New Testament Studies*) had no

influence over their rendering. In any case, whether they meant to or not, their rendering is one that is favored by egalitarians.

One other item is worthy of note on this rendering. By their own admission, "assume authority" is neutral where the previous rendering "have authority" was not. In other words, the 1984 NIV favored an interpretation that supported a complementarian point of view. The 2011 NIV now has a rendering that can be used to support an egalitarian view. If we accept the translators' argument that "assume authority" is neutral (which I don't), the translators have nevertheless acknowledged that the egalitarian view is no longer excluded by the NIV's rendering of 1 Tim 2:12. This is a tremendous reversal on the most contested verse in the gender debate.

(4) CBMW has a simplistic view of word meaning—as if words can only have one meaning.

Of course this is not how the CBMW reviews treat the meanings of words. Scholars on both sides of the debate recognize that words have a semantic range, and their meaning in a given text is determined by context. For example in the *JBMW* review, I write about the meaning of *anthrōpos* in 2 Tim 2:2. I acknowledge that *anthrōpos* can be a generic reference to "human beings" or it can be used to refer to male persons only. Context is king, and I argue at length that context determines this particular use of *anthrōpos* as masculine. We know that words can have more than one meaning.

However, we also recognize that the meanings of words are not infinitely elastic, as if any word could take any meaning. Our objection to the new NIV is when it strays outside of recognized, well-established ranges of meanings of very common words. For example, the Greek word *adelphos* ("brother") occurs 1,269 times in the New Testament and the Septuagint, and the singular form never means "brother or sister." The word *patēr* ("father") occurs 1,861 times, and the singular form never takes the gender-neutral sense "parent." The word *huios* ("son") occurs 5,581 times, and the singular form never means "child." Yet the NIV often

translates these singular terms in gender-neutral ways, and in so doing it exceeds the legitimate boundaries on the range of meanings of these words.

(5) CBMW has failed to acknowledge that many translations (including the ESV) make changes that appear to “avoid” masculine terminology.

Yes, other translations make changes that change earlier masculine-specific terminology to something that is not masculine-specific. But they do this *only when the original Hebrew or Greek text did not have a masculine-specific meaning*. This objection quite simply misses the whole point of our critique. The issue is not about grammatical gender but about the implication of biological gender that would or would not have been plain to the original readers. Where the original Greek and Hebrew texts encode masculine meaning, it should be brought out in English translation. And it is here that we find hundreds of examples of the 2011 NIV falling short. In over 3,000 places it removes the masculine meaning that would have been evident to the original readers of the Bible.

I want to say that I have the utmost respect for the scholarship represented by the NIV translators. I am personally indebted to the work of Douglas Moo, Craig Blomberg, Gordon Fee, Bill Mounce, et al., and I am grateful for their vast contributions to the evangelical cause. I do not think it is for a lack of scholarship or hard work on their part that we have these differences over the 2011 NIV. We have a philosophical difference over the best way to render the Bible into English when there is a clear masculine meaning in the original Hebrew or Greek text, and at numerous points this difference has implications for the Bible’s gender language in English.

ENDNOTES

¹“An Evaluation of Gender Language in the 2011 Edition of the NIV Bible,” available at https://www.cbmw.org/images/articles_pdf/cbmw%20final%20analysis%20of%202011%20niv.pdf.

²The response from the translators of the NIV is available at <http://www.niv-cbt.org/wp-content/uploads/cbt-response-to-cbmw-review.pdf>.

³Denny Burk, “The Translation of Gender Terminology in the NIV 2011,” *Journal for Biblical Manhood and Womanhood* 16, no. 1 (2011): 17–33. This review is available online at the *JBMW* website: www.cbmw.org/journal.

⁴Vern S. Poythress, “Gender Neutral Issues in the New International Version of 2011,” *Westminster Theological Journal* 73 (2011): 91.

Odds & Ends

Will the CBF Really Pay Churches to Consider a Woman as Pastor?

It must have seemed like a good idea at the time. Associated Baptist Press reports that a state Cooperative Baptist Fellowship is now offering financial incentives in order to encourage pulpit search committees to consider women candidates.

According to the report, “The CBF of Missouri offered Sept. 17 to pay interview, travel and other expenses incurred by search committees willing to ‘include a woman candidate in the process ... treating her as a top candidate even if she isn’t actually one of the top candidates,’ CBFMO Associate Coordinator Jeff Langford explained in a handout distributed at a Coordinating Council meeting at Memorial Baptist Church in Columbia, Mo.”

No, I am not making this up. Langford added, “Even if the church isn’t ready, the search committee may discover a remarkable candidate along the way that changes their perspective, either for the current search or for a future one.”

The motivation for the concept is clear—those who are offering these incentives are frustrated that few churches are calling women as senior pastors. According to the ABP report, the idea to offer financial incentives came out of a meeting in which several other ideas were also offered. This is the idea that made headlines.

Though the CBF promotes women as pastors, a 2005 study indicated that few of its own churches had called, or had even considered calling, a woman as pastor. The authors of that study stated their findings in clear terms:

Never before have so many Baptist women officially served as pastors and co-pastors, and yet statistically the great majority of Baptist churches affiliated with the Alliance, BGAV, BGCT, and CBF have not called women to serve as pastor.

Even within the ranks of the Cooperative Baptist Fellowship, where the leadership sincerely supports women as senior pastors, their churches are still very unlikely to call a woman as pastor. There are a few highly visible women who do serve in senior pastor positions, but they are rare exceptions to the general rule.

My point is not to accuse the Cooperative Baptist Fellowship or its leadership of hypocrisy, for there is no reason to question the sincerity of their beliefs. I believe that their convictions are wrong, not that their stance is insincere. Indeed, their frustration at the slow pace of change in this regard seems authentic—thus this new policy in Missouri.

And yet, the policy does seem clumsy, at best. *Paying* search committees to consider women as top candidates? That is awkward enough. But, paying them to treat a woman “as a top candidate even if she isn’t actually one of the top candidates”? That seems absolutely desperate, and one can only wonder if women seeking pastorates would consider this a step forward.

Kathy Pickett, moderator-elect of the Missouri CBF and pastor of congregational life at Holmeswood Baptist Church in Kansas City, voiced her own concerns that women might be harmed by the proposal. She was especially concerned about young women graduating from seminaries, who might be misled by the policy. “There is a hopefulness that something is going to change when it likely isn’t going to,” she said.

The Missouri proposal, though hard to believe at first glance, is also deeply revealing. Those who believe that women should be senior pastors believe that the slow progress toward the acceptance of female pastors is rooted in enduring prejudice against women. Those of us who believe that the Bible precludes women from serving as pastors, on the other hand, believe that this pattern reveals the endurance of a biblical instinct, even among those who believe, at some level, that women should be pastors.

The theological distance between the Cooperative Baptist Fellowship and the Southern Baptist Convention continues to grow. This development out of Missouri makes that point in an unmistakable way. It will not be the last development to do so.

Source: Vicki Brown, "CBFMO Offers Incentive for Churches to Consider Women as Pastors," Associated Baptist Press, Tuesday, September 27, 2011.

— R. Albert Mohler

Gay Marriage and the Slippery Slope

Gay marriage supporters tend to have little tolerance for slippery slope arguments that compare gay marriage to other illegal relationships like incest and polygamy. I know that I have seen impatience with that kind of argument countless times. Despite protestations to the contrary, the slippery slope is a reality, and that fact comes into clear view in a recent article from *The New York Times* website. In an online forum about the future of marriage, Stanford law professor, Ralph Richard Banks, contributes a piece to the forum titled, "How Moral Norms Evolve." He writes,

What now of the two remaining criminal prohibitions of intimate relationships: incest and polygamy? Even as same sex and interracial relationships are accepted, Americans are now imprisoned for incest or polygamy.

The cases against polygamy and incest are not nearly as strong as most people imagine....

Over time, our moral assessments of these practices will shift, just as they have with interracial marriage and same sex marriage. We will begin to take seriously questions that now seem beyond the pale: Should a state be permitted to imprison two cousins because they have sex or attempt to marry? Should a man and two wives be permitted to live together as a family when they assert that their religious convictions lead them to do so?

Another contributor to this forum—Judith Stacey—decries same-sex marriage as forcing sexual relationships into a one-on-one mold. In "Unequal Opportunity," Stacey argues that our family laws should recognize a wide array of possible sexual arrangements. She writes,

As the United States gradually makes the membership rules to marriage gender-inclusive, it risks deepening our sharp class and race disparities in marriage and family life. If we wish to avoid this fate, we should not be celebrating the benefits of marriage. Instead we need to develop family policies that give greater recognition and resources to the growing array of families formed, as Nancy Polikoff titled her book, *Beyond (Straight and Gay) Marriage*.

If anyone is still doubting the legitimacy of the slippery slope, think again. We are already well down the hill. Revisionists are not simply trying to redefine marriage; they are trying to destroy it. Welcome to the moral revolution of our time.

— Denny Burk

A Female President?

Michele Bachmann's much-ballyhooed run for the Republican nomination for President has revived discussion about the propriety of women assuming positions of leadership in public life. What is often missed in these discussions is that fact that there is no single complementarian view on the role of women in public life. The best summary of complementarian conviction is the Danvers Statement, and it is silent on the matter.

The Danvers Statement reveals a consensus understanding of Scripture on some broad themes but allows for differences on some others. For example, Danvers complementarians agree that the Bible teaches a principle of male headship that is rooted in God's original, good creation. They also recognize that the New Testament *specifically* enjoins believers to order their homes and their churches in light of this principle. But the Danvers Statement does not give specific directives as

to how these principles might apply outside of the home and the church.

Complementarians who apply male headship outside the church and the home do so on the basis of a broad biblical theme (headship as a creation principle), not on the basis of specific apostolic commands (see for example the guidelines from Piper and Grudem, *Recovering Biblical Manhood and Womanhood*, 44–45, 50–52). That is why John Piper and Wayne Grudem have said, “As we move out from the church and the home we move further from what is fairly clear and explicit to what is more ambiguous and inferential” (Ibid., 88). Nevertheless, in settings outside of the church and home, Piper and Grudem encourage women not to assume roles of “directive” and “personal” leadership over men. Still, they are careful not to forbid any particular occupation to women:

When it comes to all the thousands of occupations and professions, with their endlessly varied structures of management, God has chosen not to be specific about which roles men and women should fill.... For this reason we focus (within some limits) on how these roles are carried out rather than which ones are appropriate (Piper and Grudem, “An Overview of Central Concerns,” in *Recovering Biblical Manhood & Womanhood*, 89).

My own view on these matters matches pretty closely John Piper’s. Piper spelled-out his views in 2008 when Sarah Palin was running for vice-president of the United States. Even though he argues that a woman should not be commander-in-chief, he does not rule out that in some situations a woman would be better than a man. He writes,

If our roles are rooted in the way God created us as male and female, then these differences shape the way we live everywhere and all the time.

Add to this that the Bible does not encourage us to think of nations as blessed when women hold the reins of

national authority (Isaiah 3:12). Nor in the Bible were women part of those conscripted to fight the battles for Israel (Numbers 1:20).

These and other teachings in Scripture incline me to believe that manhood and womanhood are not mere social constructs. They are rooted in God’s design for creation. They are meant to shape culture, not merely be shaped by culture....

A person with my view may very well vote for a woman to be President if the man running against her holds views and espouses policies that may, as far as we can see, do more harm to more people than we think would be done by electing a woman President and thus exalting a flawed pattern of womanhood. In my view, defending abortion is far worse sin for a man than serving as Vice President is for a woman (“Why a Woman Shouldn’t Run for Vice President, but Wise People May Still Vote for Her,” November 2, 2008, desiringgod.org).

— Denny Burk

The Emergent Woodstock Tackles Gender

Last June, a new conference launched in a wooded area just outside of Raleigh-Durham, North Carolina. The meeting was called “The Wild Goose Festival,” and it was a conference/music festival for emergent church types. The meeting featured an all-star cast of theological liberals and progressives. And at least one report says that 1,500 people attended the four-day event. According to the conference website, here’s what “The Wild Goose Festival” is all about:

The Wild Goose is a Celtic metaphor for the Holy Spirit. We are followers of Jesus creating a festival of justice, spirituality, music and the arts. The festival is rooted in the Christian tradition and therefore open to all regardless of belief, ethnicity, gender, sexuality, denomination or religious affiliation.

There were several open discussions of gender and sexuality at the meeting. On his website (<http://www.patheos.com/blogs/tonyjones>), Tony Jones describes the impact these discussions had on him:

Based on my experience on this blog and at the Wild Goose Festival, a lot of Christians really want to talk about sexuality; and ... many Christians are ready for our conversations about sexuality to expand beyond “what to do with the gays,” and instead have a more fully-orbed dialogue about sexuality and human identity. I also know that, for the first time in my life I’ve met Christians who are in “open” marriages or are practicing polyamory—and I’m committed that my theological/ethical response to them be both Christian and pragmatic/realistic.

I think that Tony Jones’ remarks are a sad, but predictable commentary on the trajectory of liberal downgrade. Jones has not only reaffirmed his support for gay relationships among Christians but also spoken of open marriages and polyamory as faithful expressions of what it means to follow Jesus. His remarks also tell you everything you need to know about the “Wild Goose Festival.” The conference consists by and large of former evangelicals leaving the evangelical faith for a mess of pottage known as theological liberalism. As Machen argued nearly 100 years ago, liberal Christianity is no Christianity at all. And therein is the tragedy.

— Denny Burk

Confusing a Covenant with a Contract: The Deeper Problem behind Pat Robertson's Bad Advice

Timothy Paul Jones

*Associate Professor of Leadership and Family Ministry
The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary
Louisville, Kentucky*

In September 2011, television host Pat Robertson declared that a man might be justified in divorcing his Alzheimer's-afflicted spouse as long as the man enlisted someone to look "after her" and to provide "custodial care." Robertson defended his declaration by defining such diseases as "a walking death" wherein the diseased person is already "gone." Appealing to the husband's need for "some kind of companionship," Robertson declared that forbidding such a divorce was "the last thing" he would do.¹

I was not exactly in unbiased circumstances when I first heard this news. I was sitting beside a dying man in my parents' living room. The dying man was my father.

Less than a month earlier, the physician's assistant had clicked through a half-dozen scans of my father's cranial cavity. An undetected tumor in his left lung had sown four, perhaps five, cancerous lesions in his skull. Viewed from that inadequate perspective in which the body is a machine to be repaired if possible and discarded if necessary, no hope remained. Seen from the standpoint of the resurrection, these results signaled that a time was approaching when the "last enemy to be defeated" would rend my father's spirit from his flesh (1 Cor 15:26) until that future moment when the risen Christ returns for his own.

At that point, my mother made a decision. Not

yet knowing if her husband's body would persist many months or a few weeks, or what pain might mark his final hours, she chose that she would care for him to the end. If necessary, she would do this alone. She chose to walk this path without question or hesitation. From her perspective, nothing less could uphold the vows that she had affirmed nearly six decades earlier, when she herself was barely sixteen: "For better or for worse; in sickness and in health; until death do us part."

In this way, my mother, my wife and I, some siblings, and a niece began a journey alongside my father down that long dark hallway marked "Death." He would not die in a sterile cell amid a conglomeration of medical experts. He would pass from this life among all the earthy oddities of home, surrounded by a community of amateurs—"amateurs" both in the modern meaning of "non-experts" and in the etymological sense of those who do what they do out of love.

And so, we watched and waited as a country pastor who had previously devoured multiple books every week became incapable of assessing whether his newspaper was right-side up. Calloused fingers that had turned raw lumber into furniture and shaped simple chords on the neck of a guitar now clenched into gristly knots. Sentences once spoken with an inescapable Ozarks twang disintegrated into unaccented grunts and finally

into silent, liquid stares.

It was during these weeks that I first heard the religious broadcaster's advice. I readily recognize the distinctions between the relatively-rapid course of brain cancer and the slower processes of such diseases as Alzheimer's and dementia. And yet, this sense that one is dealing with a soul that is already gone remains quite similar. By this point, my father's existence no longer even qualified as "a walking death." Walking had given way to a wheelchair, and wheeling a chair was quickly giving way to lifting and turning, feeding and diapering.

Contract or Covenant?

When Pat Robinson allowed for divorce in such circumstances, his unspoken assumption seems to have been that, once a terminal illness has stolen every possibility of companionship from a spouse, the vow to remain together until "death do us part" has been fulfilled. "Death" is thus defined in terms of the dying partner's potential for a reciprocal relationship. When all such potential has ceased, "death" has already occurred.

Others have addressed how such advice makes a mockery of the gospel and reveals a defective view of the human body.² But there is an underlying, underexplored layer of thinking that enabled this faulty reasoning in the first place. What Pat Robertson's line of reasoning revealed was a fundamental confusion regarding two very different concepts: *covenant* and *contract*.³

A contract joins two parties in an agreement regarding a mutual obligation. If either person fails to provide a particular benefit, the contract may be renegotiated. If marriage were a contractual agreement, the end of reciprocity might rightly mark the death of the relationship. But marriage is not a contract. Marriage is a covenant. In covenants, persons do not simply agree regarding a set of abstract obligations; they give themselves to one another in loyal love. Covenants persist far past the capacity for reciprocity. Covenants bind people together in lasting communities of spirit and flesh, sweat and blood.

And so, when God chose to cut a covenant with Abraham, he commanded the patriarch to

hew five creatures in two, and God bound himself to Abraham by passing between these halved haunches and heads (Gen 15:7–21). Although the patriarch's descendants failed to fulfill their part of this covenant (Jer 11:10), God's faithfulness never faltered. Before it was all over, God went so far as to establish a new covenant by means of the broken and bleeding body of his only Son (Luke 22:20). This new covenant stretches far beyond Abraham's descendants to embrace all who will find their rest in Abraham's crucified offspring (Gal 3:15–18; Eph 2:11–14).

Marriage is a divinely-designed picture of this covenant that God the Father established through his Son (Eph 5:25–33). And thus, for the Christian, marriage can never be a contract negotiated for the sake of mutual benefit. Marriage is a covenant witnessed in the context of community, then consummated by the giving of two bodies as gifts to one another. "With my body, I thee wed," the older liturgy declared, and this wedding of bodies does not end when one partner loses the capacity for companionship.

What marks the finalization of the marriage vow is nothing less than death itself with all the sting that this dark enemy brings. This is how Jesus has loved us, though with a single momentous point of distinction in light of the empty tomb: Because Christ has now endured and defeated the death that we deserve, not even death can derail his covenant with us. The Christian's lifelong faithfulness in the momentary covenant of marriage allows the world to glimpse a shadow of the new covenant in Christ that not even the cemetery can stop.

"What If Grandpa Forgets About Jesus?"

This distinction between covenants and contracts is no mere academic discussion. It matters at the most mundane and practical levels of life and faith. On one of my family's many long trips to care for my father, a small voice from the back seat broke an extended silence.

"Daddy?"

"Yes, Skylar?"

Our nine-year-old stretched her head upward, and I saw two worried eyes in the rearview mirror.

“What if Grandpa forgets about Jesus before he dies? Where will he go?”

It was an understandable question. A month or two earlier, Skylar and I had discussed why no one could be saved apart from explicit faith in Jesus. Over the past week, she had watched my father lose the names of children, grandchildren, and long-time acquaintances. What if the same lesions that were leaching his awareness of family and friends and basic bodily functions misplaced his memories of Jesus as well?

Several seconds slipped by before I could speak past the lump that had lodged in my throat.

“Skylar,” I finally said. “What matters most is not whether Grandpa remembers Jesus but whether Jesus remembers him. God turned Grandpa’s heart to trust him many years ago, and Jesus will never forget him. No matter what, Jesus never forgets.”

That simple assurance was possible solely because we serve a God who operates not in terms of contractual reciprocity but on the basis of covenantal fidelity. Christ’s commitment to his people does not depend on whether his bride provides him with “some kind of companionship.” It depends on a covenant that has been engraved in his flesh and confirmed by his blood.

Epilogue

On the eighteenth of September, about the time my father would typically have finished preaching his Sunday evening message, he opened his eyes and began to breathe in deep, ragged heaves. His last sensations in this life were the kisses of his wife and her assurances of love. She remained beside him to the end, past any time when he possessed any capacity to return her love. Such is the nature of a covenant.

On the first day of fall, we planted my father’s flesh in the stony red soil of southern Missouri. There, his body awaits the spring of resurrection, the consummation of the new covenant, the death of death itself. “For the trumpet will sound and the dead will be raised imperishable, and we shall be changed.... Thanks be to God who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ” (1 Cor 15:52, 57).

ENDNOTES

¹“700 Club,” Pat Robertson, Christian Broadcasting Network, September 13, 2011.

²Russell D. Moore, “Christ, the Church, and Pat Robertson” (September 15, 2011): <http://www.russellmoore.com>; Matthew Lee Anderson, “Why Pat Robertson is Wrong About Divorce”: <http://www.relevantmagazine.com>.

³My thinking about contracts and covenants has been substantively shaped by Elmer Martens, *God’s Design* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1981), 72–73.

Play the Man

Kevin DeYoung

Senior Pastor

University Reformed Church (RCA)

East Lansing, Michigan

Some of you have probably followed Effemigate—the recent controversy to follow Seattle Pastor Mark Driscoll. The timeline looks like this: last Spring Driscoll posted something on Facebook about effeminate worship leaders. Christian blogger Rachel Held Evans called Driscoll a bully. Over at the World blog, Anthony Bradley criticized Evans’ comments as libel. Even Brian McLaren added his two cents with a predictable morality tale about two kinds of “evangelicals.” In a subsequent post Driscoll called his Facebook line “a flippant comment.” He reports that his executive elders sat him down and challenged him “to do better by hitting real issues with real content in a real context.” This is wise counsel. Driscoll’s Facebook comment was bound to create more heat than light. It was an unwise way to talk about a serious issue.¹

I don’t need to say anything more about the controversy itself. Like most web-storms, this one blew over quickly. But the issues under the issue (as Driscoll puts it) are important and worth considering.

To that end, let me suggest three general principles that should guide our discussion of biblical manhood.

(1) We must be aware which way the cultural winds are blowing. The reason for this awareness is not to go adrift with the culture, but to understand the times. In most American cities—especially cool cities like Seattle or Austin or New York—the ideas of male headship and female submission, or even gender distinctions in general, are strange, if not outright offensive. It’s safe to say the default position in America is not the biblical view of men and women. So wise faithful pastors should not be closet complementarians—who believe and do the right things when push comes to shove—but

candid complementarians. If we don’t address these issues head on, the world will press thousands of Christians into its mold.

Of course, the flip side of this cultural awareness should be a real desire for winsome, well-seasoned speech. If the cultural winds are blowing against us, hoisting our sails to catch the breeze is wrong. But this doesn’t mean spitting into the wind is a good idea. There are occasions for provocation, but careful, patient, forthright instruction will usually gain the best hearing.

2. We need to be careful we don’t equate our preferred type of masculinity with biblical manhood. I know conservatives want to push back the tide of feminism and fight against the emasculation of men in our culture, but offering stereotypes is not the way to do it. It is not fair to say, without qualification, “Real men hunt and fish. Real men like football. Real men watch ultimate fighting. Real men love *Braveheart*. Real men change the oil and chop firewood.” It’s one thing for pastors to give men *permission* to be like this. It’s another to *prescribe* that they must. You simply can’t prove from the Bible that manliness must look like William Wallace. If you insist on one way to be a man, you’re in danger of two things: (1) Hurting godly men who are manly but don’t do things with sports, cars, or the outdoors, and (2) making your particular expression of manhood the standard for everyone else. And when complementarians overreach with their definition of manhood they play into the hands of those who say there is no definition of manhood at all.

On the other hand, a different set of Christians needs to be careful they don’t make Jesus—as the quintessential man—into a progressive beatnik. Some Christians reject the stereotype in the

previous paragraph, only to replace it with another. So Jesus—and therefore, every real man—hates all violence, protests social inequality, and probably painted with watercolors. Not only does this ignore Jesus the avenger (Revelation 6 and 19) or Jesus the friend of rich people (Zacchaeus), it flattens the biblical narrative into another predictably anachronistic tale of how Jesus was a man exactly like me. So yes, Ted Nugent is not the only way to be a man. But that doesn't mean Sting is the alternative.

3. Most importantly, Christians must affirm and teach and model that men and women are different—biologically, emotionally, relationally. There are a lot of passages to which I could turn make this point, but I'll limit myself to 1 Corinthians. Here we see that the husband is the head of his wife (1 Cor 11:3). We see men have a teaching role in the church that women do not have (14:34). We even see Paul use the phrase "act like men" as a synonym for courage (16:13; cf. 1 Kings 2:2). Gender differences are real, and they matter. Little boys need to know what it means to be a man and not a woman. Little girls need to know what it means to be a woman and not a man. Gender identity and gender roles cannot be reversed without doing harm to God's good design for the sexes.

Which brings us to the point Driscoll was trying to make: Men are not women, and when men seem like women it is off-putting and unnatural. Here's where things get dicey. I think the hyper-masculine stereotypes are wrong and unhelpful. And yet ... and yet, they are trying—albeit in a clumsy way—to recover something crucial. When Paul says that nature itself teaches that long hair is a disgrace to men (11:14), I don't think he's making a universal statement about follicles. But he is making a universal statement about gender. The particulars of the exegesis can be challenging, but essentially Paul is making two points: (1) It isn't right for men to be like women; and (2) How this plays out is somewhat determined by the culture. It was a girly thing to grow out your hair, so Paul rightly tells the men not to do it.

How does this apply in our day? That's hard to say. Hopefully we could all agree with some obvious examples. "Does not nature itself teach you

that if a man wears a dress it is a disgrace for him?" "Does not nature itself teach you that if a man puts on lipstick it is a disgrace for him?" But what else can we say as Christians? Can real men enjoy musical theater and ballet and fine clothing? Surely they can and do. But on the other hand, if you met a guy who told you his favorite thing in the whole world was shopping for shoes, his favorite show was *Say Yes to the Dress*, and he got most of his news from *The View*, you would be right to be concerned.

I don't know how and where to draw every line, but 1 Cor 11:14 has to mean *something* in our day. I know the questions are out there, like whether your average dude can wax his chest or whether he should do most of the driving on the family vacation. I'm not addressing all the nitty-gritty problems of application. But before we get to those we need to see the general principle: the Bible teaches that men can be effeminate but that they shouldn't be.

Driscoll's mistake was not in taking the problem of effeminate men too seriously, but in making a flippant comment about something he knows to be a serious problem. In a day when certain men—from pirates to figure skaters to stand up comedians—wear eyeliner, and the typical sitcom dad is a henpecked oaf, we are overdue for some hard conversations about what manhood is supposed to look like. The Bible does not give us every specific detail we might want when it comes to defining masculinity. But it does start by telling us—and this is essential and by no means obvious to the world around us—that it is disgraceful for men to be women. Not because there is anything wrong with acting womanly, of course. Praise God, women do it all the time. What is wrong is when men think it is no big deal for them to do it too.

ENDNOTES

¹Here are links to the websites mentioned in this paragraph, all of which were accessed on August 4, 2011: Rachel Held Evans, <http://rachelheldevans.com/mark-driscoll-bully>; Anthony Bradley, <http://online.worldmag.com/2011/07/13/libel-is-not-love>; Brian McLaren, <http://brianmclaren.net/archives/blog/two-roads-diverged-in-the-evange.html>; Mark Driscoll, <http://there-surgence.com/2011/07/13/the-issue-under-a-lot-of-issues>.

Love the One You're With¹

Jeremy Pierre

*Assistant Professor of Biblical Counseling
The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary
Louisville, Kentucky*

After C. S. Lewis lost his wife, Helen, to cancer, he realized he didn't have a single good picture of her. Maybe that's hard to grasp in our culture of profile pics from every angle, but he wasn't upset about it. In fact, he saw the distinct advantage of lacking a quality image of his wife. He wrote, "I want H., not something that is like her. A really good photograph might become in the end a snare, a horror, and an obstacle."

How could a photo of the woman he loved become a snare? Because in the absence of the real person, he saw his tendency to fill the image with his own fancy. In fact, this was one of the prominent themes for Lewis in *A Grief Observed*. He was terrified at the prospect of shaping Helen into a phantom of his own making. Particularly alarming was his inclination to long for certain aspects of Helen's personality more than others. Of course, he would never intentionally import something fictitious about her, but, he mused, "Won't the composition inevitably become more and more my own?" What worried Lewis most was that Helen would become to him merely an extension of himself, of his old bachelor pipe-dreams.

Spousal Resistance

Lewis illuminates an overlooked gift in marriage: spousal resistance. I am not talking about red-faced tension or caustic defiance. I mean the simple fact that your spouse is a real person whose very existence will not conform to the image you have of him or her. Spousal resistance anchors you to reality, a reality in which God calls you to love your actual spouse, not your preferred one. Lewis observed, "All reality is iconoclastic. The earthly beloved, even in this life, incessantly triumphs over your mere idea

of her. And you want her too; you want her with all her resistances, all her faults, all her unexpectedness. That is, in her foursquare and independent reality. And this, not any image or memory, is what we are to love still, after she is dead."

And, I would argue, when she is alive, too. As odd as it sounds, we can be thankful for the thousands of little disagreements that season the marital relationship, the countless differences of perspective that make it alive. These indicate that you are interacting with an independent being, one you've been entrusted with to love sacrificially.

The Original and Best

The very essence of sacrificial love is accommodating another rather than expecting another to accommodate self. Taking Lewis's insight, then, we should be suspicious of our tendency to admire only those characteristics we approve of in our spouse and to revise those we don't. When remembering a deceased spouse, this is bad enough; you aren't loving her, but an edited memory of her. When serving a living spouse, it is worse; you aren't pursuing her, but what you hope she will be. Far better is to love the original, not your revised edition. After all, you're an original, too.

Loving the original requires lifelong adjustment on your part, and this deference is a key proof of the marital love to which Christians are called (Eph 5:21-33). Don't be discouraged when you don't see eye-to-eye with your spouse. Where there is no disagreement, no annoyance, no resistance, there is no opportunity for sacrifice. If we love only what is pleasing to us in our spouse, we are loving only our preferences. We don't need the gospel to do that.

We do need it to free us from our tendency to adjust one another constantly to our liking. Jesus came to serve an impulsive Peter, a distracted Martha, a dubious Thomas. And he came to serve a silly person like each one of us. And yes, Christ's redemptive love changes us by degree, but this change is about conformity to righteousness, not conformity to personal preference.

So if your wife laughs too easily for your taste, love her for it. If she's more pessimistic than you prefer, minister to her fears. If your husband is quieter in social gatherings than you'd like, be grateful for it. If he has more difficulty making plans than you think reasonable, come alongside happily. In all the little spousal resistances, celebrate the privilege of loving a person, not an image.

As Lewis said, reality is iconoclastic. And thank God this is especially true in marriage.

ENDNOTES

¹This essay originally appeared at www.thegospelcoalition.org, and it is used here with permission.

From Him, through Him, to Him¹

Nancy Leigh DeMoss

Author, Teacher

Revive Our Hearts

Niles, Michigan

On a recent trip to Colorado, I joined some adventurous friends on a day-long “jeeping” excursion in the Rocky Mountains. It was an unforgettable experience. Maneuvering around one hairpin curve after another, we made our way higher and higher up (and later back down) the narrow, sometimes treacherous, mountain trails. At times, we found ourselves perilously close to the edge, peering down the side of the mountain, wondering how much further we had to climb to make it to the peak. We got out and hiked at points, our breathing increasingly labored in the thin air, watching our steps ever so carefully, so as not to lose our footing on the steep trails.

When we finally reached the summit, towering over 13,000 feet, our effort was rewarded, as we climbed out of our vehicle and looked down and around at the breathtaking view that surrounded us on every side. We were awestruck by the beauty, the magnificence, the handiwork of God on full display.

That worshipful experience comes to mind when I read a passage of Scripture I’d like us to consider together—a passage that I believe is at the heart of the True Woman movement:

Oh, the depth of the riches and wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are His judgments and how inscrutable His ways! “For who has known the mind of the Lord, or who has been His counselor?” “Or who has given a gift to Him that he might be repaid?” For from Him and through Him and to Him are all things. To Him be glory forever. Amen (Rom 11:33–36).

When the apostle Paul wrote these words to the church in Rome, I believe he was experiencing a sense much like what we felt at the top of that Rocky Mountain pass. Let me give you some context. In the first eleven chapters of Romans, Paul lays out the basic doctrines of our faith—the sinfulness of man, the amazing grace of God, the salvation that is possible for us through Jesus Christ. Then, in the remainder of the book—chapters 12 through 16—Paul makes practical application of everything he has written before. If the first eleven chapters are the “what” of the gospel, the last part of Romans is the “so what”—how are we to live in light of these great truths? And the doxology of Rom 11:33–36 serves as a bridge between the two.

Just prior to these words, in chapters 9–11 (a section of Scripture that’s admittedly difficult to understand and one many are prone to skip over), Paul explores the mysteries of God’s sovereign, electing grace, God’s plan for redeeming both Jews and Gentiles. He talks about Israel’s past, present, and future role in God’s great redemptive story. He explains how in God’s sovereignty, the Jews’ rejection of Christ is actually the means by which Gentiles have come to accept Him as Savior. Then he writes about how in God’s great mercy He will yet fulfill His plan for Israel in spite of their rejection.

I’m oversimplifying to try summarizing such magnificent doctrines in a single paragraph, but even in the space of a few sentences, we clearly see that this divine plan is not the way we would have scripted the story. God has designed history in such a way that even human unbelief and rebellion cannot thwart His final, eternal purposes. And I’m sure as Paul, under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, began scratching out these words and concepts in

written form, he—like we—was left to scratch his head and ask the Lord, “How did You come up with this?”

So in a trek not unlike our Jeep ride in the Colorado mountains, in the first eleven chapters of his epistle to the Romans, Paul scales higher and higher through the astounding mysteries of God, weaving his way through one difficult passage after another. At the end of chapter 11 he finally reaches the summit, where he can look back down over the path he has taken. He pauses to take in the awesome view beneath and around him: the sovereignty of God, His electing mercy and grace, His eternal plan for the ages.

And as Paul pauses to contemplate it all, he is suddenly struck speechless. Words fail to explain the view, just as there are no adequate words to capture the snow-streaked, aspen-lined glories of God’s western American mountainscape from thousands of feet above the surface. I can still see it, but I can’t quite describe it. And Paul, sensing all of this and infinitely more, breaks out into a hymn of praise, like crashing cymbals in the finale of a symphonic masterpiece.

“Oh, the depth ... how unsearchable ... how inscrutable ... to Him be glory forever.”

Deeper Still

This paragraph in Romans may seem like an odd place to launch into a discussion on true womanhood. At first glance, it may not appear to have much to do with the subject. However, as I have meditated on Paul’s words, I have been reminded that they are foundational to what it means to be a true woman of God.

This passage provides a framework and context for our lives as women. It gives us a fixed reference point for our hearts. It tethers us to God’s ultimate, eternal purposes. It gives us a perspective—a grid—for responding to His sovereign choices in our lives, especially those we cannot understand or explain.

And it all starts here: *“Oh, the depth ...”*

The Greek word translated “depth” in our Bibles is similar to our English word “bath.” The way we sink down into hot water in a bathtub—until we’re submerged from neck to toe—the

depths of God’s “riches and wisdom and knowledge” overwhelm us. They rise above us. They roll beneath us. They float all around us. We just want to bathe in them.

On January 23, 1960, a U.S. Navy lieutenant and a Swiss scientist took a deep-diving, submersible vessel known as a bathyscaphe down to the deepest spot on earth—the Marianas Trench, a chasm in the Pacific near the island of Guam. Seven miles straight down under the ocean’s surface—35,800 feet—a massive, record-setting human feat. It took them nearly five hours, but they were finally able to locate the bottom of the ocean floor. Once there, you can go no farther.

This is not the case, however, with the depths of God. Five hours, five years, five whole lifetimes would not be enough to plumb the depths of His riches, wisdom, and knowledge. Try as you might, you can’t get your mind around them. He is inexhaustible, limitless, immeasurable. *“Oh, the depth ...”*

But though we can never reach the bottom of God’s unfathomable ways, we do know what it’s like to reach the bottom of our own strength. Perhaps you’ve been there—perhaps you *are* there—down where life drags the floor of all human abilities, where everything feels hopeless and pointless and impossible to handle. This is where most women give up and call it quits, or slink away into a pit of bitterness, or turn their frustrations on those nearest them—*anything* to cope with life at the bottom. But the true woman knows that deeper than her own limitations and problems, is the bedrock of God’s riches, wisdom, and knowledge. His unseen yet sovereign, eternal purposes are underneath it all, holding it all together.

It reminds me of the well-known account from Corrie ten Boom’s life, when her sister Bessie, wasting away and dying in the Nazi concentration camp at Ravensbruck, urged her to “tell people what we have learned here ... that there is no pit so deep that He is not deeper still.”

This became the theme of Corrie’s ministry for the rest of her life. Miraculously released from the horrible conditions that had claimed her sister’s life, Corrie travelled the world into her eighties, declaring the depths of the riches and wisdom

and knowledge and love of God. “They will listen to us, Corrie,” Betsie had told her. “They will listen to us because we have been here.”

Your problems may be deeper than ever. Your issues and challenges may never before have reached such depths as you’re experiencing now. But no matter how low they’ve taken you, there is something—Someone—who is deeper still. “The eternal God is your dwelling place, and underneath are the everlasting arms” (Deut 33:27).

“Oh, the depth of the riches ... of God”

Deep inside the earth are vast riches still waiting to be found. Some estimate that six billion dollars’ worth of sunken treasure lies undiscovered, scattered across the darkened ocean depths of the globe.

The world’s deepest gold mine, located near Johannesburg, South Africa, extends two full miles into the earth, having produced more than a hundred million ounces—three thousand tons—of pure gold since it began operations in the early 1950s. Once described as the eighth wonder of the world, the Driefontein mine employs nearly 17,000 people who spend all day every day gathering gold from the earth. And still there’s more—this one mine is expected to produce at least a million ounces a year, for the next twenty years.²

But God’s riches go deeper still.

Earlier in the book of Romans, Paul talks about the “riches of his kindness and forbearance and patience” (Rom 2:4), as well as “the riches of his glory” (9:23). In Ephesians he declares God to be “rich in mercy” (Eph 2:4), extolling the “riches of his grace, which he lavished upon us, in all wisdom and insight” (1:7–8). But unlike the riches on the ocean’s floor, which could eventually be collected if a way were available to reach them—unlike the riches of a gold mine, which eventually yields all the precious metal it contains—the gold in God’s mine will never be emptied. Never. It is limitless. It is inexhaustible.

God will never experience economic collapse or even the slightest wave or bobble of uncertainty. When the Scripture addresses our human lacks and shortages, the promise is that “God will supply every need of yours according to his riches in

glory in Christ Jesus” (Phil 4:19). His always-available provision for your needs will neither strain nor drain the budget of the Most High. Rather, it will continue pouring from His hand into your life, utterly free and fathomless, from His bottomless resources.

Whatever your need, whatever your deficit, the riches of God are more than what’s required.

“Oh, the depth ... of the wisdom and knowledge of God”

God knows everything—and everything *about* everything! Everything about the world, everything about history, everything about the future, everything about elections, everything about economies and where they’re headed. And not only does He know all things from a comprehensive, macro perspective, He also knows everything in miniature, down to the tiniest detail. God has complete wisdom and knowledge; He knows everything about your life.

- He knows everything about your past, your present, and your future.
- He knows the things you’ve done and the things that have been done to you.
- He knows things you’ve never told a single soul.
- He knows all about your family situation.
- He knows all about your financial needs.
- He knows all about your physical challenges.
- He knows all about your motives.
- He knows all about your sins.
- He knows all about your fears and insecurities.

He knows all of mine too. He knows it all. He knows everything.

The wisdom and knowledge of God are infinitely greater than our own. The human mind could never have come up with a way that sinners could be justified and declared righteous before a holy God. No one has wisdom and knowledge like that. But the wisdom of God devised a way—before sin had even entered the world!

And regardless of how complex, convoluted, or impossible your situation may seem or actually be right now, the wisdom of God is much more than adequate to walk you through it. “For the foolishness of God is wiser than men, and the weakness of God is stronger than men” (1 Cor 1:25).

“Oh, the depth of the riches and wisdom and knowledge of God!”

Beyond Knowing

“How unsearchable are his judgments and how inscrutable his ways.” I like J. B. Phillips’ paraphrase of this verse: “How could man ever understand his reasons for action, or explain his methods of working?” Or as the King James Version puts it, His ways are “past finding out.” His decrees and decisions are “unsearchable”—they are beyond our human capacity to fathom.

“Inscrutable” is not a word we toss around in everyday conversation. Dictionary.com defines it this way: “incapable of being searched into or understood by inquiry or study; impossible or difficult to be explained or accounted for satisfactorily; incomprehensible; not easily understood; mysterious.”

In other words, no matter how brilliant a person may be, no matter how hard or long she works at it, she can never completely understand why (or how) God does what He does. It’s unknowable, unsearchable, inscrutable. That’s how Paul describes God’s judgments and His ways.

Try doing a Google search on the “judgments of God,” and you’ll get 313,000 hits. Search the “ways of God,” and you’ll discover a million more. But even if you could take the time to investigate every one of these sites and all the various trails they could take you to, you’d barely have skimmed the surface of the depths of His ways. We simply cannot know all that He is doing or why He does what He does. Those answers are hidden, locked away in the mind of God, and we have no choice but to leave them there. In fact, rather than demanding answers to our questions, we should trust that He knows what we need to know—as well as what we don’t—and that it is His kindness that withholds from us what would be too grand or painful for us to absorb in our mortal minds.

Years ago, I heard Pastor John Piper make a statement that resonated deeply in my heart. I’ve shared it with many others since then in various settings. He said, *“In every situation and circumstance of your life, God is always doing a thousand different things that you cannot see and you do not know.”* Though at times God reveals some portion of His will clearly to us, enough that we can detect a *few* things He is doing and say, “Oh, that makes sense,” the vast majority of His work is behind the scenes, providentially obscured from our view.

I repeated this statement of Pastor Piper’s recently while talking with a mom whose daughter has chosen a prodigal lifestyle. She looked back at me through tears, even as her face showed visible signs of relief. She said, “I need that quote hanging in my home where I can look at it all the time.” Yes, and all of us need it hanging in our hearts. God is at work. You may not see it. But you know it’s true.

“How unsearchable ...”

You will never be able to fully explore what God is doing in your life. You cannot possibly see the end or the outcome . . . not yet anyway. You cannot fathom the means He has devised to fulfill His holy purposes through you. He doesn’t owe you an explanation. He is God, and He is working.

“How inscrutable ...”

Our inability to fathom God’s ways led Paul from exclamatory statements to three rhetorical questions found in verses 34 and 35, each with the same answer: “For who has known the mind of the Lord?” Answer? *No one*. “Or who has been his counselor?” *No one*. “Or who has given a gift to him that he might be repaid?” *No one. No one. A thousand times . . . no one.*

How many times have you tried to tell God what He should do in a certain situation? How many times have you questioned whether He knows what He’s doing? How many times have you felt like He owed you something for all you’ve invested in trying to live for Him?

Job knew the feeling . . . and got this answer in response, amid several chapters’ worth of Leviathan sightings and such: “Who has first given to

me, that I should repay him? Whatever is under the whole heaven is mine” (Job 41:11).

Oh, dear sister, if we could just lay hold of this in our hearts. God doesn’t need to consult with anyone about anything. He never needs input or counsel, needs no guidance or advice—not from me, not from you, not from anyone. He possesses limitless wisdom. He never needs to call a hotline, use a life-line, or phone directory assistance for information. He is altogether self-sufficient and independent. He never needs assistance from anything or anyone outside of Himself.

How just the opposite we are—utterly, totally, absolutely dependent on Him. He doesn’t need us—we need Him! Even the seemingly simple task of drawing a single breath—in and out, just one time—requires lung capacity and involuntary muscle activity that is completely out of our hands, supported solely by the gracious provision of God. We cannot survive into the next split second if not for His aid and the strength He supplies.

God is everything we are not. He makes no mistakes. He’s not indebted to anyone, doesn’t owe us anything. Nothing ever just occurs to God. Nothing ever surprises Him. He never has to scramble to come up with a solution. He has no sudden starts or emergency situations. This One who cares for us so completely doesn’t have to follow current events—He determines and foresees all events—past, present, and future. He never needs to stop and figure out what His next move will be.

So, women of God, why would we ever need to get bent out of shape by something that’s not going our way? Why would we doubt that God is not only fully capable of providing our need, but that He has seen this challenge coming from far away and has been preparing us for it all along . . . that He is even now accomplishing “a thousand different things” through this very process of events?

Believing this leaves no place for doubt, or fear, or anger, or second-guessing, or disputing God’s choices. He is God, and we are not. It’s not up to us to understand it all. And why should we? We are covered and cared for by One who is sovereign and all-wise, whose thoughts are unfathomable, the depths of whose ways are impossible to plumb.

“How unsearchable ... how inscrutable ...”

And yet, we must acknowledge that His ways do not always *seem* right to human reason or sense. At times they can be hard, painful, or confusing (to us, not to Him!). In fact, we stand in a long line of sisters who have stood before the imponderable ways of God and been faced with the option of either demanding an answer or living in submitted trust.

- Sarah, whose husband’s wavering faith put her life in jeopardy on at least two occasions
- Ruth, widowed in a strange land, becoming the object of racism and hardship
- Hannah, suffering years of infertility, taunts, and unfulfilled longings for a child
- Mary, facing an unplanned, teenage pregnancy, having her soul pierced as she offered up her Son for the sins of the world

God’s ways for you—just as His ways for these women—will not always make sense to your human reasoning. They may mean physical challenges, weakness, weariness, aging, disease. His plan for your life may include financial hardship, family difficulties, infertility, a special needs child. It may mean a parent with Alzheimer’s, unfulfilled longings for a mate, loss of a husband or child, a prodigal son or daughter. The list could go on and on, taking you down paths you never envisioned, drawing a storyline you’d never have scripted.

But we stand in this line with the Lord Jesus, for whom the ways of God meant divesting Himself of His rights, experiencing rejection and ridicule on a scale never known by anyone before or since, then ultimately enduring a cruel death on the cross. *“How inscrutable.”*

Your circumstances may be difficult. They may be hard to understand—incomprehensible to your feeble sense. It may seem that His plan is not working; you can’t imagine how the outcome could be anything but bleak.

But you can be assured that God doesn’t make mistakes. He has an eternal purpose in mind—a

plan for the display of His glory throughout all the universe. He is working out that plan, and you are a part of it.

You don't have to know what He's doing. Or why.

The fact is, *He* knows. And that's all that really matters.

And if you trust Him, in time, you will thank Him for the treasures that have resulted from those trials. As a friend going through a deeply trying season with young adult children confided to me recently with tears, "If I hadn't been through this, I wouldn't know God the way I do. I wouldn't desire Him the way I do."

He's Everything

Paul's towering statements of truth can lead to only one conclusion: "*For from him and through him and to him are all things*" (Rom 11:36). Everything finds its true meaning and purpose in *God's* meaning and purpose.

This is why true womanhood results in a God-centered life and perspective, a God-centered worldview, eternally tethered to who God is and His sovereign, inscrutable ways.

If you're not there or are unwilling to go there—if you're resisting the call of God for true womanhood—your life will be set adrift on a sea of shifting emotions and unruly ways of thinking. You are inviting depression and anger. You are tempting bitterness and confusion. You are fueling a mindset that will stay in constant disarray, with no reference point to provide any kind of stability for your life.

Where you need to be is here: "*From him and through him and to him are all things.*" If you're not *there*, you've missed the whole point of your existence.

"From him ... are all things."

He is the Source and origin of our existence. We have no life apart from Him. All things were created by Him. That means that every circumstance that touches your life and mine, including even severe loss and testing, comes into our lives through the filter of His sovereign hand. It means that the real issue behind any conflict you're facing

is not your husband, your kids, your singleness, or your health. In fact, to resist or resent the situation and circumstances in which you find yourself is ultimately to resent and resist God Himself. From Him are all things.

"Through him ... are all things."

Not only is He the Source, but He is also the Sustainer, the one who "upholds the universe by the word of his power" (Heb 1:3), the one in whom "all things hold together" (Col 1:17). If not for His powerful word sustaining the sun, the moon, the stars, and the planets, the entire universe would all fall apart, including (of course) us. So when you feel like you just can't hold things together any longer, guess what? You can't hold *anything* together—not even for a second. But He can. And He does.

"To him are all things."

He is our supreme purpose. He is our goal. He created all things—including you and me—for Himself and His pleasure. How contrary this is to our natural perspective that says, "It's all about me." We live as though all things were from *us*, and through *us*, and to *us*, which leaves us depleted, fearful, angry, bitter, confused, and depressed. But God loves us too much to let us continue hurtling toward hopelessness and dissatisfaction. When we oppose His righteous, unsearchable judgments, He lovingly disciplines us as His children until we're back in line with the way things really are, the way He created all things to operate.

Yes, God is the Source of all things, the sovereign Lord and Director of all things, the Sustainer of all things, and the supreme Goal of all things. That means nothing is beyond His ability to control, to transform, and to use for His glory and your good. In His way and His time, even the sinful choices of human beings—those who have wronged and wounded you, and who perhaps continue to cause you harm even as you attempt to reach out in mercy and forgiveness—even these unholy actions will eventually glorify God and demonstrate the greatness of His wisdom, power, and grace. There is simply no escape for anyone from the cosmic reality that "*from him and through*

him and to him are all things.”

And what is our response? “*To him be glory forever. Amen*” (Rom 11:36). The appropriate response to the fathomless depths of God’s wisdom and ways is to step out of the spotlight and turn the spotlight on Him. It is to say, *Amen!*—wholeheartedly affirming our agreement with the Word of God. We believe that our bottomless, unsearchable, all-encompassing Lord is the sum and whole point of everything there is. Therefore, we submit our entire lives to His holy, eternal purposes. *Amen*. Let it be so!

A True Woman’s Response

So what does all this have to do with being a “true woman”? How does it apply to where we live? My friend, this passage has everything to do with being a true woman of God. This is where true women find a refuge for their hearts. In embracing these truths, we discover what true womanhood is all about.

All that we have seen about God and His ways is designed to bring us comfort as well as courage and conviction in our calling as women. There are many implications and applications we could make, but I want to leave you with three simple ones that apply to every Christian woman. I pray that you will grasp them and seek to orient your life around them.

(1) *A true woman lives a God-centered life.*

We live in a self-centered world, but a true woman of God lives a God-centered life. She lives for His glory and pleasure, not her own ... because it’s not about us. It is all, all, all about Him. A God-centered woman embraces the supreme purpose for which she was created. She lives to reflect the beauty and wonder of His ways and to join every created thing in heaven and earth in glorifying and worshiping Him eternally. This is her reason for living. This is what gets her up in the morning and keeps her going through the day. Every day and every moment of every day, she seeks to live with His purposes in view.

Seeing the magnitude of His greatness and fixing our eyes on Him gives a whole new context and perspective for our problems. You may say, “Nancy,

you have no idea how big my challenge is. I’m not just imagining it or blowing it out of proportion.” Please hear me: I’m not minimizing what you’re going through. Compared to what I’m facing right now, your issues may be huge—but not by comparison with the torrent, the river of God’s love, mercy, and grace. Our greatest problems, no matter how enormous and unsolvable they may seem, become puny when measured against the vastness of God.

A true woman is more than a good wife and mother, a loyal friend and daughter. More than anything else, she is enthralled with the Lord Jesus Christ—the Pearl of great price, the supreme Treasure of life. He is the center of her universe, and her life revolves around Him.

And therefore, a true woman has hope—real, genuine hope—in the midst of a world filled with pain, loss, and uncertainty. A true woman is a God-centered woman.

(2) *A true woman trusts God.* We live in a fearful world. We know now that our generation is not immune from the same kind of stock market plunges that make us think of grainy, black-and-white film images from the Great Depression. We read of random shooting sprees that erupt in shopping centers or places of business or church services. We see third-graders hustled into lockdown on reports that a gunman has been spotted nearby. And we experience unexpected and life-altering events a lot closer to home that have our own names written on them.

But the true woman doesn’t give into fear. As Prov 31:25 says, she “smiles at the future” (NASB), because she knows He’s got the whole world in His hands. She knows of a God whose depths never reach bottom, whose ways are beyond finding out. She knows that the One in charge of “all things” can be trusted to know what He’s doing. He has a plan we may not have scripted, a plan we may not understand, but it is His plan, and His plan is good, wise, and can never be thwarted.

So a true woman accepts His plan as good, though it may not be the way *she* defines good. She knows it’s *God* who defines good, so she leans on Him. She depends on Him even in times of prosperity, joy, and plenty. But she also maintains her

trustful gratitude in times of pain and hardship, of lack and want, of loneliness, uncertainty, and confusion. She is married to Christ—for better, for worse, for richer, for poorer—not like a paid lover, wanting Him only for what He can give her.

I know life is hard to understand. From our limited frame of reference, it sometimes seems that God doesn't know what He's doing. And though many of us would never dare to speak such words aloud or even consciously think them, many of us are practicing atheists at times, living as if there's no God, or at least wondering if He has really messed things up this time.

A true woman, however, trusts God completely, patiently believing that He is faithful, and that in His way and in His time, His promises will be fulfilled.

Perhaps you're thinking, *It's not God who's messed up—it's me. I'm the one who has failed. I can't see how God's plan for my life could ever be fulfilled.* A true woman trusts that her past failures are not beyond the reach of God's redeeming grace. Unredeemable losses and impossibilities do not exist in the inscrutable mind of God. As Martin Luther succinctly captured it, "God can draw a straight line with a crooked stick," even if those "crooked sticks" are your personal failings, even if they're the sins of a parent, a husband, a child, an employer. Nothing is beyond His plan and repair.

The way God goes about redeeming this broken world is so very different than the way we would do it. So when we can't understand what He's doing or why He's doing it, it's not our place to challenge or dispute, but rather to humbly bow before His sovereignty, His goodness, His mercy, and His greatness—"the riches and wisdom and knowledge of God"—and to align ourselves with His purposes, embracing His will.

The true woman who trusts God doesn't have to strive. She doesn't have to be afraid. She can relinquish control. She doesn't have to manipulate and control the whole wide world (as if we could). She doesn't resent, or resist, or run from the Cross. She embraces the Cross with faith.

I love the way the eighteenth-century English poet William Cowper expressed the kind of confi-

dent trust we see in Romans 11:

God moves in a mysterious way,
His wonders to perform;
He plants his footsteps in the sea,
And rides upon the storm.

Deep in unfathomable mines
Of never failing skill,
He treasures up his bright designs,
And works his sovereign will.

Ye fearful saints, fresh courage take,
The clouds ye so much dread
Are big with mercy, and shall break
In blessings on your head.

Judge not the Lord by feeble sense,
But trust him for his grace;
Behind a frowning providence,
He hides a smiling face.

His purposes will ripen fast,
Unfolding ev'ry hour;
The bud may have a bitter taste,
But sweet will be the flow'r.

Blind unbelief is sure to err,
And scan his work in vain;
God is his own interpreter,
And he will make it plain.

(3) A true woman says, "Yes, Lord." That's basically what Paul goes on to say in the verse that immediately follows our text: "I appeal to you therefore, brothers, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies as a living sacrifice, living and holy and acceptable to God ..." (Rom 12:1).

A true woman recognizes that her life is not her own. She lives instead for the glory of God. His Word, not her world, becomes her compass. She affirms that His purposes are good and wise, and therefore she follows His leading with the "yes" of full obedience and submission.

The true woman accepts the way God made her, embracing her God-given design and roles in life, being grateful that He has made her a woman, thankful for the privilege of serving and giving and fulfilling His holy purposes.

She lives intentionally, not just drifting from one meaningless activity to the next, letting the circumstances of life pull her along. She's willing to be like a salmon, swimming upstream, living a counter-cultural life in an unholy world for the glory of God. She's willing to make personal sacrifices, not constantly asking, "What will make me happy?" Rather, she wants to know: "What will please *You*, Lord?" "What will further Your kingdom?" "What will display Your glory?" Her heart attitude is: "If it pleases You, it pleases me." The true woman reflects the spirit of Mary of Nazareth when she said in response to God's calling, "I am the servant of the Lord; let it be to me according to your word" (Luke 1:38).

"Yes, Lord."

To say, "Yes, Lord," means saying "no" to a lot of other things:

- "no" to bitterness
- "no" to self-centeredness
- "no" to whining
- "no" to complaining
- "no" to pining
- "no" to resisting, resenting, running from the will of God

But it means saying "yes" to a lot more:

- "yes" to forgiving those who have sinned against us
- "yes" to receiving God's forgiveness for ourselves
- "yes" to repentance
- "yes" to serving
- "yes" to embracing God's choices for our lives
- "yes" to trusting Him with our circumstances
- "yes" to finding and fulfilling His purposes

Living a God-centered life, trusting Him even when we don't understand, responding to Him with a heart that always says "Yes, Lord"—this is no easy way to travel. The road that winds through this kind of lifestyle can be steep and scary at times. But we walk by faith, not by sight.

And if you will keep pressing on by His grace, I assure you the day will come when you will get to the summit, as Paul did in Romans 11. Then, you'll look back at the trails you have scaled by His grace; you'll look around at the scenery, amazed at the unsearchable depths of God.

The sight will be glorious and you will say, "Ah, I see! It all makes sense now.... Why was I so anxious? Why did I fret? Why did I become bitter and angry? Why did I despise my husband for making my life so difficult? I see now that he was an instrument in the hand of God to fulfill God's holy, eternal purposes...."

We will look back on the path we have climbed, with vision and clarity we cannot possibly have now. And our hearts will cry out, "Oh Lord my God, you have done all things well.... How great Thou art!"

For sure, there will be those long nights and days when the summit seems hopelessly far away, when all you can see is trouble and danger, when you're not sure why He's put you in such a tight place.

For all those days, I offer you Rom 11:33–36—the depths, the riches, the wisdom, the knowledge. His unsearchable judgments. His inscrutable ways. You can fall back into His sovereignty, sure of His love, and proclaim with Paul, even through your tears and trouble, "*To him be glory forever. Amen.*"

ENDNOTES

¹This essay is reprinted from *Voices of the True Woman Movement: A Call to the Counter Revolution* (Chicago: Moody, 2010). It is based on a message delivered at the True Woman '08 conference and appears here with permission.

²See http://www.miningreview.com/archive/mra_5_2005/pdf/48-49.pdf.

Christ's Functional Subordination in Philippians 2:6: A Grammatical Note with Trinitarian Implications¹

Denny Burk

*Associate Professor of New Testament
The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary
Louisville, KY*

Introduction

Recent years have seen some disagreement between hierarchalists and non-hierarchalists over the nature of the Son's submission to the Father in Phil 2:6–7.² In 2:6 in particular, the discussion has focused in part on the meaning of Christ's "equality with God": "Although he existed in the form of God, he did not regard equality with God as a thing to be grasped for" (Phil 2:6, author's translation). On the one hand, Millard Erickson writes that the Son's "equality with God" is a reference to the Son's "equal authority" with the Father—"something he already possessed" in his preincarnate state.³ On the other hand, Wayne Grudem writes that "equality with God" refers to the Son's "equality in glory and honor in heaven, which Christ gave up in coming to earth."⁴ For Erickson, the Son temporarily laid aside his "equal authority" with the Father in the incarnation in order to submit to the Father during his earthly life only.⁵ The Son's equal authority was restored to him after the resurrection. Thus in Erickson's view, there would be no eternal subordination in role of the Son to the Father. For Grudem, the text still allows for the Son to be submitted to his Father from all eternity.

The purpose of this essay is to discuss another possible way of understanding Christ's "equality

with God" in Phil 2:6.⁶ To do so, I want to highlight a grammatical item that is often overlooked by interpreters and commentators.⁷ The aim of this short study is not to rehearse the old disputes and give a comprehensive history of interpretation. This task has already been ably done elsewhere.⁸ My purpose here is to highlight the grammatical item in this verse and to briefly note its potential theological impact on our understanding of intra-trinitarian relations.

I render the key phrase, ὅς ἐν μορφῇ θεοῦ ὑπάρχων οὐχ ἄρπαγμὸν ἠγήσατο τὸ εἶναι ἴσα θεῷ, as follows, "who, although he existed in the form of God, did not regard equality with God as something that he should grasp for." In my translation, I have already given an indication as to where I stand with respect to some of the more well-known interpretive disputes. But the grammatical issue that I wish to address concerns the double-accusative at the end of this verse—the first accusative being ἄρπαγμὸν, and the second the infinitive phrase τὸ εἶναι ἴσα θεῷ. The matter at hand centers on the significance of the article in the second accusative. The grammatical question that I will ask and answer in this essay is as follows. What is the significance of the article in the articular infinitive τὸ εἶναι ἴσα θεῷ?⁹

N. T. Wright and the Conventional View

N. T. Wright proposed an answer to this question in a little article that he wrote for the *Journal of Theological Studies* in 1986.¹⁰ He follows the conventional wisdom on this point and argues that the article has the same significance with verbal nouns (i.e., infinitives) as it has with any other noun. What significance does the article have with other nouns? We do well to remember that the Greek article is a *determiner*¹¹ and at times points back, as it were, to an antecedent noun in the preceding context. This phenomenon of the article referring back to another noun in the preceding context is called *anaphora*. A routine example of the anaphoric use of the article is found in John 4:40 where we read that Jesus “remained” with the Samaritans for “two days.” A couple of verses later, we read that “after *the* two days, [Jesus] went out from there into Galilee” (John 4:43). What “two days” in verse 43? *The* two days mentioned two verses earlier in verse 40. A theologically significant example is found in James chapter two. In James 2:14 we read, “What is the benefit, my brothers, if a man says that he has *faith* but he has no works? Can *the* faith save him?” Notice the article in the second half of the verse. It is not just any “faith.” It is “*the* faith” (ἡ πίστις) just mentioned in the first part of the verse. The faith that will not save is *that* “faith” just mentioned that does not have any works. In this case, the definite article is the functional equivalent of a demonstrative pronoun. That is why the NASB, for example, renders this verse, “Can *that* faith save him?”¹²

N. T. Wright argues that just as the article often carries this anaphoric significance with other Greek nouns, so it could possibly have an anaphoric significance when used in connection with the Greek infinitive. In Phil 2:6, Wright contends that “*the* being equal with God” (τὸ εἶναι ἴσα θεῶ) refers back to “the form of God” (μορφῇ θεοῦ) mentioned in the first part of the verse. The exegetical result is that “equality with God” is equal to or synonymous with the “form of God.”¹³ These two phrases (τὸ εἶναι ἴσα θεῶ and μορφῇ θεοῦ) are but two ways of referring to one reality. It is at this point that the Christological significance of the grammatical observation begins to emerge. If these two

phrases are semantically connected on the basis of anaphoric reading of the articular infinitive, then we have to say that Christ had “equality with God” in his preexistent¹⁴ unity with God. Since the two phrases refer to the same thing, then he must have possessed both because they are one.

An Alternative View

I propose an interpretation that allows for “equality with God” to be a reality that is distinct from Christ’s existing in the “form of God.”¹⁵ What is it about the syntax of this verse that allows me to argue for such an interpretation? Contrary to N. T. Wright, I contend that the article in the phrase τὸ εἶναι ἴσα θεῶ does not refer back to the μορφῇ θεοῦ. In other words, there is no anaphoric link between these two phrases. If I am correct in arguing that there is no anaphoric link, then this observation allows us to consider the possibility that the “form of God” (μορφῇ θεοῦ) and the “equality with God” (τὸ εἶναι ἴσα θεῶ) are not synonyms and that we should not regard them as semantically overlapped. “Equality with God” and “form of God” might not be two ways of referring to the same thing. Therefore, if one wants to argue that these two phrases are semantic equivalents, one will have to do so on other grounds because there is little if any grammatical basis for the supposed anaphoric link. But before we can come to such a conclusion, we have to consider the grammatical arguments that militate against the alleged anaphoric link. My argument will proceed in four parts: (1) a contrast of my thesis with the conventional view contained in the grammar book by Blass-Debrunner-Funk, (2) an argument for the grammatical necessity of the article in Phil 2:6, (3) a brief statement of a controlling presupposition concerning the semantics of the Greek article, and (4) an exposition of how my thesis is born out in the rest of the New Testament and other related literature.

Wright, BDF, and the Conventional View

Although I have singled out the remarks in N. T. Wright’s 1986 article, I should point out that he is merely articulating the conventional wisdom concerning the significance of the article in the

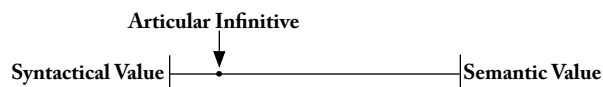
articular infinitive. He is not the only commentator making this claim.¹⁶ As noted above, the conventional wisdom holds that the article has the same significance with verbal nouns (i.e., infinitives) that it has with other nouns. If one reads Blass-Debrunner-Funk’s section on the articular infinitive (the NT grammar book that many still consider to be the state of the art reference grammar), one finds the conventional view stated very clearly, “In general the anaphoric significance of the article, i.e. its reference to something previously mentioned or otherwise well known, is more or less evident.”¹⁷ So Wright and others seem to be following the settled grammatical conclusions of BDF.¹⁸ Thus, the question is whether Wright is correct in his reliance upon BDF’s judgment concerning the articular infinitive. I think this reliance is not correct for at least two reasons.

First, a careful reading of BDF reveals that this grammar never intended to communicate that the article *always* bears an anaphoric significance when used with the articular infinitive. In fact, BDF says that when the articular infinitive is “[w]ithout this anaphoric reference, an infinitive as subject or object is usually anarthrous.”¹⁹ BDF concedes that the articular infinitive is sometimes found “without” an anaphoric reference. Furthermore, BDF goes on to divide its treatment between those examples which are “anaphoric” and those which are “less clearly anaphoric.”²⁰ One could reasonably argue that the only clearly anaphoric articular infinitives are those that have a cognate term in the near context (e.g. θανάτου ... τὸ ἀποθανεῖν in Phil 2:20–21). Such is not the case with τὸ εἶναι ἰσα θεῷ and μορφῇ θεοῦ. Thus, the *prima facie* argument for an anaphoric link does not hold in Phil 2:6. The important thing to note is that even BDF allows that the articular infinitive simply does not *always* bear an anaphoric significance—not even in the nominative/accusative examples. In the area of lexical semantics, careful scholars avoid the error of illegitimate totality transfer—that is, reading a word’s entire lexical range into a given use of that word in context. In the area of grammar, scholars would do well to avoid the same fallacy as it is applied to syntax—that is, in this case, to avoid

attributing the entire range of grammatical functions to the article that is attached to the infinitive in Phil 2:6. Just because *some* uses of the articular infinitive may appear to be anaphoric (a claim I contest below), that does not mean *all* articular infinitives are anaphoric.

Second, Wright is not correct in following BDF’s judgment because the NT evidence shows that BDF has overstated the significance of the article in connection with the infinitive. And here is where I will introduce the heart of my argument and contrast it with the conventional view of the articular infinitive. My thesis concerning the meaning of the article with the infinitive contains both a positive and a negative element: Whenever the definite article is connected to the infinitive, it always does so in order to signal a structural relation and/or to clarify case, not to indicate the semantic change normally associated with determiners (e.g., anaphora). Let us briefly consider both the negative and positive aspects of my argument.

Negatively stated, the article with the infinitive does not have the semantic effect of making the infinitive definite (and thereby anaphoric).²¹ Any given use of the article can best be described as falling on a spectrum of significance. At one end of the spectrum is *syntactical value* and at the other end of the spectrum is *semantic value*.²² Many uses of the article comprise a combination of both syntactical and semantic features. However, there are many uses in which one of these elements predominates—either syntactical or semantic.



The use of the article with the infinitive consistently falls on the far left of the spectrum, which is graphically illustrated above. The evidence below will show that the article does not determine the infinitive as definite (be it *individual*, *generic*, *par excellence*, *anaphora*, etc.), thereby effecting a semantic modification to the infinitive.²³ Therefore, it is completely off the mark to say that the article is used with the infinitive in exactly the same way that it is used with other nouns. With other nouns,

the article's significance is all over the spectrum. With the infinitive, it is only on the left side.

Positively stated, the article with the infinitive functions primarily as a syntactical marker. As such the article appears with the infinitive for one of two reasons: (1) to mark the case of the infinitive or (2) to mark some other syntactical function that can only be made explicit by the presence of the article. In other words, the definite article gets connected to the infinitive in order to mark a structural relation. The article clarifies the syntactical relation of the infinitive phrase to its context and is used only as a function word.²⁴

The Grammatical Necessity of the Article in Philippians 2:6

What syntactical relationship needs clarifying in Phil 2:6? As Daniel Wallace observes, without the definite article we would not be able to distinguish the accusative object from the accusative complement following the verb "consider" (ἡγήσατο).²⁵ The article is required in order to mark the components of this double accusative phrase. Because our focus is on the double accusative, it will therefore be necessary to elaborate on the syntax of the object-complement construction. Whereas most transitive verbs take only one accusative direct object, there are at least fifty-six verbs in the New Testament that can take two accusatives.²⁶ In this scenario, one accusative is the direct object, and the other accusative is the complement.²⁷ The complement *predicates* something about the direct object. For example, Paul writes, "I consider these things a loss" (ταῦτα ἡγήμαι ... ζημίαν ταῦτα, Phil 3:7). "These things" (ταῦτα) and "a loss" (ζημίαν) are both in the accusative case. "These things" is the direct object, and "a loss" describes "these things."

Sometimes there is the potential for confusion in distinguishing the accusative object from the accusative complement. For this reason, Wallace has set forth a set of rules that help to distinguish the accusative object from the accusative complement.²⁸ The object will either be a *pronoun* or a *proper name*, or it will have the *definite article*. In Phil 2:6, the only way we can distinguish the accusative object from the accusative complement

is by the definite article at the beginning of the infinitive. If the article were absent, the syntactical relation of the infinitive phrase to the rest of the sentence would be unclear. So the article does not show up here in order to link "equality with God" to the "form of God." The definite article appears here to distinguish the object (τὸ εἶναι ἴσα θεῷ) from the complement (ἀρπαγμὸν).

Presupposition concerning Syntax and Semantics

I have just demonstrated that the article is syntactically required in Phil 2:6 in order for the double-accusative construction to be intelligible. This observation is important because of a presupposition that many linguists make when analyzing the Greek article. This assumption can be summarized as follows: When it can be demonstrated that the Greek article is syntactically required, one should not look for any further semantic significance in the article. In these situations, the article appears as a function word with little to no semantic weight as a determiner. In this way I am following the methodological assumption of Haiim B. Rosén in his work on the Greek article in Heraclitus:

The recognition of grammatical features is also essential for the exegete or semanticist, that is, for one whose objective is to explain the meaning of an expression or text, since ... only a total elimination of all grammatical features permits us to arrive at true semantic statements ... the first step of linguistic analysis aimed at defining the function of a given element of expression is to exclude all its uses in environments where it appears to be compulsory or grammatically induced.²⁹

According to Rosén, when the article appears in contexts where it is grammatically obligatory, one cannot press the usual semantic value that the article has as a *determiner*. This procedure is consistent with Robert Funk's observation concerning the significance of the article in Hellenistic Greek, "Where the article functions more or less exclusively as a grammatical device, i.e., where it is

lexically entirely empty.”³⁰ He elaborates that in such situations, “The article in Greek is often a purely grammatical device and should be assigned only grammatical “meaning.”³¹ The rest of this essay builds upon the same presupposition. Therefore, in the following analysis of articular infinitives in the New Testament, whenever it can be demonstrated that the article is required as a function marker or case-identifier, we cannot conclude that the article *definitizes* the infinitive (thereby making it anaphoric).

An Analysis of the Articular Infinitive in the New Testament in Light of Related Literature

My argument against Wright and Blass-Debrunner-Funk is borne out by the fact that no articular infinitive in the NT is clearly anaphoric and that the overwhelming majority of them are clearly not anaphoric. There are at least 320 occurrences of the articular infinitive in the NT.³² We can divide the occurrences of the articular infinitives of the New Testament between those that follow prepositions and those that do not. In order to demonstrate the value of the Greek article in such contexts, we will first explore the uses of the articular infinitive as object of prepositions, and then we will consider the articular infinitives that are not governed by prepositions.

Articular Infinitives Following Prepositions

Well over half of the 323 articular infinitives in the New Testament (201 to be exact) are the object of a preposition.³³ Two observations lead us to the conclusion that the article is grammatically obligatory when an infinitive serves as the object of the preposition. The first observation consists of a simple description of the data as it stands in the New Testament. As has already been pointed out, every infinitive that serves as a prepositional object in the New Testament is articular. There is no exception to this pattern in the New Testament literature, and this pattern is consistent with other koine writings of the period.³⁴ As a second observation, we can see that the article is necessary in order to mark the infinitive as the object of the preposition.³⁵ Because of the absence of spaces

between words in Greek, one would not be able to distinguish infinitives as objects from those that are being used in composition.³⁶ Thus, great ambiguity would result if only anarthrous infinitives were used following prepositions.³⁷ Theoretically, there would be at least two syntactical possibilities for an anarthrous infinitive following a preposition. The first possibility is that the infinitive might be functioning as the object of the preposition. The second possibility is that the preposition may be combining with the verb to form a compound. Because of this potential ambiguity, the article is needed in order to distinguish the first situation from the second situation.

We can illustrate the function of the Greek article in these kinds of prepositional phrases by thinking about how English distinguishes prepositional objects from compound words. In English this distinction has both morphological³⁸ and phonetic aspects. Morphologically, English readers distinguish “infields of gold” from “in fields of gold” by the use of spaces between words. In the first phrase, we know “infields” to be a compound word simply by observing that there is no space between the prepositional prefix “in” and the noun “fields.” The space separating “in” from “fields” in the second phrase shows us that “fields” is intended to be the object of the preposition. English speakers also make a phonetic distinction between “infields” and “in fields” through the use of accent. “Infields” is articulated with an accent on the first syllable, while “in fields” would normally have an accent on the second. The point is that English users utilize both morphological and phonetic conventions in order to disambiguate what would otherwise be very unclear.

Such morphological and phonetic distinctions would have been important to the authors of the New Testament since their original audience would have included both readers and hearers.³⁹ The original reader of a given use of the articular infinitive in the New Testament would have needed a morphological way to distinguish compound infinitives from infinitives as object of the preposition. Just as the space marks the noun as the prepositional object in English, so the article marks

the infinitive as the prepositional object in Greek. The original hearers of the spoken New Testament materials also would have needed such signals. The spoken article would have enabled the original hearers to make this syntactic distinction. The point is that the article is grammatically obligatory when an articular infinitive is governed by a preposition. None of them indicate an anaphoric link to some other element in the immediate context, and I have not found anyone who would dispute that claim.⁴⁰

Articular Infinitives Not Following Prepositions

Of the other 122 articular infinitives not governed by a preposition, the vast majority are clearly not anaphoric.⁴¹ Of the 81 genitive and one dative examples, the article clearly appears to encode a meaning associated with the article's case. Of the 23 nominative and 18 accusative infinitives (which are identical in form), the article appears to clarify a syntactical relation. All of these infinitives have the article in order to clarify a grammatical relationship or to encode a meaning associated with the article's case. If there are any that denote anaphora, it would only be among the nominative/accusative examples, and even then there is only a handful.⁴²

The one dative example in 2 Cor 2:13 deserves comment because there is general agreement that the article appears to encode a meaning associated with the dative case. In this lone example from the New Testament, the dative case form is employed in order to signify *instrumentality* (cf. LXX 2 Ch 28:22; Ecc 1:16; 4 Mac 17:20-21).⁴³ The 81 genitive examples of this construction also encode a meaning associated with the case form. As K. L. McKay has aptly pointed out,

The genitive of the articular infinitive is found with expressions implying separation (ablatival genitive) and in dependence on nouns (descriptive genitive)....

Occasionally the genitive of an articular infinitive is found in constructions in which an anarthrous infinitive is normal, and where there seems to be no need for the genitive ... In all these the genitive is probably partitive ... indicating that the preceding activity is in some way seen as

part of that expressed by the infinitive.⁴⁴

McKay's point is that even in those texts that appear to be expressing purpose, the sense is probably partitive. Yet in texts such as 1 Cor 10:13, the genitive articular infinitive is often rendered as purpose, ποιήσει σὺν τῷ πειρασμῷ καὶ τὴν ἔκβασιν τοῦ δύνασθαι ὑπενεγκεῖν, "He will provide with the temptation a way of escape *so that* you might be able (a way of escape consisting in the ability) to bear up." But in this text the genitive actually defines τὴν ἔκβασιν, and the idea of purpose (or consequence) actually arises from the logic rather than the grammar of the sentence.⁴⁵ For our purposes, the important thing to note in all the genitive and dative examples is that the article appears in order to encode a meaning associated with the case, not to determine the infinitive as definite.

The 40 nominative and accusative examples of the articular infinitive that do not follow prepositions are the most analogous in form and semantics to the example in Phil 2:6. For this reason, we will have to give a fuller accounting of these texts. Like the genitive and dative examples, the nominative and accusative articular infinitives are grammatically induced, though not for precisely the same reason. In the genitive and dative examples, the article encodes a syntactical relation and a meaning that is directly related to the case of the article. In the nominative and accusative examples, the article only marks a syntactical relation. The reason for this slight difference can be attributed to the difference between the cases. Whereas the genitive and dative in themselves signify an identifiable semantic content, the nominative and the accusative do not.⁴⁶ The nominative and accusative cases are by definition *non-defining*.⁴⁷ So we will not find the nominative and accusative infinitives to be freighted with additional semantic content such as *instrumentality* (as with the dative), *description* or *separation* (as with the genitive). What we do find is that the nominative and accusative neuter articles function to disambiguate what would otherwise be ambiguous syntactical arrangements.⁴⁸ That is, when the nominative or accusative article appears in conjunction with the infinitive, it expresses a

grammatical-structural relation that may not otherwise be apparent.

The nominative article functions to mark the infinitive as the subject of the sentence in which it stands. There are at least 304 instances in the New Testament in which infinitives function as the syntactical subjects of the sentences in which they stand. In the vast majority of these examples (280 to be exact), the infinitive is anarthrous.⁴⁹ Only 24 examples of the infinitive as subject are articular. These statistics show that the article is not obligatory in order for an infinitive to be understood as the syntactical subject. Most of the time, one can deduce that the anarthrous infinitive is the subject without the article marking it as nominative.⁵⁰ But there are several situations in which the article becomes important as a structural marker.

First, the article can be necessary in order to distinguish the subject from the predicate nominative. This is certainly the case with the two articular infinitives in Phil 1:21, Ἐμοὶ γὰρ τὸ ζῆν Χριστὸς καὶ τὸ ἀποθανεῖν κέρδος. If the neuter articles were absent in this text, it would not be at all clear how the infinitives function in this context. If we were to utilize the normal rules for distinguishing subject from predicate nominative, then Χριστὸς would certainly be considered the subject in the absence of the neuter article. It is true that ζῶης and θανάτου (Phil 1:20) immediately present themselves as possible antecedents of an anaphoric article. But an anaphoric article would be semantically superfluous. The author does not need an anaphoric article to clarify his continued exposition of his “living” and “dying.” The same author feels no compulsion to use the anaphoric article with the infinitive in similar contexts (cf. Paul’s judging in 1 Cor 5:3, 12). For this reason, the grammatical explanation of the article seems most satisfactory.

Second, the article often keeps the subject-infinitive from being confused with an infinitive that modifies a predicate adjective. In Matt 20:23 (par. Mark 10:40), for instance, we read, τὸ δὲ καθίσαι ἐκ δεξιῶν μου καὶ ἐξ ἐνωπύμων οὐκ ἔστιν ἐμὸν δοῦναι.⁵¹ In this case, if the article were absent, it would be difficult to decipher which infinitive is the subject and which is expegetical to ἐμὸν. There

are contexts in which the anarthrous infinitive is expegetical to a predicate adjective (Matt 9:5; 9:5; Mark 2:9; 2:9; Luke 5:23; 5:23). The neuter article removes the potential syntactic ambiguity by showing καθίσαι to be the subject and δοῦναι to be modifying the adjective ἐμὸν. This explanation accounts for the article’s appearance in at least 10 other texts (Mark 12:33; 12:33; Rom 14:21; 14:21; 1 Cor 7:26; 11:6; 11:6; 2 Cor 9:1; Phil 1:24; Heb 10:31).

Third, the article functions to clarify the infinitive as subject so that it will not be mistaken as standing in an adverbial relation to the main verb. The pair of infinitives in Rom 7:18 have articles that perform this duty, τὸ γὰρ θέλειν παράκειται μοι, τὸ δὲ κατεργάζεσθαι τὸ καλὸν οὐ. In this text, the article is necessary to mark the infinitive as subject because παράκειμαι can be followed by the anarthrous infinitive with an *ecclastic* sense (cf. Jdt. 3:2, 3; perhaps 2 Mac 12:16; 3 Mac 7:3). The article removes the ambiguity. In Phil 1:29, we find a similar example of this usage, ὑμῖν ἐχαρίσθη τὸ ὑπὲρ Χριστοῦ, οὐ μόνον τὸ εἰς αὐτὸν πιστεῦν ἀλλὰ καὶ τὸ ὑπὲρ αὐτοῦ πάσχειν. In this instance, the neuter article is necessary to set the infinitive in apposition to the grammatical subject, τὸ ὑπὲρ Χριστοῦ. If Paul had not used the article in this text to clarify the infinitive as the subject, then it would have been syntactically possible to translate the infinitives adverbially, “it is present in order to desire for me, but not in order to do the good.” Such an understanding is perhaps unlikely, but the presence of the definite articles removes any potential confusion about how these infinitives are functioning in this sentence. In 2 Cor 8:11, the article is necessary to mark ἐπιτελέσαι as subject of a new clause so that it would not be misinterpreted as in an attributive relation to the genitive article governing the previous infinitive, ἡ δὲ καὶ τὸ ποιῆσαι ἐπιτελέσατε, ὅπως καθάπερ ἡ προθυμία τοῦ θέλειν οὕτως καὶ τὸ ἐπιτελέσαι ἐκ τοῦ ἔχειν. In all of these texts, the definite articles provide the structural clues we need to identify the infinitive as subject.

There are at least 16 instances of the accusative articular infinitive in the New Testament.⁵² With the exception of two texts in which the accu-

sative article marks an appositional relation (Rom 14:13; 2 Cor 2:1),⁵³ the accusative case appears with the infinitive in order to encode the infinitive as the direct object of a transitive verb. In at least five of these texts, the accusative articular infinitive helps to clarify the meaning of the main verb. In Acts 25:11, we read, οὐ παραιτοῦμαι τὸ ἀποθανεῖν. The article with ἀποθανεῖν removes the possibility that the infinitive is indirect discourse. Without the article, παραιτοῦμαι might be misinterpreted as “request” (cf. Luke 23:23; John 4:9; Acts 3:14; 7:46; 13:28; Eph 3:13; Heb 12:19). An accusative object with no indirect discourse leads to interpreting παραιτοῦμαι as “refuse” or “reject” (1 Tim 4:7; 5:11; 2 Tim 2:23; Titus 3:10; Heb 12:25). Consider also 2 Cor 10:2, δέομαι δὲ τὸ μὴ παρῶν θαρρήσαι τῇ πεποθήσει ἢ λογίζομαι τολμήσαι ἐπὶ τινος τοῦς λογιζόμενος ἡμᾶς ὡς κατὰ σάρκα περιπατοῦντας. James L. Boyer includes δέομαι in his list of verbs that take an infinitive in indirect discourse.⁵⁴ When δέομαι is followed by an anarthrous infinitive, the infinitive phrase indicates indirect discourse (e.g. Luke 8:38; 9:38; Acts 26:3). Bauer’s lexicon shows that with the accusative, δέομαι refers to the accusative of the thing as distinguished from “indirect discourse” and “direct discourse.”⁵⁵

In Rom 13:8, the accusative article appears to clarify the meaning of the verb ὀφείλετε in Μηδενὶ μηδὲν ὀφείλετε, εἰ μὴ τὸ ἀλλήλους ἀγαπᾶν. The verb ὀφείλω requires either a *complementary* infinitive or an accusative *object*. When it is followed by a *complementary* infinitive in Paul, the sense of ὀφείλω is always “ought, should, must” (Rom 15:1, 27; 1 Cor 5:10; 7:36; 9:10; 11:7, 10; 12:11, 14; Eph 5:28; 2 Thess 1:3; 2:13). When followed by an accusative *object*, the sense of ὀφείλω is always “owe” (Rom 13:8; Phm 18). Thus, the article marks the infinitive as accusative object and shows that the infinitive is not *complementary*. The ὀφείλω ... ἀγαπᾶν pair also occurs in Eph 5:28 where ἀγαπᾶν is anarthrous and thus *complementary*. A similar situation is found in 2 Cor 8:10, οἵτινες οὐ μόνον τὸ ποιῆσαι ἀλλὰ καὶ τὸ θέλειν προενήρξασθε ἀπὸ πέρυσι. The accusative article is necessary to mark the infinitive as object because ἐνάρχω and related verbs can be used with the anarthrous infinitive as *complementary* (cf. Deut

2:24, 25, 31).⁵⁶ The main point in all these texts is that the article appears in order to clarify the infinitive’s case. Thus, the article emerges as a function word in such texts.

Sometimes the accusative case is made explicit by the article so that the main verb will be construed as transitive with respect to the infinitive object. Such is the case in Phil 4:10, ἀνεθάλετε τὸ ὑπὲρ ἐμοῦ φρονεῖν. Though ἀνεθάλλω is a *hapax legomena* in the New Testament, we know from its use in the LXX that an accusative object is required in order for this verb to be considered transitive (Sir 1:18; 11:22; 50:10; Ezek 17:24). Without the article, the subject of ἀνεθάλλω can be construed as more or less the receptor of the verbal action (cf. Ps 27:7; Wis 4:4; Sir 46:12; 49:10; Ho 8:9), a sense clearly not intended in this text.⁵⁷ Likewise, in Phil 2:13 the article clarifies the sense of ἐνεργέω: θεὸς γὰρ ἔστιν ὁ ἐνεργῶν ἐν ὑμῖν καὶ τὸ θελεῖν καὶ τὸ ἐνεργεῖν ὑπὲρ τῆς εὐδοκίας. With accusative of thing, ἐνεργέω means “produce, effect.” Without the accusative, ἐνεργέω is intransitive and refers to a more generic “working.”⁵⁸ In 1 Cor 14:39, the two accusative articles mark the two infinitives as objects of their respective imperative verbs “Ὡστε, ἀδελφοί [μου], ζηλοῦτε τὸ προφητεῦν καὶ τὸ λαλεῖν μὴ κωλύετε γλώσσαις. Without the article, the two infinitives might be taken in a final sense with ὥστε, a very common use of the infinitive in the New Testament.⁵⁹

In all of these examples of the accusative articular infinitive, we can see that the neuter accusative article regularly occurs for a syntactical reason. It marks the infinitive as object. In a similar way, that is what is happening in Phil 2:6. But in this text, the article marks the direct object and thereby distinguishes it from its accusative complement. Imagine for a moment the potential syntactical confusion that would result if we were to remove the definite article from the infinitive in Phil 2:6. It would then be syntactically possible to take ἀρπαγμὸν as the direct object and to take the infinitive as an adverbial phrase, “He did not think about ἀρπαγμὸν so that he would not be equal with God.” Again, this understanding of Paul’s meaning might be unlikely, but it would be syntactically possible. The presence

of the article clears away any possible ambiguity. These texts illustrate what I think is the case across the board with the articular infinitive in the New Testament. The article only appears with the infinitive as a *function word* or *syntactical marker*. Because these uses of the article are grammatically induced, it is not advisable to posit the semantic notion of *anaphora* to the articular infinitive.

Theological Implications

The primary theological implication of this exegesis is that we have removed any grammatical basis for a necessary semantic link between “form of God” and “equality with God.” In the absence of an explicit link between these two items and in the absence of evidence showing that they are linked on other grounds, we should not assume too quickly that the two phrases are synonymous. There is no *prima facie* basis to regard them as synonymous, and it is therefore possible that they refer to two separate realities. As I mentioned at the beginning, I think Paul intends the following: “Although⁶⁰ Jesus existed in the form of God, he did not consider equality with God as something he should go after also.”⁶¹ In other words, although Jesus actually possessed an identical characteristic of his Father with respect to his deity (i.e., “he existed in the form of God”), he did not want to grasp after another role that was not his—namely, “equality with God.” So what is this “equality with God” if it is not something that he already possessed?

The adversative “but” (*ἀλλά*) in verse 7 helps us to understand what “equality with God” means. Paul contrasts *grasping for equality* with Christ’s self-emptying (*ἑαυτὸν ἐκένωσεν*). Christ’s self-emptying is not an ontological divesture of his deity. Rather, self-emptying is defined by two dependent clauses that express the means by which Christ “emptied himself.” He did it “by taking the form of a servant” and “by taking on the likeness of men.” Both of these participial clauses address features attaching to Christ’s role as the incarnate God. In other words, they address characteristics that define Christ’s *personhood* within the Godhead. They are functional characteristics, not ontological ones. Thus, they express Christ’s role as the

God-incarnate servant—a role peculiar to the second person of the Trinity.

So the contrast between “grasping for equality” and “emptying himself” suggests that both are functional categories. “Grasping for equality” would have been the opposite of “self-emptying.” “Grasping for equality” would have precluded Jesus from his taking the form of a servant and from his becoming in the likeness of men. In his preexistent state, Jesus decided not to pursue “equality,” but to pursue *incarnation*.⁶² Paul argues here that in his pre-incarnate state, Christ’s existed as *θεός*. Yet in this pre-incarnate existence, Christ Jesus did not seek to be like *θεός* in every respect. Paul pictures Christ Jesus (*Χριστῷ Ἰησοῦ*) as identified with God (*θεός*) in one respect, but distinguished from Him in another respect. Christ, before all time, preexisted in the form of God, but he did not forsake his unique role in order to be like God the Father in every way. The pre-incarnate Christ shared the Father’s deity, but he did not try to usurp the Father’s role. The Father would send the Son, and the Son would submit to being sent. In eternity past, the Son submitted to this plan.

Conclusion

My argument can be summed up as follows. Many commentators and grammarians see “form of God” and “equality with God” as semantic equivalents. This semantic equivalence is based in part on the erroneous assumption of a grammatical link between “form of God” and “equality with God.” This supposed grammatical link consists of an anaphoric use of the articular infinitive, “*the* being equal with God” (*τὸ εἶναι ἴσα θεῷ*). What I have shown is that this link has little grammatical basis and should be discarded. The theological result is that “form of God” and “equality with God” should not be regarded as synonymous but as phrases with distinct meanings. Therefore, in Paul’s Christology “form of God” is something that Jesus possessed by virtue of his deity, while “equality with God” is not. In fact, “equality with God” is best understood as a role that Jesus refused to pursue so that he could pursue his redemptive work in the incarnation.

ENDNOTES

¹This article is to be included in the forthcoming volume edited by Dennis Jowers and H. Wayne House, *The New Evangelical Subordinationism? Perspectives on the Equality of God the Father and God the Son* (Wipf & Stock). An earlier version of this article appeared as “On the Articular Infinitive in Philippians 2:6: A Grammatical Note with Christological Implications,” *Tyndale Bulletin* 55 (2004): 253–74.

²I use the term *hierarchicalist* to describe the view that the Father has authority over the son in eternity past, present, and future. I use the term *non-hierarchicalist* to describe the view that the Father and Son have equal authority from all eternity, even though the Son took on temporarily a position of subordination during his earthly life and work. Cf. Millard J. Erickson, *Who’s Tampering with the Trinity?: An Assessment of the Subordination Debate* (Grand Rapids: Kregel, 2009), 21. Erickson uses the terms *gradational authority* and *equivocal authority* to describe the two views.

Kevin Giles specifically defines the non-hierarchicalist perspective in connection with his interpretation of Phil 2:6: “In Philippians 2:5–11 Paul asserts that the Son had equality with the Father *before* he voluntarily emptied himself to become man and die on the cross, and that *afterward* he exalted to reign as Lord. Before the incarnation the Son was the co-Creator, equal with the Father, and after the resurrection he was exalted to his former glory” (Kevin Giles, “The Subordination of Christ and the Subordination of Women,” in *Discovering Biblical Equality: Complementarity without Hierarchy* [ed. Ronald W. Pierce and Rebecca Merrill Groothuis; Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 2004], 337). Contra Bruce A. Ware, *Father, Son, & Holy Spirit: Relationships, Roles, & Relevance* (Wheaton: Crossway, 2005), 50–51. Ware argues that Christ’s glory is penultimate to the Father’s ultimate glory in Phil 2:11. He concludes, “It is the Father, then, who is supreme in the Godhead—in the triune relationships of Father, Son, and Holy Spirit—and supreme over all of the very creation over which the Son reigns as its Lord” (Ibid.).

³Erickson, *Who’s Tampering with the Trinity?*, 120.

⁴Wayne Grudem, *Evangelical Feminism and Biblical Truth: An Analysis of More Than 100 Disputed Questions* (Sisters, OR: Multnomah, 2004), 409.

⁵So also Gilbert Bilezikian, “Hermeneutical Bungee-Jumping: Subordination in the Godhead,” *Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society* 40, no. 1 (1997): 65. “Such texts, however, teach Christ’s self-subjection exclusively in relation to the accomplishment of his redemptive ministry” (Ibid.).

⁶This article is an updated revision of an article I wrote several years ago: “On the Articular Infinitive in Philippians 2:6: A Grammatical Note with Christological Implications,” *Tyndale Bulletin* 55, no. 2 (2004): 253–74. My full treatment of the articular infinitive appears in my book: *Articular Infinitives in the Greek of the New Testament: On the Exegetical Benefit of Grammatical Precision* (Sheffield: Sheffield Phoenix, 2006).

⁷Many who work in the field of Greek grammar and linguistics have noted that too many New Testament scholars think that all that needs to be said about Hellenistic Greek Grammar has already been said (see for example J. J. Janse van Rensburg, “A New Reference Grammar for the Greek New Testament: Exploratory Remarks on a Methodology,” *Neotestamentica* 27 [1993]: 135; Lars Rydbeck, “What Happened to New Testament Greek Grammar after Albert Debrunner?” *New Testament Studies* 21 [1975]: 424–27). I want to affirm the sober judgment of Richard A. Young who said, “The common assumption that everything in Greek

scholarship has already been accomplished has stifled a generation of Greek scholarship and needs to be abandoned” (*Intermediate New Testament Greek: A Linguistic and Exegetical Approach* [Nashville: Broadman & Holman, 1994], x).

⁸Stephen Fowl is correct when he says, “Few other passages in the NT have generated more scholarly literature” (Stephen E. Fowl, *Philippians* [The Two Horizons Testament Commentary; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2005], 89). For this reason, I agree with Markus Bockmuehl’s opinion that, “none but the most conceited could claim to have mastered the secondary literature, and none but the dullest would find pleasure or interest in wading through it” (Markus Bockmuehl, “The Form of God’ (Phil 2:6): Variations on a Theme of Jewish Mysticism,” *Journal of Theological Studies* 48 [1997]: 1). A survey of major interpretive issues in Phil 2:5–11 appears in a collection of essays edited by Ralph P. Martin and Brian J. Dodd, *Where Christology Began: Essays on Philippians 2* (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox, 1998); cf. I. Howard Marshall, “The Christ-hymn in Philippians,” *Tyndale Bulletin* 19 (1968): 104–27. On Phil 2:6 in particular, N. T. Wright’s analysis is to my mind the most insightful and carefully nuanced treatment of the various interpretations, “ἄρπαγμός and the Meaning of Philippians 2:5–11,” *Journal of Theological Studies* NS 37 (1986): 321–52. The same article appeared subsequently in Wright’s *The Climax of the Covenant: Christ and the Law in Pauline Theology* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1992), 62–98.

⁹This grammatical question is not vitiated by Roy W. Hoover’s watershed thesis that this double-accusative construction comprises an idiom (“The Harpagmos Enigma: A Philological Solution,” *Harvard Theological Review* 64 [1971]: 95–119). Even if there is an idiom present, it is still necessary to determine the syntactical and semantic contribution of the article with the infinitive. Against Hoover, see Samuel Vollenweider, “Der ‘Raub’ der Gottgleichheit: Ein religionsgeschichtlicher Vorschlag zu Phil 2.6,” *New Testament Studies* 45 (1999): 413–33; cf. John Cochrane O’Neill, “Hoover on harpagmos reviewed, with a modest proposal concerning Philippians 2:6,” *Harvard Theological Review* 81 (1988): 445–49.

¹⁰N. T. Wright, “ἄρπαγμός and the Meaning of Philippians 2:5–11,” 344; cf. *The Climax of the Covenant: Christ and the Law in Pauline Theology*, 83.

¹¹*Determiner* is a term linguists use to identify a certain class of words that appear in nominal clusters, “articles, demonstrative pronouns, indefinite pronouns, and so forth—come under the general heading of *determiners*, and all are included in this class because they may be used interchangeably, but cannot be used in combination (except with the article)” (David Alan Black, *Linguistics for Students of New Testament Greek: A Survey of Basic Concepts and Applications* [2d ed.; Grand Rapids: Baker, 1995], 108; cf. Robert W. Funk, *A Beginning-Intermediate Grammar of Hellenistic Greek* [2d ed.; Sources for Biblical Study; Missoula, MT: Society of Biblical Literature, 1973], 2:528–29, 555). Recent studies in general linguistics have raised questions concerning such conventional descriptions of *determination*. These studies have demonstrated that determiners do not mark for quantity, number, and possession. Rather, *determination* refers strictly to the devices used to mark noun phrases as definite. Heinz Vater’s work in this area is critical. He argues that, “Determination and quantification are different semantic phenomena with a different syntactic behavior” (Heinz Vater, “Determination and Quantification,” in *Semantika a konfrontacja jezykowa*, ed. Violetta Koseska-Toszewa and Danuta Rytel-Kuc [Warszawa: Slawistyczny Ośrodek Wydawniczy, 1996], 120; contra Violetta Koseka-Toszewa, *The Semantic Category of*

Definiteness/Indefiniteness in Bulgarian and Polish [Warszawa : Slawistyczny Ośrodek Wydawniczy, 1991], 8).

¹²These two examples are taken from Daniel B. Wallace's *Greek Grammar Beyond the Basics: An Exegetical Syntax of the New Testament* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1996), 219.

¹³A further reason, not usually noticed, for taking τὸ εἶναι ἰσα θεῶν in close connection with ὅς ἐν μορφῇ θεοῦ ὑπάρχων is the regular usage of the articular infinitive (here, τὸ εἶναι) to refer "to something previously mentioned or otherwise well known" (Wright, "ἄρπαγμός and the Meaning of Philippians 2:5–11," 344).

¹⁴Simon Gathercole has argued in favor of Christ's preexistence from Matthew, Mark, and Luke. For Gathercole, Christ's preexistence in the Synoptics increases the likelihood that Paul would be arguing for the same in Philippians 2. See Simon J. Gathercole, *The Preexistent Son: Recovering the Christologies of Matthew, Mark, and Luke* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2006), 288. J. D. G. Dunn continues his opposition to seeing a preexistent Christ in this text (*Christology in the Making: A New Testament Inquiry into the Origins of the Doctrine of the Incarnation* [2^d ed.; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1989], xix, 113–21; idem "Christ, Adam, and Preexistence," in *Where Christology Began*, 74–83, esp. 78–79). However, it is not necessary to argue against an Adam-Christology in order to maintain Christ's pre-existence (e.g., Charles Arthur Wanamaker, "Philippians 2:6–11: Son of God or Adamic Christology?," *New Testament Studies* 33 [1987]: 179–93). N. T. Wright correctly points out that the presence of an Adam-Christology in Phil 2:5–11 does not rule out the possibility of Christ's pre-existence, "Adam in Pauline Christology," *Society of Biblical Literature Seminar Papers* 22 (1983): 359–89. I am in general agreement with Markus Bockmuehl that μορφῇ θεοῦ "refers in Phil. 2:6 to the visible divine beauty and appearance which Christ had in his pre-incarnate state, before taking on the visible form and appearance of a slave" ("The Form of God" (Phil 2:6): Variations on a Theme of Jewish Mysticism," *Journal of Theological Studies* 48 [1997]: 4).

¹⁵I would introduce the word *essence* as a possible understanding of μορφῇ, "Whereas εἰκὼν contemplates the external or representational features of an object, μορφῇ tends, both in classical and Hellenistic Greek, to point to the metaphysical property of an object so that it refers to *nature* or *essence*" (David Wallace, "A Note on *morphè*," *Theologische Zeitschrift* 22 [1966]: 22). Yet I still agree with Bockmuehl (see preceding footnote) because this *essence* is manifest. Thus I follow Moulton and Milligan's definition which says that μορφῇ "always signifies a form which truly and fully expresses the being which underlies it" (James Hope Moulton and George Milligan, *The Vocabulary of the Greek Testament Illustrated from the Papyri and Other Non-Literary Sources* [Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1930], 417). So also Dennis W. Jowers, "The Meaning of ΜΟΡΦΗ in Philippians 2:6–7," *Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society* 49, no. 4 (2006): 739–66. Contra Joseph H. Hellerman, "ΜΟΡΦΗ ΘΕΟΥ as a Signifier of Social Status in Philippians 2:6," *Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society* 52, no. 4 (2009): 779–97.

¹⁶e.g., Peter T. O'Brien, *The Epistle to the Philippians* (NIGTC; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1991), 216; Gerald F. Hawthorne, *Philippians* (WBC; Waco, TX: Nelson, 1983), 84; Gordan D. Fee, *Paul's Letter to the Philippians* (NICNT; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1995), 207; Kenneth Grayston, *The Letters of Paul to the Philippians and the Thessalonians* (Cambridge Bible Commentary; Cambridge: Cambridge University, 1967), 27.

¹⁷F. Blass and A. Debrunner, *A Greek Grammar of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature* (trans. and rev. Robert W. Funk; Chicago: University of Chicago, 1961), 205, §399 [henceforth BDF].

¹⁸BDF is not alone in its judgment. See also: A. T. Robertson, *A Grammar of the Greek New Testament in the Light of Historical Research* (4th ed.; Nashville: Broadman, 1934), 1065.

¹⁹BDF, 205, §399 [emphasis mine].

²⁰Ibid.

²¹To be precise, we should note that determiners mark nouns as definite, and in certain contexts this *definiteness* has an anaphoric value. Thus anaphora is only properly understood as a sub-category of definiteness. John A. Hawkins's work has exerted some considerable influence in the way that general linguists conceive of the semantic category of *definiteness*: "According to my location theory the speaker performs the following acts when using the definite article. He (a) introduces a referent (or referents) to the hearer; and (b) instructs the hearer to locate the referent in some shared set of objects ... and he (c) refers to the totality of the objects or mass within this set which satisfy the referring expression" (*Definiteness and Indefiniteness: A Study in Reference and Grammaticality Prediction* [Atlantic Highlands, NJ: Humanities, 1978], 167). The question that I am trying to answer in this essay is whether or not the Greek article always carries with it this semantic value as a *definitizer*.

²²By "semantic value" I am referring rather narrowly to the article's value as a *definitizing* determiner, not to the potential value associated with the article's case.

²³This is Funk's list (Ibid., 2:555–56), though more could be added (e.g. Wallace, *Greek Grammar Beyond the Basics*, 216–31).

²⁴Associated with the distinction between structural meaning and lexical meaning is the distinction between *content* words and *function* words. *Content* words are those items that possess little structural meaning but great lexical meaning. *Function* words are those items that have little lexical meaning but great structural meaning. Eugene Van Ness Goetchius writes, "The most important function words are prepositions (*to, for, with, by, etc.*), conjunctions (*and, or, but, because, etc.*), and the articles (*a, an, the*)" (*The Language of the New Testament* [New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1965], 25). One way to think about the difference between *function* words and *content* words is by analogy. If structure words make up the mortar of a language, then content words are the bricks that provide the substance of a language (Black, *Linguistics for Students of New Testament Greek*, 98).

²⁵Wallace first raised this grammatical issue in his *Greek Grammar Beyond the Basics*, 186, 602.

²⁶For Daniel Wallace's complete list of such verbs, see his article titled, "The Semantics and Exegetical Significance of the Object-Complement Construction in the New Testament," *Grace Theological Journal* 6 (1985): 96, n.23. An abbreviated list can be found in his *Greek Grammar Beyond the Basics*, 183.

²⁷This is of course notwithstanding the *person-thing double accusative* in which the accusative of the person functions like the more typical dative of the person (C. F. D. Moule, *An Idiom Book of New Testament Greek* [2d ed.; Cambridge: Cambridge University, 1959], 33).

²⁸These rules correspond directly with the rules for distinguishing subject from predicate nominative (Wallace, "Object-Complement Construction," 103–05; *Greek Grammar Beyond the Basics*, 184–85). Wallace notes that Goetchius first suggested the analogy between these two constructions (*The Language of the New Testament*, 46; 142–44).

²⁹Haiim B. Rosén, *Early Greek Grammar and Thought in Heraclitus: the Emergence of the Article*, Proceedings of the Israel Academy of Sciences and Humanities, VII:2 (Jerusalem: Israel Academy of Sciences and Humanities, 1988), 30, 37.

³⁰Funk, *A Beginning-Intermediate Grammar of Hellenistic Greek*, 2:557. However, Funk's use of John 8:37 as an example of a purely grammatical use of the article is incorrect. This text is actually an example of the article's function as a determiner.

³¹*Ibid.*, 2:558.

³²A computer search of the GRAMCORD database produced this number. The statistics that follow are the result of my own search of the GRAMCORD database and of a comparison of these results with Votaw and Boyer (James L. Boyer, *Supplemental manual of information: infinitive verbs* [Winona Lake, Indiana: Boyer, 1986]; Clyde W. Votaw, *The Use of the Infinitive in Biblical Greek* [Chicago: Published by the Author, 1896]). Because Votaw worked from the Westcott and Hort text, our final tallies are not quite identical.

³³Matt 5:28; 6:1; 6:8; 13:4; 13:5; 13:6; 13:25; 13:30; 20:19; 20:19; 20:19; 23:5; 24:12; 26:2; 26:12; 26:32; 27:12; 27:31; Mark 1:14; 4:4; 4:5; 4:6; 5:4(x2); 6:48; 13:22; 14:28; 14:55; 16:19; Luke 1:8; 1:21; 2:4; 2:6; 2:21; 2:27; 2:43; 3:21; 5:19(x2); 5:12; 5:17; 6:48; 8:5; 8:6; 8:40; 8:42; 9:7; 9:18; 9:29; 9:33; 9:34; 9:36; 9:51; 10:35; 10:38; 11:1; 11:8; 11:27; 11:37; 12:5; 12:15; 14:1; 17:11; 17:14; 18:1; 18:5; 18:35; 19:11(x2); 19:15; 22:15; 22:20; 23:8; 24:4; 24:15; 24:15; 24:30; 24:51; John 1:48; 2:24; 13:19; 17:5; Acts 1:3; 2:1; 3:19; 3:26; 4:2(x2); 4:30; 4:30; 7:4; 7:19; 8:6(x2); 8:11; 8:40; 9:3; 10:41; 11:15; 12:20; 15:13; 18:2; 18:3; 19:1; 19:21; 20:1; 23:15; 27:4; 27:9; 28:18; Rom 1:11; 1:20; 3:4; 3:26; 4:11(x2); 4:16; 4:18; 6:12; 7:4; 7:5; 8:29; 11:11; 12:2; 12:3; 15:8; 15:13(x2); 15:16; 1 Cor. 8:10; 9:18; 10:6; 11:21; 11:22(x2); 11:25; 11:33; 2 Cor. 1:4; 3:13; 4:4; 7:3(x2); 7:12; 8:6; 8:11; Gal 2:12; 3:17; 3:23; 4:18; Eph 1:12; 1:18; 6:11; Phil 1:7; 1:10; 1:23; 1:23; 1 Thess 2:9; 2:12; 2:16; 3:2(x2); 3:3; 3:5; 3:10(x2); 3:13; 4:9; 2 Thess 1:5; 2:2(x2); 2:6; 2:10; 2:11; 3:8; 3:9; Heb. 2:8; 2:17; 3:12; 3:15; 7:23; 7:24; 7:25; 8:3; 8:13; 9:14; 9:28; 10:2; 10:15; 10:26; 11:3; 12:10; 13:21; Jas. 1:18; 1:19(x2); 3:3; 4:2; 4:15; 1 Pet 3:7; 4:2.

³⁴The exceptions in literature outside of the New Testament are very rare: "Der in der klassischen Sprache überaus seltene Gebrauch einer Präposition oder eines Präpositionaladverbium mit dem artikellosen Infinitiv . . . Sicher steht der auch in Rechnungen nachchristlicher Jahrhunderte nicht seltene Ausdruck εἰς πλεῖν . . . Alle anderen in Betracht kommenden Fälle sind höchst zweifelhaft" (Edwin Mayser, *Grammatik der griechischen papyri aus der Ptolemäerzeit, mit einschluß der gleichzeitigen ostraka und der in Ägypten verfassten inschriften*, vol. 3, *Satzlehre* [Berlin and Leipzig: Walter de Gruyter, 1926], 324). Robertson agrees, "The instances without the article are clearly very few" (*Grammar*, 1069). According to Moulton, the Greek of the New Testament follows Attic in its use of the article. Moulton says that the frequent use of εἰς πλεῖν in the papyri is the result of Ionic influence. That is why this exception exists in the papyri and not in the New Testament (James Hope Moulton, *A Grammar of New Testament Greek*, vol. 1: *Prolegomena* [3d ed.; Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1908], 81). There are many textual problems with the exceptions in the LXX (e.g., Judg 6:11; Ps 122:2; 1 Mac 16:9; Robertson, *Grammar*, 1071–72 and Votaw, *The Use of the Infinitive in Biblical Greek*, 17–18).

³⁵This is not to say that the article make the infinitive substantival. As Robertson argues, "It is not true that the article makes the inf. a substantive as Winer has it. It is not just a substantive, nor just a verb, but both at the same time. . . . One naturally feels that the articular inf. is more substantival than the anarthrous . . . but that is not correct. . . . The addition of the article made no essential change in the inf. It was already both substantive and verb" (*Grammar*, 1057, 1058, 1063).

³⁶*Ibid.*, 1069.

³⁷There is also a semantic ambiguity that would occur in some instances because without the article the case of the infinitive would be ambiguous. As Robertson has argued, "It is the *case* which indicates the meaning of the *preposition*, and not the *preposition* which gives the meaning to the *case*" (*Grammar*, 554). Compare this with the recommended procedure for interpreting prepositional phrases in Murray J. Harris, "Prepositions and Theology in the Greek New Testament," in *New International Dictionary of New Testament Theology* (ed. Colin Brown; [Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1978], 3:1173; cf. Robertson, *Grammar*, 568. According to Robertson and Harris, one cannot understand prepositional phrases without first understanding the case of the object.

³⁸Technically, this is a morpho-syntactic distinction because English relies so heavily upon word order.

³⁹Modern readers often fail to recognize this fact. The proliferation of printed Bibles in our own day makes it difficult for modern readers to relate to the oral culture that existed two millennia ago. Yet we know that both Jews and Christians of the first century relied upon the spoken word for their scriptural training, not the written (Luke 4:16; Acts 13:15, 27; 15:21, 30–31; 2 Cor 3:14–15; Eph 3:4; Col 4:16; 1 Thess 5:27; 1 Tim 4:13; Rev 1:3). Robert H. Stein has recently reminded New Testament scholars of the importance of remembering that the New Testament materials were written with the knowledge that they were to be read aloud in the Christian assembly: "Another important implication that flows out of the presupposition that Mark thought of his 'readers' as 'hearers' having his Gospel read to them, is that he wrote clearly enough that his hearers would be able to understand what he said *as the Gospel was being read to them* . . . Thus Mark, and even Paul's letters, should be interpreted in light of the ability of their hearing audiences to process the information being read to them, *as it was being read*" ("Our Reading of the Bible vs. the Original Audience's Hearing It," *Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society* 46 [2003]: 73–74).

⁴⁰In a private conversation with Peter Gentry on this matter, he suggested that I exclude from my study all instances of articular infinitives governed by prepositions. He pointed out that since the article is grammatically required to mark the case of the infinitive, one should not attempt to discover additional semantic meaning in its use.

⁴¹Matt 2:13; 3:13; 11:1(x2); 13:3; 15:20; 20:23; 21:32; 24:45; Mark 9:10; 10:40; 12:33(x2); Luke 1:9; 1:57; 1:73; 1:77; 1:79; 2:6; 2:21; 2:24; 2:27; 4:10; 4:42; 5:7; 8:5; 9:51; 10:19; 12:42; 17:1; 21:22; 22:6; 22:31; 24:16; 24:25; 24:29; 24:45; Acts 3:2; 3:12; 5:31; 7:19; 9:15; 10:25; 10:47; 13:47; 14:9; 14:18; 15:20; 18:10; 20:3; 20:20(x2); 20:27; 20:30; 21:12; 23:15; 23:20; 25:11; 26:18; 26:18; 27:1; 27:20; Rom 1:24; 6:6; 7:3; 7:18; 7:18; 8:12; 11:8(x2); 11:10; 13:8; 14:13; 14:21; 14:21; 15:22; 15:23; 1 Cor 7:26; 9:10; 10:13; 11:6; 11:6; 14:39(x2); 16:4; 2 Cor. 1:8; 2:1; 2:13; 7:11; 8:10; 8:10; 8:11; 8:11; 8:11; 9:1; 10:2; Gal 3:10; Phil 1:21(x2); 1:22; 1:24; 1:29(x2); 2:6; 2:13; 2:13; 3:10; 3:21; 4:10; 1 Thess 4:6(x2); Heb. 2:15; 5:12; 10:7; 10:9; 10:31; 11:5; Jas 5:17; 1 Pet 3:10; 4:17; Rev 12:7.

⁴²These are the texts suggested in BDF, §399.1–2: Matt 15:20; cf. 15:2, 23; Mark 9:10; 12:33; Acts 25:11; Rom 4:13; 7:18; 13:8; 14:13; 1 Cor 7:37; 11:6; 14:39; 2 Cor 2:1; 8:10; 9:1; Phil 1:21, 24, 29; 2:6, 13; 4:10; Heb 10:31; Rev 13:8.

⁴³Robertson, *Grammar*, 1061. Votaw recognizes that *instrumentality* to some extent overlaps semantically with the categories *cause*, *manner*, *means* and includes 2 Cor 2:13 under this threefold heading (Votaw, *The Use of the Infinitive in Biblical Greek*, 29). See also Moulton, *Prolegomena*, 220; Stanley E. Porter, *Idioms of the Greek New Testament* (Sheffield: JSOT, 1992), 200.

⁴⁴K. L. McKay, *A New Syntax of the Verb in New Testament Greek: An Aspectual Approach* (New York: Peter Lang, 1994), 55, 59.

⁴⁵*Ibid.*, 129.

⁴⁶The syntactic cases such as nominative and accusative encode primary syntactic functions such as subject and object and do not have any specific semantic function. On the other hand, [semantic] cases like ablative, instrumental, and locative generally represent adverbials which have a more specific semantic content” (*Routledge Dictionary of Language and Linguistics*, trans. Gregory Trauth and Kerstin Kazzazi [London: Routledge, 1996; original, *Lexikon der Sprachwissenschaft*, 2d completely revised edition. Stuttgart: Kröner Verlag, 1990], 63). The so-called syntactic cases (nominative and accusative) primarily denote grammatical structure while semantic cases encode a semantic element as well. Thus we see that observing the “ground meaning” of a semantic case is much more significant than trying to observe the same for a syntactic case.

⁴⁷I am thoroughly influenced by J. P. Louw in my description of the ground meaning of the Greek cases. On the nominative and accusative in particular: “On the semantic level the accusative denotes relation to the constructional chain without defining the relation ... On the semantic level the mere nominal idea is stated by the nominative without relation to the sentence, while the accusative, denoting a relation, is non-defining” (“Linguistic Theory and the Greek Case System,” *Acta Classica* 9 [1966]: 80).

⁴⁸Michael W. Palmer writes that the article “disambiguates” the “structural ambiguity” of some Greek phrases (*Levels of Constituent Structure in New Testament Greek* [New York: Peter Lang, 1995], 41, 40 respectively).

⁴⁹Matt 3:15; 9:5; 9:5; 12:2; 12:4; 12:10; 12:12; 13:11; 14:4; 15:26; 15:26; 16:21; 16:21; 16:21; 16:21; 17:4; 17:10; 18:7; 18:8; 18:8; 18:9; 18:9; 18:13; 18:33; 19:3; 19:10; 19:24; 20:15; 22:17; 23:23 (x2); 24:6; 25:27; 26:35; 26:54; 27:6; Mark 2:9(x2); 2:15; 2:23; 2:26; 3:4(x4); 6:18; 7:27; 7:27; 8:31(x4); 8:36(x2); 9:5; 9:11; 9:43(x2); 9:45(x2); 9:47(x2); 10:2; 10:24; 10:25(x2); 12:14; 13:7; 13:10; 14:31; Luke 1:3; 2:26; 2:49; 3:21; 3:22(x2); 4:43; 5:23(x2); 6:1; 6:4; 6:6(x2); 6:9(x4); 6:12; 8:10; 9:22(x4); 9:33; 11:42(x2); 12:12; 13:14; 13:16; 13:33(x2); 14:3; 15:32(x2); 16:17(x2); 16:22(x2); 17:25(x2); 18:1(x2); 18:25(x2); 19:5; 20:22; 21:9; 22:7; 22:37; 24:7(x2); 24:26(x2); 24:44; 24:46(x2); 24:47; John 3:7; 3:14; 3:30(x2); 4:4; 4:20; 4:24; 5:10; 9:4; 10:16; 12:34; 18:14; 18:31; 20:9; Acts 1:7; 1:16; 1:22; 2:29; 3:21; 4:5; 4:12; 4:19; 5:29; 6:2; 7:23; 9:3; 9:6; 9:16; 9:32; 9:37; 9:43; 10:28(x2); 11:26(x3); 13:46; 14:1(x2); 14:22; 15:5(x2); 15:22; 15:25; 15:28; 16:16; 16:21(x2); 16:30; 17:3(x2); 19:1(x2); 19:21; 19:36(x2); 20:16(x2); 20:35(x4); 21:1; 21:5; 21:35; 21:37; 22:6; 22:17; 22:18; 22:22; 22:25; 23:11; 24:19(x2); 25:10; 25:16; 25:24; 25:27; 26:1; 26:9; 26:14; 27:21; 27:24; 27:26; 27:44; 28:8; 28:17; Rom 12:3; 12:15(x2); 1 Cor 5:12; 7:1; 7:9(x2); 8:2; 9:15; 11:13; 11:19; 14:34; 14:35; 15:25; 15:53(x2); 16:4; 2 Cor 2:3; 5:10; 11:30; 12:1; 12:4; Gal. 4:18; 6:14; Eph 5:12; 6:20; Phil 1:7; 3:1; Col 4:4; 4:6; 1 Thess 4:1(x2); 2 Thess 1:6; 3:7; 1 Tim 3:2; 3:15; 2 Tim 2:6; 2:24(x2); Titus 1:7; 1:11; Heb 2:1; 2:10; 4:6; 8:3; 9:5; 9:26; 9:27; 11:6; 13:9; Jas 3:10; 1 Pet 3:17; 2:21(x2); 3:11; Rev 1:1; 4:1; 6:4; 7:2; 10:11; 11:5; 13:7(x2); 13:14; 13:15; 16:8; 17:10; 20:3; 22:6. Votaw incorrectly includes Acts 23:30, 2 Cor 9:5, Phil 2:25, 2 Pet 1:13, and Rev 13:10 in his list of anarthrous subject infinitives (Votaw, *The Use of the Infinitive in Biblical Greek*, 31–40).

⁵⁰This fact is most clearly seen in the 154 instances in which the infinitive is the subject of an impersonal verb. In each instance, the infinitive is anarthrous.

⁵¹The editors of NA²⁷ admit that τοῦτο has a comparatively weak textual basis and only give it a “C” rating (Bruce M. Metzger, *A*

Textual Commentary on the Greek New Testament [2d ed; Stuttgart: Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft/German Bible Society, 1994], 42). For this reason, I agree with the text of Westcott–Hort, which leaves it out.

⁵²Acts 25:11; Rom 13:8; 14:13; 1 Cor 14:39; 14:39; 2 Cor 2:1; 8:10; 8:10; 8:11; 10:2; Phil 2:6; 2:13; 2:13; 4:10; 1 Thess 4:6; 4:6.

⁵³We might add 1 Thess 4:6 to the list of appositional uses. However, I think it is more likely that the article marks the two object infinitives as asyndetically coordinated with the infinitive phrase τὸ ἑαυτοῦ σκεδῶς κτᾶσθαι of verse 4:4. Thus there are two direct objects of the verb οἶδα of verse 4:4. In any case, BDF does not make a case for an anaphoric use of the article in this text.

⁵⁴James L. Boyer, “The Classification of Infinitives: A Statistical Study,” *Grace Theological Journal* 6 (1985): 9.

⁵⁵BDAG, s.v. δέομαι, 218.

⁵⁶The accusative articular infinitive in the following verse (2 Cor. 8:11) is necessary to remove any possible *final* or *ecclastic* sense from the infinitive phrase, which is the thrust of the following ὅπως clause.

⁵⁷In the transitive sense, this verb takes “an accusative of the thing germinated” (J. B. Lightfoot, *St. Paul’s Epistle to the Philippians* [Reprint, Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 1993], 163). The intransitive sense would only occur if the genitive τοῦ reading (F G) were preferred over the accusative τό, which is probably why BDAG and BDF describe this use of ἀναθαλλῶ as factitive (BDAG, s.v. ἀναθαλλῶ, 63; BDF §101; §399[1]).

⁵⁸BDAG, s.v. ἐνεργέω, 335.

⁵⁹Matt 8:24; 8:28; 10:1; 10:1; 12:22(x2); 13:2; 13:32(x2); 13:54; 13:54; 15:31; 15:33; 24:24; 27:1; 27:14; Mark 1:27; 1:45; 2:2; 2:12; 2:12; 3:10; 3:20; 3:20; 4:1; 4:32; 4:37; 9:26; 15:5; Luke 4:29; 5:7; 12:1; 20:20; Acts 1:19; 5:15; 5:15; 14:1; 15:39; 16:26; 19:10; 19:12; 19:12; 19:12; 19:16; Rom 7:6; 15:19; 1 Cor 1:7; 5:1; 13:2; 2 Cor. 1:8; 2:7; 2:7; 3:7; 7:7; Phil 1:13; 1 Thess 1:7, 8; 2 Thess 1:4; 2:4; Heb 13:6; 1 Pet 1:21.

⁶⁰I take the present participle ὑπάρχων as concessive. See BDAG, s.v. ὑπάρχω, 659.

⁶¹I regard ἄρπαγμός to be concrete and passive, or *res rapienda*. See pp. 20–38 in my master’s thesis for an argument for this meaning (Dennis Burk, “The Meaning of *Harpagmos* in Phillipians 2:6,” [Th.M. Thesis, Dallas Theological Seminary, 2000], 13–14, 20–38).

⁶²Jesus’ refusal to grasp after *equality with God* is a function of his subordinate role as the second person of the Trinity. This reading resembles the theological conclusions of H. A. W. Meyer’s commentary on this text (though he reached his conclusion through an exegesis different than my own), “in this pre-existence the Son appears as *subordinate* to the Father, as He does throughout the entire New Testament, although this is not ... at variance with the Trinitarian equality of essence in the Biblical sense. By the ἄρπαγμὸν ἠγεῖσθαι κ.τ.λ., if it had taken place, He would have wished to *relieve* Himself from his subordination” (*Critical and Exegetical handbook to the Epistles to the Philippians and Colossians* [trans. John C. Moore from the 4th German ed.; rev. William P. Dickson; Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1875], 83–84).

A Prejudicial Treatment of the Issues

A Review of Carolyn Custis James, *Half the Church: Recapturing God's Global Vision for Women*. Grand Rapids: Baker, 2009.

Todd L. Miles

*Associate Professor of Theology and Hermeneutics
Western Seminary
Portland, Oregon*

Half the Church: Recapturing God's Global Vision for Women by Carolyn Custis James is a book written by a woman for women, calling them to bless the church and ultimately the world through the exercise of their gifts. First, a summary of the contents: The book is driven by two issues that are of chief concern to James. First, she “grieves” the loss to the church and to men when half the church effectively disappears through “anorexic spiritual diet” or stymied roles (19). Second, James is dismayed over the plight of women in other countries and is outraged that the church is not the loudest voice decrying the atrocities committed against women around the world (21). These two issues lead to three significant questions whose answers comprise the rest of the book. She wants to know what message the church has for women of the twenty-first century. What will the church do about the rampant suffering of the world, and what messages are we sending to the world in the way that we mobilize and treat our own daughters (41)? It is her desire to write a book that takes seriously the plight of women who live in states of horrific oppression, while simultaneously calling women of the evangelical church to kingdom action. In so doing, she urges women to participate in the “full-orbed gospel”—that is, both gospel proclamation and mercy/social justice (25).

Much of the book is given to alerting the reader to atrocities committed against women around the world, such as abuse, sex-trafficking,

torture, and various kinds of murder (e.g., female infanticide and so-called honor killings). But James is concerned that the evangelical church is sending the wrong message to the watching world and to those women who are suffering. Though the time is right for

believers to embody a gospel culture where *both* halves of the church are thriving because following Jesus produces a climate of honor, value, and love, and we are serving God together as he intended from the beginning.... 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. Everywhere we go, a line has been drawn establishing parameters for how much or how little we are permitted to do within the church (48).

To remedy this, James correctly turns to the Bible. First, from Genesis 1, she teaches that men and women are fully and equally created *imago Dei* (57–72). James rightly notes the glory of being an image bearer, along with the awesome responsibility that the doctrine entails. From the creation of man and woman in the image of God, she contends that Adam and Eve were born into conflict and resistance (before the fall) where both are called to be leaders in the tasks presented to them by God

(73–78). James finds evidence for female leadership in the narrative of Ruth and Naomi (80–98).

Second, James turns to Genesis 2, where it is written that Eve was created as a helper fit (*ezer kenegdo*) for Adam. James notes that there are many places in Scripture where God is described as an *ezer*, often with military connotations. James then concludes that “God created his daughters to be *ezer-warriors* with our brothers” (113). She then unpacks the paradigm shifting implications (for both women and men) of women being “*ezer-warriors*” (111–18, 123–33), particularly given the dangers in our current cultural context of magnifying submissiveness, surrender, and meekness as important attributes for women (120–23).

Third, James turns to what she calls the “blessed alliance” that the Bible presents as the model for male and female roles and relationships (135–43). Examples of the blessed alliance are found in Esther and Mordecai, and then in Mary and Joseph (143–50).

Having turned to the Bible for instruction and examples of how women and men are to relate in the mission of the Kingdom, James then explains where we ought *not* to turn in the Bible for such instruction: the passages over which complementarians and egalitarians debate (153–61). James believes that biblical texts such as 1 Tim 2:11–15 are so difficult to understand that it would be wise to turn to clearer texts that are not the subject of debate for guidance on the issue of men’s and women’s roles in the church and home. It is frustrating to James that the church quarrels over these texts while women in the world are suffering injustice and atrocities (161–65). Turning to the example of Jesus, James suggests that evangelicals should be less concerned with issues of authority and more concerned with issues of justice (166–73).

Finally, James concludes her book with a call to women to rise up and actively participate in the mission of the kingdom, proclaiming the gospel and advocating for women around the world who are suffering (175–94). The church must empower and utilize its other half by mobilizing an army of *ezer-warriors*.

Let me begin my critique of the book by high-

lighting four areas of agreement with James. First, it is evident that Carolyn Custis James is a sister in Christ who cares deeply about the proclamation of the gospel of Jesus Christ. Despite our differences, we are co-laborers in the kingdom of Christ. Second, in *Half the Church*, James calls attention to the atrocities committed against women in other nations. She rightly rebukes the church for its ignorance and silence concerning the horrific plight of far too many around the world. Third, James correctly calls for the church to engage in both the word and deed of the kingdom, commanded by Jesus, and then modeled by Jesus and his apostles. Too often the church swings from the extremes of proclamation only to mercy/social justice only. Such is a distortion of the kingdom and the gospel that announces it. Finally, James is right to want to get every woman involved in the ministry of the gospel. She appropriately grieves over the “anorexic spiritual diet” of many Christian women.

As an elder in a local church, I can deeply appreciate these emphases. Unfortunately, the book is flawed at too many levels for me to endorse it. Hermeneutical errors, biblical-theological errors, exegetical errors, and logical errors abound. These errors are not peripheral to her main points but in every case exist precisely where her arguments are being made. For the reasons outlined below, I cannot in good conscience recommend the book.

James understands Adam and Eve to be co-laborers in a context of conflict and resistance even before the fall, necessitating a strong co-leader for Adam. But Scripture attributes the conflict of the biblical drama to sin, narrated in the account of the fall in Genesis 3. There is no hint in the narrative or in subsequent biblical testimony to the kind of conflict that would necessitate a co-leader and warrior for Adam. Adam is alone; so God creates one who is like him—but not the same as him—as a “helper suitable for him,” and in so doing creates the institution of marriage. James ignores the biblical-theological categories of fall and redemption, attributing that which the Scriptures blame on the sinful rebellion of Adam and Eve to creation itself. Contrary to James’s analysis, Adam was called to “work and keep” the garden *before* the creation of

Eve (Gen 2:15), and this is language more in keeping with a biblical priest than a biblical warrior. Further, even if the mandate to work and keep were passed on to Eve (which I suspect it was), does this entail that their respective roles in working and keeping were identical?

James's evaluation of the Hebrew word *ezer* is more problematic. Recall that James established that God had created a "warrior-*ezer*" for Adam because other biblical uses of the word *ezer* carry military implications. But words have meaning in specific contexts and to find a meaning of a word in one text and then transfer that meaning in wholesale fashion to another text is illegitimate. By the time James is done, her call for an army of warriors with *ezer*-spirit permeates the book. Gone, all in the name of a word study, is any notion of marriage in the understanding of "helper fit for him," even though the context of that specific text (Gen 2:18) is marriage itself. Gone is the important and faith-filled reality that Adam named his wife Eve (contra James's assertion in 100–01), "the mother of all living" (Gen 3:20), his statement of faith that God would save them one day through the offspring of his wife (Gen 3:15).

James calls for a blessed alliance between women and men. But she refuses to interact with the biblical texts that speak directly to how men and women are to relate in the context of the church and marriage (in fact, James implies that the Bible does not contain instructions for building a blessed alliance in our churches and homes [146]). She simply dismisses those texts as too difficult to understand, claiming that doctrines should be based on clear texts, not disputed texts. That sounds a bit like "cooking the books" to me. If one eliminates all the many biblical texts that speak to differentiation of roles in the church and home, then of course there would be no call or reason for wives to submit to their husbands, or for the office of elder to be reserved for men. But are those texts too difficult to understand? Is "I do not permit a woman to teach or exercise authority over a man" or "Wives, submit to your own husbands, as to the Lord" impossible to interpret? I will grant that application will take wisdom and discernment.

But disliking the implications of a verse is not the same thing as not being able to interpret the verse. If dispute over meaning were grounds for eliminating biblical texts, we would have no word from God at all. Furthermore, dismissing the debate by arguing that while the church quarrels "millions of little girls are being sold as sex slaves in vast regions of the Majority World ... and human trafficking is happening locally, right under our noses" (161) is both a red herring and an appeal to emotion, and is neither suitable nor helpful for real Christian discourse, nor does it help those being victimized.

On the same topic, James feels that the egalitarian world is repelled over the debates concerning men's and women's roles in the church and home, because women who have experienced great gains in the academy and workforce are called to submit in the church (48–49, 159). But what kind of argument is this? Of course our fallen world will look at the church, which calls for women to submit to the sacrificial leadership of their husbands, as hopelessly bizarre. Acceptance or rejection by the world is not an argument in any way for the legitimacy of a doctrine.

One last significant hermeneutical flaw: James believes that a key to understanding the Ancient Near East and Greco Roman contexts in which the Bible was written is to look at today's Middle East (32). They do share commonality in that they could each be described as patriarchal, but is it legitimate to compare the contemporary Muslim culture of the Middle East with the Jewish and Greco-Roman cultures of the Old and New Testaments? For example, did Mary really face the threat of an "honor killing?" The biblical texts do not indicate so. When such erroneous cultural assumptions are made, the result in *Half the Church* is a distortion of the biblical narratives. Honestly, as I read James's retelling of the stories, I almost came to dislike Joseph and Boaz for being dangerous patriarchalists. Never mind that the biblical texts describe Joseph and Boaz as "just" and "worthy," respectively. In general, James's interpretation of the biblical narratives, particularly when she seeks to find examples of female leadership over men (e.g., Ruth and Naomi over Boaz, Mary over Joseph, Esther

over Mordecai), are creative, but faithful neither to the immediate context nor to the biblical-theological storyline.

Finally, as a husband, father of a daughter (and five sons), and elder over a church at least half-full of women, I must comment on the tone of the book. The language throughout is prejudicial against those who see marriage and motherhood as of the essence of femininity, and against those who see submissiveness as a legitimate biblical virtue to be sought after. For example, women who lovingly submit to the sacrificial and loving leadership of their husbands are described as bringing less of themselves to the task at hand, not bringing their full selves to the partnership (158). Parents who teach their daughters to submit in this day and age might be setting them up for physical abuse (120–22). Perhaps most frustrating were claims that differentiation of men's and women's roles in the church and home are not qualitatively different than—and could lead to—the atrocities of violence and abuse committed against women in the world. These claims were explicitly made (e.g., 110). They were, perhaps more effectively, implicitly made on the numerous occasions when chapters expressing concern for women in the church began and ended with stories of horrific abuse from around the world. This is an effective literary strategy, but it is irresponsible, logically flawed, and misleading.

James is right to call attention to the plight of victimized women around the world, but her biblical arguments are so poor that she has done little to rectify the meager spiritual diet she so decries. The women of the church need better than this.

Alleging Heresy Where There Is None

A Review of Thomas H. McCall, *Which Trinity? Whose Monotheism? Philosophical and Systematic Theologians on the Metaphysics of Trinitarian Theology*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2010.

Bruce A. Ware

*Professor of Christian Theology
The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary
Louisville, Kentucky*

Tom McCall has provided a very helpful description and assessment of several leading Trinitarian proposals of recent years. His endeavor to engage some of the most influential contributions from philosophical and systematic theologians together succeeds well, in most ways. He is a clear writer and is able to summarize complex discussions from both fields, and he does so in a way that both can benefit from understanding more clearly the strengths and weaknesses of the various proposals he discusses.

The book divides into three sections. Section one discusses major proposals on both Trinity and Monotheism. McCall presents summaries of key contributors within “schools” or models of Social Trinitarianism (e.g., Cornelius Plantinga, Richard Swinburne, Stephen Davis, J. P. Moreland, and William Lane Craig), Relative Trinitarianism (e.g., Peter Geach and Peter van Inwagen), and Latin Trinitarianism (e.g., Brian Leftow). In each case, he discusses these positions in sufficient detail for the reader to follow the main lines of argument, and he provides substantive critique both here and later in the book. McCall then discusses historical, philosophical, and theological issues related to Monotheism, providing helpful assessment and evaluation.

Section two turns to some of the key conceptual tools of analytic philosophy that are also accessed in Trinitarian theology. Here he focuses special attention on Robert Jenson’s stress on God as the one who raised Jesus, Jürgen Moltmann’s use of Perichoresis, Wayne Grudem and Bruce Ware’s proposal of “eternal functional subordina-

tionism,” and John Zizioulas’s stress on holy love and divine aseity. In each case he provides summary of the view in question and then engages in critical assessment.

Section three provides something of a map for further endeavors of Trinitarian development as McCall sets forth certain conclusions and commitments he suggests are important for a correct understanding of the oneness and threeness of God.

I found most of the book clear and helpful in thinking through a host of issues related to understanding this complex doctrine. Some readers would find McCall’s favorable assessment of some version of social Trinitarianism problematic, but I stand with him in his positive (with qualifications) advocacy of this model. His eighth concluding principle states, “Trinitarian theology should insist on an understanding of persons that is consistent with the New Testament portrayal of the divine persons, that is, as distinct centers of consciousness and will who exist together in loving relationships of mutual dependence” (236). I agree that the Trinity is most clearly understood when the Persons of the Godhead are seen as distinct centers of consciousness and will. How one would understand the eternal relatedness within the Godhead if this were not the case certainly is difficult to conceive. Others, however, would surely disagree with McCall’s openness to some modified form of social Trinitarianism in ways that I would not. Further, many of McCall’s constructive suggestions are helpful and on target, both biblically and theologically (though there is little interaction with Scripture). On the whole, the

book is helpful to those who are undertaking the mind-bending task of endeavoring to understand the nature of Trinitarian discussions in our day.

The one (and only) area with which I have major disagreement is in how McCall both described and evaluated the “eternal functional subordination” (EFS) proposal that Wayne Grudem and I (along with many others, of course) have sought to explain and defend. Readers of this review surely have every right to think, “Well, of course you didn’t like his treatment, since he was very critical of your view.” Indeed, he was critical. But in my judgment, this chapter failed to show the kind of careful and fair description of other’s views McCall evidenced elsewhere in the book, and his critique of our proposal is deeply misguided and mistaken. Because this is the only area of the book with which I have strong disagreement, I’ll devote the rest of this review to my brief reply to McCall’s sixth chapter, “Eternal Functional Subordination: Considering a recent Evangelical Proposal.”

McCall’s opening description of EFS starts well. He indicates that some (he quotes mostly throughout chapter 6 from writings by Wayne Grudem and me) evangelicals have wanted to deny “ontological” or “essential” subordination while also insisting on the Son’s eternal “functional” subordination to the Father. That is, EFS affirms the full equality of the Father, Son, and Spirit in essence, as each possesses eternally the identically divine nature, while EFS also affirms that the submission of the Son to the Father is not merely a submission of the incarnate Son but also of the Son in eternity past and in eternity future. The Son, then, is fully and eternally equal to the Father in nature (hence, *homoousios*) while being eternally distinct from the Father in function, as the Son submits to the authority of his Father.

But McCall challenges the validity of this position. He first raises questions about what such submission would look like in a world where only God exists. This is a fair question, but of course almost any question about the inner relations among the Trinitarian persons apart from creation is hard to conceive. More centrally, however, he claims that—what he calls “Hard EFS”—the view that the Son’s

submission was not only incarnational (i.e., “Soft EFS”) but in fact marks his relation to the Father for all eternity—“entails the denial of the *homoousion*” (179, cf. 180, 188). The charge here needs to be seen for the seriousness it contains. If Wayne Grudem and I (and others) support a position which “entails” the denial of *homoousios*, despite what we may claim elsewhere, we are guilty of denying the full deity of the Son, and hence we are guilty of heresy of the first order. After all, if the Son is not *homoousios* with the Father, then his nature (*ousios*) is not “the same” (*homo*) or equal to the Father. But since the Father possesses eternally the nature of God, and if the Son has a nature different than the nature of the Father, then the Son cannot be God. This charge, to be honest, takes my breath away. If McCall is correct, then those who teach EFS should be disciplined by the institutions and churches where they serve. McCall’s final sentence in his chapter six summarizes his charge and its seriousness: “If I am right, [Hard EFS] simply entails the direct denial of the *homoousion*, and thus should be resisted by Christians who hold to creedal orthodoxy” (188).

On what basis does he level this charge? Here is McCall’s statement explaining why Hard EFS entails a denial of *homoousios*, one deserving a very careful and attentive reading:

- (1) If Hard EFS is true, then the Son has the property *being functionally subordinate in all time segments in all possible worlds*.
- (2) If the Son has this property in every possible world, then the Son has this property necessarily. Furthermore, the Son has this property with *de re* rather than *de dicto* necessity.
- (3) If the Son has this property necessarily (*de re*), then the Son has it essentially.
- (4) If Hard EFS is true, then the Son has this property essentially while the Father does not.
- (5) If the Son has this property essentially and the Father does not, then the Son is of a different essence than the Father. Thus the Son is *heteroousios* rather than *homoousios*.

Permit me a couple responses. First, if Hard EFS succumbs to *heteroousios* based on the logic of this argument, then Athanasius and the framers of the Nicene Creed succumb likewise. Why? Simply for this reason: Athanasius and Nicea also held that the Son possesses a property that is his alone, a property that he possesses in all possible worlds, one that he has *de re* (in principle) rather than *de dicto* (in fact) and hence essentially (i.e., necessarily and non-contingently), and one that the Father does not also possess. After all, *not* to affirm this would be to say that the Son is not the eternal Son of the Father, that his being begotten is contingent (*de dicto*) and hence not necessary. But Nicea saw no such contingency attached to its declaration that the Son was the only begotten of the Father. Instead, the Son alone is begotten of the Father—the Father is unbegotten; the Spirit proceeds; but the Son is begotten. Only the Son is begotten, and the Son’s begottenness is from eternity. This property is true of the Son in every possible world, since this is not a contingent or accidental property but is a necessary property. This property is possessed by the Son with a *de re* necessity; it is a property that the Son has essentially (i.e., necessarily and non-contingently), and the Father does not possess it. Well then, according to the argument McCall proposes, the fifth premise is just as applicable to Athanasius and Nicea as to Hard EFS. If the Son has this essential property of being eternally begotten and if the Father does not also possess this property, then the Son is of a different essence than the Father. Thus the Son is *heteroousios* rather than *homoousios*. The irony here is thick. Athanasius and Nicea proposed *homoousios* and succeeded in getting this word and its attending concept into the first ecumenical creed of the church. But this same creed also speaks of the Son as “begotten, not made,” and it thus affirms a property of the Son unique to him as Son, essential to him in his personhood as Son, and one the Father does not possess. If McCall is correct, Athanasius and Nicea are deeply and irreconcilably contradictory. While they affirm *homoousios*, their insistence on an essential property unique to the Son entails their denial of *homoousios*.

This brings me to my second response. Why

are Athanasius and Nicea not guilty as charged? And why are proponents of Hard EFS likewise not guilty? The property in question for each—the property of “begottenness” for Athanasius and Nicea, and the property of “eternal functional subordination” for advocates of Hard EFS—is a property of the *person* of the Son, not a property of the *essence* or *nature* which the Son shares fully with the Father and the Spirit. It puzzles me to no end why McCall did not consider this solution to the argument he set forth against Hard EFS. One reason for my puzzlement is this: Wayne Grudem and I gave this very response to Tom McCall and Keith Yandell in a public debate we had with them on October 9, 2008. In our opening remarks, provided to them in a document prior to the debate and to all who attended the debate, we wrote and then said,

[W]hile the Son has *properties of his personhood* that the Father in his personhood does not and cannot have, yet each and every property of the Son’s divine essence is a property possessed also fully and eternally by the Father in his divine essence. The Son, then, is rightly distinguished *in his personhood* from the Father, but the Son cannot rightly be distinguished *in his essence* from the Father, since then the Father would be in essence different from the essence of the Son (and Spirit).... (p. 17 of Grudem-Ware Opening Statement for the Affirmative, on the question, “Do Relations of Authority and Submission Exist Eternally among the Persons of the Godhead?” Debate with Tom McCall and Keith Yandell, held in the chapel of Trinity Evangelical Divinity School, Deerfield, Illinois, October 9, 2008.)

Since McCall’s book was published in 2010, I can only assume that he had access to our previous response to his own argument against us, and yet he chose not to indicate any knowledge of this reply, or of the debate more generally, in the chapter he wrote on this issue.

Also puzzling is this: McCall actually refers at one point to a possible appeal to “personal properties” as those which distinguish the Father, Son,

and Spirit from one another. But when he writes of these, he says,

Traditionally, properties such as “being generated,” “being ingenerate,” or “being spirated” belong to the distinct persons and are thus called “personal properties.” These belong eternally to the divine persons, and each is possessed by only one of the divine persons. The Father, Son, and Spirit are personally distinct in their relations, and they are so eternally. Given this, why would we need to appeal to functional properties to account for genuine distinction? (184).

How very strange, indeed. The property of “eternal functional subordination” that the Son possesses and the Father does not possess is indeed a personal property. That is, this is a property of the person of the Son, and it is a property that only could exist in relation to another person. The Son could not possess this property were he a monad or a Unitarian deity. But as the person of the Son, he is under the authority of the Father, and as such his property of “eternal functional subordination” is a property of his personhood or a “personal property.” I cannot fathom how or why McCall would fail to see this property as a personal property of the Son in relationship with the Father in the ways in which advocates of EFS have labored to describe.

And adding to the puzzlement is this. Later in McCall’s book, he references this very line of thought in considering how Zizioulas might escape a problem McCall had noted of his view. In discussing this possible escape, McCall notes that one might

take recourse to the venerable distinction offered by the Cappadocians against the assaults of “neo-Arianism.” Recall that when pressed by Eunomius that the divine hypostases must be different in either essence or accidents (neither of which was palatable), the Cappadocians responded that the properties that distinguished the divine hypostases were neither essential (which would amount to a denial of the *homoousion*) nor accidental

(which would make the divine hypostases contingent), but that the divine hypostases are distinguished by personal properties. In other words, the hypostases are distinguished by relational properties—properties had by virtue of the relations to the other divine persons (200).

So, it appears that McCall confuses two sets of properties that are distinguished within the Hard EFS position—(1) properties possessed fully and eternally by the Father, by the Son, and by the Spirit, of the one and undivided divine *essence*, and (2) properties possessed distinctly by the Father, and other properties possessed distinctly by the Son, and yet other properties possessed distinctly of the Spirit, as properties of each of their respective *Persons*. When Hard EFS states that the Son possesses eternally the property of being under the authority of the Father, it proposes this as a property of the Son’s personhood and not a property of the Son’s essence. EFS, then, appeals to the very same distinction to which the Cappadocians appeal in response to the neo-Arians.

This leads me to my third response. An equivocation of sorts has occurred in how McCall frames his argument supporting his charge that Hard EFS denies *homoousios*. When McCall states in his premise (5) that: “If the Son has this property essentially and the Father does not, then the Son is of a different essence than the Father,” it is clear that McCall sees the possession of a unique property “essentially” as indicating a unique “essence.” But this confuses the meaning of the adjective “essential” and the noun “essence.” That “venerable distinction offered by the Cappadocians” surely had in mind properties of personhood that were “essential” to the Father being the Father (e.g., unbegotten), “essential” to the Son being the Son (e.g., eternally begotten), and “essential” to the Spirit being the Spirit (e.g., proceeding from the Father—as stated in the 381 Constantinople addition to the Nicene Creed), while also affirming that every property of the “essence” of God was possessed fully by the Father, and by the Son, and by the Spirit. But the distinguishing properties of the unique personhood of each Trinitarian person, while essential to

who each is, does not constitute those properties as properties of the divine essence. No, they are properties (essential though they be) of the persons. Can it be otherwise? Can we say of the Father (or Son, or Spirit) that he has no essential (i.e., non-contingent, necessary) distinguishing properties of his personhood? If we can, then what marks the Father as the Father, or the Son as the Son, or the Spirit as the Spirit? Clearly, the distinction of the persons requires that there are distinguishing properties of each person, such that these properties of their unique personhood are essential to that personhood as opposed to being merely contingent or accidental. In short, it does not follow that because the Son has a distinguishing property, a property that he possesses in every possible world, one that he possesses with a *de re* necessity, and one that he possesses essentially—it does not follow from this that he therefore has a different essence from the Father, so long as that distinguishing property is one of his person and not a property of the common essence he possesses eternally and fully along with the Father and the Spirit.

In light of the fact that McCall had heard and read our responses to his charges at our debate in October of 2008, and in light of the “venerable distinction offered by the Cappadocians” that he cites later in his book—a distinction that appeals exactly to what the advocates of Hard EFS appeal—I find his charge that the Hard EFS position entails a denial of *homoousios*, offering no discussion of how Grudem and I would answer his charges, irresponsible.

McCall also skirts past the massive biblical and historical evidence that Grudem and I put forward in our debate. His discussion of our position, if the reader knew nothing else, would lead one to think that, basically, we only have passages that speak of the incarnational submission of the Son to the Father on which to base our view. This description of our view is deceptively selective and misleading, to say the least. If the reader of this review would care to do so, he may listen to and view the October 9, 2008, debate in which Grudem and I lay out a large summary of our evidence, along with the McCall-Yandell opening statements

and our interaction (see <http://www.henrycenter.org/media/?id=154&type=video>).

What otherwise is a very helpful and insightful discussion of the Trinity is marred by McCall’s discussion in chapter six. I continue to commend the book, however, since it has much to offer. I do hope, however, that McCall will retract the charge he levels at evangelicals who hold to the eternal roles of authority and submission in the Godhead. Repeatedly, Grudem and I (not to mention others who hold our view) have affirmed the full, unqualified, and eternal *homoousios* of the Son with the Father and Spirit. To deny *homoousios* and the full deity of the Son is unthinkable for both of us. So, the charge that our position entails its denial is weighty, serious, and grave. Also weighty, however, is the clear biblical teaching that the Father created the universe through the agency of the Son (1 Cor 8:6; Heb 1:1–2), that the Son came down from heaven not to do his own will but to do the will of the Father (John 6:38), that the Son became incarnate not on his own initiative but because the Father sent him (John 8:42), that the Son submits himself to the Father in his exaltation as he sits at the Father’s right hand (1 Cor 15:28), and that this relationship marked by the Father’s authority and the Son’s submission is never, never reversed.

Faithfulness to Scripture requires affirming both the full equality of essence of the Father, Son, and Spirit, along with affirming the eternal authority-submission role distinctions among those persons. Equality and distinction both must be upheld, as McCall himself attests to repeatedly. Our proposal seeks to do just this, and to do it in a manner fully faithful to all of the Bible’s teaching. For all of the benefits of McCall’s book—and there are many—this chapter’s weakness is massive. Perhaps we can hope for revisions of his critique that will be more on par with much of the rest of the volume.

Well-Intended Goal, Misguided Process

A Review of Bruce Morton, *Deceiving Winds: Christians Navigating the Storm of Mysticism, Leadership Struggles, and Sensational Worship*. Nashville: Twenty-First Century Christian, 2009.

Timothy Paul Jones

Associate Professor of Leadership and Family Ministry
The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary
Louisville, Kentucky

Bruce Morton is a deacon with responsibilities for preschool education at a church in Katy, Texas. He has earned the master's degree from Harding University and studied medieval religion at Gettysburg Theological Seminary. *Deceiving Winds* is his first book.

The purpose of *Deceiving Winds* is to take a thematic look at key concerns in Paul's letters that relate to leadership, worship, and gender issues. The author's methodology is to show how the thoughts and practices of ancient cults have reappeared in present times (15). Morton's proofs for these contemporary reappearances include websites dedicated to Artemis and Isis as well as contemporary texts that mention an "inner goddess" (16). Wicca, New Age spirituality, religious feminism, and certain strands of the "emerging church" are lumped together in a shared "message of mysticism," which Morton links to ancient Ephesian goddess worship (16).

Therein lies one of the primary problems in this well-intentioned but misguided book: Throughout *Deceiving Winds*, the author leaps directly from the goddess cults of ancient Asia and Achaia to contemporary Wiccan practices and goddess worship. In the process, Morton seems to overlook the fact that, although contemporary goddess-worshippers may invoke the names of ancient deities, these present practices have little (if anything) to do with the rituals known to people in Paul's world. Contemporary practices of Wicca and goddess worship derive primarily from the now-discredited works of Margaret Murray, Marija Gimbutas, and others—works that claimed to have reconstructed a long-lost goddess-centered past. Ancient paganism

and contemporary claims of a goddess-centered past are equally false, but the history and practices associated with each falsehood differ at the most fundamental levels. Nevertheless, Morton moves between the two as if they are analogous or even identical (see, e.g., 36–37).

Other logical linkages throughout the book are equally tenuous: At one point, Morton begins with the church's perennial need to focus on God the Father's power before leaping to a critique of Rudolf Bultmann and then to an encouragement for Christians to center their lives on the resurrection of Jesus by "singing Anna Barbauld's beautiful eighteenth century song *Again the Lord of Light and Life*"; all of this unfolds in the space of two pages (28–29). Later, Morton claims that a particular form of hip-hop music must be "closely linked with the sound of Dionysiac music and ritual" because both include "high-pitched sounds and deep bass rhythms" (76). Despite repeated readings, I was never able to untangle how an ancient game played with a goat's knee bones connects to Gaia concepts in *Captain Planet* which in turn tie somehow to contemporary children's need for activities that illustrate God's connection with humanity (118–19).

Exegetical fallacies mar the book as well. Because *epimelestai* ("he will care for," 1 Tim 3:5) derives from a form of *meli* ("honey") and because bee motifs were common in Ephesus, Morton reasons that Paul was calling elders to "sweet friendship" when the apostle wrote, "If he does not know how to manage his own household, how will he care for [*epimelestai*] God's church?" (149–50).

While sweet friendship with church members is certainly to be commended, I find it highly unlikely that Paul was thinking about honeybees when he selected this verb. This is a textbook example of an etymological fallacy.

Morton's commitment to non-instrumental worship seems to cloud his exegetical choices at times. After admitting that *psallein* ("to make music") includes the use of stringed instruments in the Septuagint, Morton argues that Paul's addition of "with the heart" (Eph 5:19) changes the meaning so that the word now excludes the use of instruments (92). The semantic range of *psallein* may not necessarily require stringed instruments; however, it is a stretch to conclude that the addition of "with the heart" so radically shifts the meaning of the term that it now excludes instruments.

The author of this text clearly means well, and his desire to equip Christians to withstand neopaganism is to be commended. Morton clearly affirms and defends male eldership in churches; this too is to be commended. At the same time, excessive exegetical missteps and unwarranted logical leaps prevent a wholehearted recommendation of this book.

The (Abstract) Art of Manliness

A Review of Brett and Kate McKay, *The Art of Manliness: Classic Skills and Manners for the Modern Man*. Cincinnati, OH: How Books, 2009.

Phillip Bethancourt

Associate Vice President of Enrollment Management

Instructor of Christian Theology

The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary

Louisville, Kentucky

Could a man become a master artist simply by visiting his local museum to observe the artwork? Not likely. But his night at the museum could spark a passion for art that develops into a lifetime pursuit of painting. In *The Art of Manliness: Classic Skills and Manners for the Modern Man*, authors Brett and Kate McKay take men on a guided tour of the art of manhood with the goal of igniting a “lifetime pursuit of the art of manliness” (264).

Building on the success of their popular website of the same name, the McKays write this book to overcome the modern crisis of manhood by encouraging “a new generation of men to pick up where their grandfathers left off in the history and legacy of manliness” (2). Highlighting skills ranging from treating snake bites to changing diapers, the book argues that “manliness doesn’t need to be reinvented. The art of manliness just needs to be rediscovered” (2). Though the McKays are Mormon and write the book from a largely secular vantage point, *The Art of Manliness* calls for a return to virtuous masculinity that can help evangelicals evaluate the status of biblical manhood in the church.

The Art of Manliness recognizes that there is a crisis of manhood in contemporary culture. According to the authors, manly virtues have disappeared in the last fifty years. To fill the void, manliness has become associated with “dithering dads ... shallow action dudes ... and the meatheads of men’s magazines” (2). The cause of this lapse is that, “in too many cases, fathers have stopped passing down the art of manliness to the next generation” (144). As a result, what the culture sees is “a bunch of boys

walking around in men’s bodies” (117). This manhood crisis extends even to evangelical churches and families. How can Christians address the issue?

Several ideas that frame the McKays’ discussion of manliness can shape the recovery of biblical manhood in evangelical churches and homes. First, *The Art of Manliness* realizes that recovering manhood requires a model. For their model, the McKays look back to an abstract golden age of masculinity in which “manliness was a worthy and distinct characteristic” (1). The Bible makes it clear, however, that humanity has been looking back for a golden age of male headship ever since Adam rejected it at the fall. Instead, evangelicals have a better model—not an abstract group of historical figures but the God-man Jesus, who is the defining example of the art of manliness. Reclaiming biblical manhood is at root a restoration of dominion. For evangelicals to recover the biblical art of manliness, we must follow the model of Christ the king.

Second, *The Art of Manliness* recognizes that recovering manhood hinges on mentors in general and fathers in particular. The decline of manhood is because “fathers have ceased passing on the art of manliness to their sons” (2). Part of the problem is that “dad-manship does not come with an instructional manual” (144). Yet, for believers, the Bible does provide direction for discipleship (2 Timothy 2; Hebrews 12:3–11). What if discipleship by fathers and churches included training not only in spiritual matters like Scripture memory but also in practical matters like car repair? For evangelicals to recover the biblical art of manliness, we must raise up mentors.

Third, *The Art of Manliness* realizes that recovering manhood rests on maturity. As the book notes, “The world needs the leadership of virtuous men more than ever” (208). It takes maturity to build maturity. The manly virtues that the McKays advocate are strikingly similar to the fruit of the Spirit and spiritual gifts described in Scripture. Yet, Christians must go further than the McKays contention that “manliness simply means being the best man you can be” (264). Instead, Scripture declares that the normal Christian life for men must be marked by manly virtue that reflects the character of Christ. For evangelicals to recover the biblical art of manliness, we must re-focus on maturity.

Fourth, *The Art of Manliness* recognizes that recovering manhood re-orientes our mission. Manliness cannot be taught through a manual. The McKays admit this, stating that the book should “only be the beginning” of the reader’s pursuit of manliness (3). Christians are not called to produce gender-neutral disciples. Instead, inherent in Christ’s call to the kingdom community of the church is the need to cultivate distinctly biblical masculinity and femininity. For evangelicals to recover the biblical art of manliness, we must re-orient our mission.

The Art of Manliness appeals to many men in our culture because they resonate with the call to rediscover masculinity. Those who read the work may learn about new skills or techniques. But, for the evangelical reader, the true value of the book lies in calling the church to reflect on its mission of raising boys to be men who distinctly display biblical manhood. Overall, it reminds the church of its expectation to raise up men who lead, provide, and protect in a way that reflects not a golden age of masculinity but Christ the warrior king who completely embodies biblical manhood.

Another Middle Way that Doesn't Exist

A Review of Jim and Sarah Sumner, *Just How Married Do You Want to Be? Practicing Oneness in Marriage*. Grand Rapids: Baker, 2009.

Jason C. Meyer

Assistant Professor of New Testament
Bethlehem College and Seminary
Minneapolis, Minnesota

Summary

The introduction to *Just How Married Do You Want to Be?* informs the reader that Jim and Sarah Sumner had been married “almost twelve years” at the time of publication. They do not hesitate to add, “these have been seven of the happiest years of our whole lives!” (11). In other words, they do not claim that marriage is easy or automatic (12). It is not a possession for people to have (13). It is hard work that happens by choice and covenantal commitment as people learn to practice oneness in their “one flesh” relationship (12–13). As the authors recall counseling a husband and wife who told them the love is gone and the marriage is over, they remind the couple and the reader that marriage is a covenant in which the focus is “not about *being* loved,” but “about learning *to* love” (13).

The Sumners are great models in this regard because they certainly have a unique story to tell concerning the triumph of God’s grace in their marriage. The first chapter is called “an unlikely couple” and the reader will not have to read far to discover why. Sarah was on her way to being the first woman to graduate from Trinity Evangelical Divinity School with a Ph.D. in systematic theology, while Jim was a stripper (21). They met at Willow Creek Community Church. Jim had heard the gospel at Cook County Correctional Facility and was now a new believer (21). He had the reputation for being “the most on-fire new Christian at Willow Creek” (22), while Sarah had a previous ministry experience of nineteen years and was currently on paid staff at Willow Creek. The rest of the book

chronicles some of the lessons they have learned in marriage, especially how to overcome their considerable differences in order to attain the goal of “oneness” in marriage.

Those who write books on marriage need to defend them. Why another book on marriage? What is unique about this one? The introduction claims that their book challenges people to ask “just how married they want to be” as a spouse to their partner and as a Christian to their Lord, the Groom of the church (14). As part of this challenge, “the uniqueness of this book is the theological paradigm it promotes” (14). They argue that too many Christians focus on the roles that husband and wife play in the marriage. They believe that this focus is misguided because the “headship” of the husband conveys the image of “oneness,” not “leadership” (16–17).

The subtitle of the book is, thus, an excellent summary of the book’s contents: “practicing oneness in marriage.” The second chapter discusses two popular models of marriage and what is wrong with them. The authors attempt to move beyond the traditional complementarian and egalitarian models of marriage. In other words, they argue that both positions fall short of Scripture, and thus they call for a new model. Chapter three attempts to unpack a deeper understanding of headship that will prepare the way for their specific proposal (the “biblical” model) in chapter four.

In chapter two, the Sumners argue that the complementarian position takes the “mystery” out of marriage. Jim Sumner says that he once operated

under the model that says the husband is the head of the house. He was to be the leader that made “the final decisions” (36), while the wife “though invited to offer her best input in decision making,” must “submit” in the end (36). The authors emphasize the distinct difference between the phrase “head of the wife” and “head of the house” (36–37). This subtle shift from “wife” to “house” distorts the biblical imagery because the husband does not become “one flesh” with his house (36).

The biblical picture of a head connected to the body is a metaphor (38). The authors insist that metaphors should not be defined or taken literally (38). They argue that others want to define the word “head” instead of maintaining its metaphorical usage. “Consequently, the biblical picture gets lost. There is no biblical picture of head and body oneness when the husband is assumed to be the authority or the source of his wife” (39). These distortions miss the simple biblical picture of a head connected to a body.

The book explains these two distortions of the biblical picture in more detail. They characterize the egalitarian position as the “democratic” model in which “the husband and wife are seen as equals” (41). The democratic model emphasizes respect and love as well as the mutual submission of two equals (the wife submits to the husband and the husband submits to the wife). This view would interpret “head” as “source” (42) so that the husband is the source of the wife as in Gen 2:21–22. The Sumners see two problems with this position. First, they say this reading does not fit 1 Cor 11:3 because the source of man was the dust, not Christ. They also point out that God alone was not the source of Christ because the Holy Spirit and the virgin Mary were both sources (43). Second, they argue that mutual submission makes the husband’s headship “irrelevant” so that it means “virtually nothing” (43). They also say that this view ignores the fact that the Bible clearly tells the wife to submit to the husband (Eph 5:22), but the Bible never explicitly commands the husband to submit to the wife (43).

The authors characterize the complementary position as the “business” model (43). They explain that the husband is “the leader, the higher-

ranked spouse,” while the wife is “his assistant, the lower-ranked spouse whom God designed to be the husband’s helper” (43). The husband is called to lead and love, while the wife is called to submit and respect (44). The Sumners point out two mistakes that this position makes as well. First, the husband is never told to “lead” his wife in Scripture. They make much of this point with rhetorical finesse:

This idea is popular, but it doesn’t derive directly from God’s Word. The apostle Paul never says it in all his letters. Jesus doesn’t say it either. Neither does Peter or John. No one in the New Testament ever says it. In fact, God never says it in the Old Testament—though many like to think that it’s found somewhere in Genesis 1–3 (44).

Second, Eve was not called to be Adam’s lower-ranked helper because of the meaning of the Hebrew phrase *ezer kenegdo*. *Kenegdo* refers to a “correspondent” or a “counterpart” and *ezer* speaks of a “powerful type of helper” because it serves as a reference to God in sixteen of its nineteen appearances in the Old Testament (45). God thus commands them *both* to rule in Gen 1:28. Therefore, when the husband “falls prey to the temptation to rule his wife, he lives out the curse that resulted from original sin” (46).

Positive Assessment

Three main strengths come to mind that make this book a valuable contribution. First, it is honest to a degree that some would call “raw.” This book was one of the most authentic real-life narratives of the process of developing intimacy and oneness in marriage that I have read. The authors are not afraid to portray themselves as sinners involved in a struggle to make a marriage work despite many obstacles. The authors do not simply give a passing nod to these common struggles; they analyze their inner workings. This candid confession of sin and struggle gives greater clarity of witness to the transforming power of God’s grace and the beauty of forgiveness.

Second, the book has a narrative quality that

makes for enjoyable reading because the authors often share the story of their marriage and the lessons they have learned in an unfolding narrative format. Marriage insights rarely come from leisurely moments of objective reasoning; they are usually forged in the heat of real-life conflict. Sharing these insights as part of the story in which they were forged helps drive them deeper into the heart and mind.

Third, the authors unpack one aspect of the head/body metaphor that could be ignored if one only talks about authority or equality. Who would not want to celebrate the oneness that the head/body metaphor presupposes for husbands/wives and Christ/his bride? The metaphorical image of marriage as the joining of a male head and a female body certainly gives the reader a powerful picture concerning the painful sin of divorce, which is pictured as the severing of the head from the body (73).

The Central Weakness: Confusing a Metaphor's Background with a Word's Meaning

These strengths share the stage with some weaknesses as well. I would like to focus the rest of this review article on what I regard as the central weakness of the book. The most significant error is that the authors take the assumed background for the head/body metaphor and surprisingly turn it into not only the primary meaning of the word *kephalē* but the exclusive meaning.

I say that this fallacy is surprising because the Sumners sound frequent alarms about the danger of defining metaphors with undue precision. However, they define the metaphor in a way that empties the word *kephalē* of any sense of authority. I do not doubt that *kephalē* presupposes a connection between a head and a body. However, the reader must take a further step and ask what specific "type" of connection the term *kephalē* actually conveys.

In other words, the head/body metaphor presupposes an organic connection between a head and a body, but what does each word mean within this metaphor? Do they both mean "oneness?" Or is there a specific meaning for "head" that distinguishes it from the "body," even though they are still joined together? Therefore, the key question

becomes, "Does each context support this restricted meaning of *kephalē* as oneness or does it support the specific sense of the authority of the head?"

The Sumners develop their central paradigm for marriage from the metaphorical use of *kephalē* in Paul. Therefore, a critique of their position at a minimum must include an exposition of *kephalē* in Paul. Their book is written at a popular level that attempts to avoid complicated endnotes and endless scholarly debates. I will attempt to write in a similar way. I am conducting a straightforward linguistic exercise that asks whether the surrounding context of Paul's use of *kephalē* supports a restricted nuance of "oneness" only.

Brief Survey of *kephalē* in Paul

The term *kephalē* occurs eighteen times in Paul's letters. He uses *kephalē* in a metaphorical sense ten times (1 Cor 11:3 [3x]; Eph 1:22; 4:15; 5:23 [2x]; Col 1:18; 2:10, 19), but he also uses *kephalē* in reference to a physical head seven times (Rom 12:20; 1 Cor 11:4 [2x], 5 [2x], 7, 10). The only other usage, 1 Cor 12:21, is unique in that Paul speaks of a physical head, but it is found within a discussion of the church as a body metaphor.

Upon examining the surrounding contexts of these passages for clues as to the meaning of *kephalē*, one discovers that the concept of "authority" keeps coming to the forefront, while a connection of oneness is simply assumed as a necessary part of the background in order that the metaphor will work. Three comments are in order here as we walk through these texts.

First, the most frequent concept that emerges from the surrounding context is the "authority" or "rule" of the head and "submission" or "subjection" as the proper response to the head. The breakdown is as follows:

Ephesians 1:22. And He put all things in subjection (*hupotassō*) under His feet, and gave Him as head (*kephalē*) over all things to the church.

Ephesians 5:22–24. Wives, submit [word implied from *hupotassō* in verse 21] to your own husbands, as to the Lord. For

the husband is the head (*kephalē*) of the wife even as Christ is the head (*kephalē*) of the church, his body (*sōma*), and is himself its Savior. Now as the church submits (*hupotassō*) to Christ, so also wives should submit [word again implied from the context] in everything to their husbands.

Colossians 2:10. And you have been filled in him, who is the head (*kephalē*) of all rule (*archē*) and authority (*exousia*).

The “headship” envisioned in Col 1:18 is also parallel to Christ’s authoritative headship in Eph 1:22; 5:23-24; and Col 2:10. Paul celebrates Christ’s position as Lord over the creation and head (*kephalē*) of the body, the church, or new creation. Paul connects the concepts of Christ and his rule because of the position he occupies as “first place” or “preeminent” (*prōteuō*). It is surely important to add here that the believer’s submission to Christ as head is not *identical* to the wife’s submission to her husband as head. There are certainly differences of degree. The believer’s allegiance to Christ is absolute. A wife’s submission to her husband is not. However, even though these two types of submission are not identical, Paul clearly makes them *parallel*.

The most confusing part of the book was that, although the Sumners affirm that the wife is to submit to her husband, they never get around to offering a rationale for the submission. If she does not submit to her husband as her “authoritative head,” then why does she submit? If headship only refers to oneness, then why could Paul not say that the “wife is the head of the husband?” I remain unclear as to the Sumners’ overall rationale for submission. Perhaps this confusion is an indication that they are trying to trail blaze a middle way where one does not exist.

Second, 1 Cor 11:3–12 is a passage that is unique in stressing the interdependence of husband and wife more than other texts that use the head and body metaphor, but even here it certainly conveys the concept of authority for “headship”:

1 Corinthians 11:3. But I want you to understand that the head (*kephalē*) of every man is Christ, the head (*kephalē*) of a wife is her husband, and the head (*kephalē*) of Christ is God.

This metaphorical meaning of *kephalē* in 1 Cor 11:3 has a significant bearing on what women and men do with their literal or physical heads (1 Cor 11:4, 5, 7, 10). The Sumners argue that the phrase “the head of Christ is God” (1 Cor 11:3) exclusively refers to Christ’s “oneness” with God (50–51). This focus seems misplaced in the context. Paul takes the theological principle of “headship” in 11:3 and specifically applies it to the husband/wife relationship in 11:10. The text literally reads, “the wife ought to have an authority (*exousia*) on the head (*kephalē*).” Translators are certainly right to add the word “symbol” or “sign” to the concept of authority: “the wife ought to have a *symbol* of authority on her head.” The relationship between headship and authority is what comes to the forefront here. The logic of the passage is that the husband’s headship (11:3) necessitates that the “wife should wear a symbol of authority on her head” (11:10).

Again, I would not dispute the fact that the metaphor presupposes the relational oneness between husband and wife in the context of 1 Cor 11:3–12. Paul clarifies that men and women are physically bound together and thus are not independent of each other “for as woman was made from man, so man is now born of woman. And all things are from God” (11:12). It was God’s plan that Eve would be created out of the body of Adam, but he also designed the fact that every man had or has a mother that gave birth to him.

This backdrop still does not prove that *kephalē* means “oneness” because the concept of authority cannot be muted from the context; it comes to the surface again in verses 8–9. On the one hand, “man was not made from woman, but woman from man” (1 Cor 11:8), but on the other hand, “man was not created for the woman’s sake, but woman for the man’s sake” (1 Cor 11:9). In other words, while there is an undeniable sense of oneness linking the woman and man together (woman came from man), there is also a sense of the man’s distinct

position or status in the relationship (man was not made from the woman or made for the woman—rather the woman was made from man and the woman was created for the man’s sake).

Third, one also observes that contextual clues often highlight the connection between the head and the body (like Eph 4:15 and Col 2:19), but the question here is whether or not these instances provide any evidence that the word *kephalē* means “oneness.”

Ephesians 4:15. Rather, speaking the truth in love, we are to grow up in every way into him who is the head (*kephalē*), into Christ, from whom the whole body (*sōma*), joined and held together by every joint with which it is equipped, when each part is working properly, makes the body grow so that it builds itself up in love.

Colossians 2:19. and not holding fast to the Head (*kephalē*), from whom the whole body (*sōma*), nourished and knit together through its joints and ligaments grows with a growth that is from God.

I do not dispute the fact that these two examples emphasize the organic connection between the head and the body, but that still does not prove that *kephalē* means “oneness.” The texts still highlight the special role that the head plays in relation to the body. For example, note that the whole body grows “from” Christ, the head (Eph 4:15; Col 2:19). One cannot reverse these terms so that they both refer to “oneness” without distinction. The “head” does not receive its growth from the “body.” The concept of dependence shines through here and this portrayal of dependence is shot through with the necessary notion of the authority of the head. These contextual clues merely show that oneness is presupposed as the background for the metaphor.

This picture is parallel to Jesus’ own metaphor in John 15:5: “I am the vine; you are the branches. Whoever abides in me and I in him, he it is that bears much fruit, for apart from me you can do nothing.” There is an organic connection of oneness, but the branches are clearly dependent upon

the vine in this relationship.

Once again I want to stress that the head/body relationship that exists between Christ and the church is parallel but not identical to the one that exists between husband and wife. Paul explicitly says that the husband and wife are interdependent upon each other. However, he would never say that Christ is dependent upon the church. One must keep making these necessary distinctions.

Finally, 1 Cor 12:20–21 deserves comment here because it features the use of *kephalē* as part of a wider metaphor. Here the term “head” appears in a context that focuses on the connection between the head and the body.

1 Corinthians 12:20–21. As it is, there are many parts, yet one body. The eye cannot say to the hand, “I have no need of you,” nor again the head to the feet, “I have no need of you.”

The word refers to a physical head, but it is used as part of a metaphor stressing unity. Even here, however, there is no additional commentary that fleshes out what distinguishes a “head” from the “feet,” as if they both only convey the idea of “oneness.” Distinctions between the head and the feet are still presupposed within a wider metaphor that assumes some kind of unified connection.

Assessment of the Sumners’ Use of Kephale

Therefore, what should the reader conclude about the metaphorical use of *kephalē*? My view is that the head/body metaphor *presupposes* an intimate connection between the head and the body. This is the implied background that the metaphor must assume for it to work *as a metaphor*. In other words, *kephalē* presupposes that there is a “body” to which the head is connected. However, this connection or “oneness” is not what *kephalē* means any more than saying that “body” (*sōma*) specifically means “oneness.” If both words mean the same thing, then they are interchangeable, which is certainly not the case in this metaphor.

One must highlight the need to differentiate between two different ways of interpreting the data. There is a difference between saying that (1)

the head/body metaphor presupposes an intimate connection [i.e., what I am saying], and (2) this intimate connection is what *kephalē* specifically means [i.e., what the Sumners are saying]. Category confusion results from an inability to make this crucial distinction.

The simplest way to summarize the distinction is to say that “head” and “body” (both halves of the metaphor) presuppose a connection between head and body but that they do not both mean “oneness.” Rather, the intended nuance of the word *kephalē* is “authority.” This authority is not a disembodied authority, but it is an authority nonetheless. It is an authority that the head exercises within a metaphor that assumes connectedness and relationship with a body.

Other Problems

There are some additional problems that flow from the proposed “biblical” picture of the Sumners. They say that “headship” means “oneness” so that “God heads Christ by being one with him” (50). I am certainly not calling the oneness of the Father and the Son into question (cf. John 10:30). But one may again question whether or not the terms could be used interchangeably if, in fact, both “head” and “body” only convey a sense of oneness. If both the Father and the Son are one, then would it matter if Paul would have written, “Christ is the head of God” (1 Cor 11:3)? Why not say that the “the woman is the head of man”?

Furthermore, does not 1 Cor 11:3 contradict this claim from the Sumners?:

In every case in the New Testament in which *kephalē* (head) is used, the connotation it conveys is physical. The word either refers literally to someone’s physical head, or it refers metaphorically to a picture of a head in relation with a body (49).

Is God pictured as the head and Christ as *the body* in this example? The context further calls the “oneness” only interpretation of 1 Cor 11:3 into question because if *kephalē* only means “oneness,” how does one explain Paul’s statement that “Christ is the head of every man” (11:3)? Why

didn’t Paul say that “Christ is the head of every man and woman,” since he is equally “one” with both men and women? Paul uses the specific male term *andros* and not the generic *anthrōpos*, which is sometimes translated as “man and woman” or “humanity” in general. Why would Paul have us picture Christ as the “head” and picture the man without the woman as Christ’s body here? I highly doubt that Paul wants his readers to picture three head/body diagrams in 1 Cor 11:3:

Christ (head)	Man (head)	God (head)
Man (body)	Woman (body)	Christ (body)

Interpreting head with the nuance of “authority” gives a rationale for Paul singling out the man only. Though the man is the authority over the woman, he is not free to act anyway he pleases. He is a man under authority because Christ is the authority over the man. Furthermore, even Christ presented himself as someone under authority because He claimed to be the *obedient Son* that always did the will of His Father. “So Jesus said to them, ‘Truly, truly, I say to you, the Son can do nothing of his own accord, but only what he sees the Father doing. For whatever the Father does, that the Son does likewise’” (John 5:19; cf. John 8:28).

Another problem concerns the claim that the husband is never presented as the leader of the home. It is true that no New Testament writer uses the phrase “head of the house.” But Paul clearly speaks of the husband “managing” (*proistēmi*) his house well as a requirement for managing the household of God: “He must manage his own household well, with all dignity keeping his children submissive, for if someone does not know how to manage his own household, how will he care for God’s church?” (1 Tim 3:4–5). Paul uses a term (*proistēmi*) that connotes a position of “authority” or “rule” over the house. The requirement is the same for deacons: “Let deacons each be the husband of one wife, managing their children and their own households well” (1 Tim 3:12). Husbands here must “manage” not only their children, but also “their own households.” Is there a stark difference between the husband “managing” or “ruling” over his house and the

husband as the leader of his house?

A final problem is the Sumner's characterization of complementarianism, which I regard as a caricature. Recall that the authors portray the complementarian position as the "business" model (43). They explain that the husband is "the leader, the higher-ranked spouse," while the wife is "his assistant, the lower-ranked spouse whom God designed to be the husband's helper" (43). The husband is called to lead and love, while the wife is called to submit and respect (44). Paul's picture of the husband loving like Christ by laying down his life for his bride is conspicuously absent from this portrayal, which is the part of the picture that I most enjoy celebrating as a husband awed by the love of Christ.

Concluding Assessment

I think the book is full of excellent teaching on marriage and vivid examples of the transforming grace of God. I also affirm the necessity of celebrating the intimate relationship that exists within the head/body metaphor. However, I cannot recommend it to others without very specific cautions because the authors admit that the *unique* contribution of the book is the "theological paradigm it promotes" (14). If I have successfully argued that their interpretation of the metaphor is misguided, then the book as a whole suffers from an unbalanced perspective on marriage. Our views of marriage should be as balanced as the Bible. I remain unconvinced that they can successfully lay claim to expressing the "biblical" model. I am also concerned that this book will muddy the waters by suggesting a middle way that does not really exist.

THE DANVERS STATEMENT

BASED ON OUR UNDERSTANDING OF BIBLICAL TEACHINGS, WE AFFIRM THE FOLLOWING:

1. Both Adam and Eve were created in God's image, equal before God as persons and distinct in their manhood and womanhood (Gen. 1:26-27, 2:18).

2. Distinctions in masculine and feminine roles are ordained by God as part of the created order, and should find an echo in every human heart (Gen. 2:18, 21-24; 1 Cor. 11:7-9; 1 Tim. 2:12-14).

3. Adam's headship in marriage was established by God before the Fall, and was not a result of sin (Gen. 2:16-18, 21-24, 3:1-13; 1 Cor. 11:7-9).

4. The Fall introduced distortions into the relationships between men and women (Gen. 3:1-7, 12, 16).

- In the home, the husband's loving, humble headship tends to be replaced by domination or passivity; the wife's intelligent, willing submission tends to be replaced by usurpation or servility.

- In the church, sin inclines men toward a worldly love of power or an abdication of spiritual responsibility and inclines women to resist limitations on their roles or to neglect the use of their gifts in appropriate ministries.

5. The Old Testament, as well as the New Testament, manifests the equally high value and dignity which God attached to the roles of both men and women (Gen. 1:26-27, 2:18; Gal. 3:28). Both Old and New Testaments also affirm the principle of male headship in the family and in the covenant community (Gen. 2:18; Eph. 5:21-33; Col. 3:18-19; 1 Tim. 2:11-15).

6. Redemption in Christ aims at removing the distortions introduced by the curse.

- In the family, husbands should forsake harsh or selfish leadership and grow in love and care for their wives; wives should forsake resistance to their husbands' authority and grow in willing, joyful submission to their husbands' leadership (Eph. 5:21-33; Col. 3:18-19; Titus 2:3-5; 1 Pet. 3:1-7).

- In the church, redemption in Christ gives men and women an equal share in the blessings of salvation; nevertheless, some governing and teaching roles within the church are restricted to men (Gal. 3:28; 1 Cor. 11:2-16; 1 Tim. 2:11-15).

7. In all of life Christ is the supreme authority and guide for men and women, so that no earthly submission—domestic, religious, or civil—ever

implies a mandate to follow a human authority into sin (Dan. 3:10-18; Acts 4:19-20, 5:27-29; 1 Pet. 3:1-2).

8. In both men and women a heartfelt sense of call to ministry should never be used to set aside biblical criteria for particular ministries (1 Tim. 2:11-15, 3:1-13; Titus 1:5-9). Rather, biblical teaching should remain the authority for testing our subjective discernment of God's will.

9. With half the world's population outside the reach of indigenous evangelism; with countless other lost people in those societies that have heard the gospel; with the stresses and miseries of sickness, malnutrition, homelessness, illiteracy, ignorance, aging, addiction, crime, incarceration, neuroses, and loneliness, no man or woman who feels a passion from God to make His grace known in word and deed need ever live without a fulfilling ministry for the glory of Christ and the good of this fallen world (1 Cor. 12:7-21).

10. We are convinced that a denial or neglect of these principles will lead to increasingly destructive consequences in our families, our churches, and the culture at large.



2825 Lexington Road • Box 926
Louisville, KY 40280

NON PROFIT ORG
US POSTAGE PAID
LOUISVILLE, KY
PERMIT #1545