



**C O V E N A N T**  
T H E O L O G I C A L S E M I N A R Y

**BS 6007 WOMEN IN MINISTRY**  
**Dr. Will Ryan**

# Covenant Theological Seminary

PO Box 1177 Greenville, NC 27835-1177 USA

[www.gocovenant.com](http://www.gocovenant.com)

## COMPLETED WORK IS TO BE SUBMITTED IN A SINGLE PDF DOCUMENT

1. A cover page which includes:
  - a. Name of course, author and instructor's name with title
  - b. Student's name, degree working toward, and the date completed
  - c. Facilitator's complete title/name the seminary's name and location (Greenville, NC)
2. Separate page & heading for each new section, capitalized at top center of that page SUMMARY, PRECIS, PAPER
3. All papers are to be typed with .5" margins using font & size: Calibri 11 pt. Summaries and book reports are to be double-spaced
4. Grading will be percentage based on questions, outlines, grammar, and theological and philosophical thought and execution of writing forms.

The file must be in Adobe PDF compatible format or it will be rejected. (5 MB is the maximum file size allowable.) A free PDF writer is available at [www.cutepdfwriter.com](http://www.cutepdfwriter.com). Once this file is installed on your PC, you simply Print the file and select CutePDF Writer as the "printer". You will be asked to name the file and select the location for the file. CutePDF Writer often precedes the file name with the name of the source software (i.e. Microsoft Word).

# Covenant Theological Seminary

www.gocovenant.com | www.goctsonline.com

## COURSE ASSIGNMENT: BS 6007 WOMEN IN MINISTRY

### Textbook

*Two Views on Women in Ministry (Counterpoints: Bible and Theology)*

by James R. Beck (Editor), Stanley N. Gundry (Series Editor), Linda L. Belleville (Contributor), Craig L. Blomberg (Contributor), Craig S. Keener (Contributor), Thomas R. Schreiner (Contributor)

Summary: What does the Bible say about women's roles in the church? With pros and cons on either side of a heated, ongoing debate, no definitive conclusions have emerged. This book furnishes you with a clear and thorough presentation of the two primary views on women in ministry so you can better understand each one's strengths, weaknesses, and complexities. Each view—egalitarian (equal ministry opportunity for both genders) and complementarian (ministry roles differentiated by gender)—is represented by two contributors.

#### 1. WATCH:

- Watch this video on Women in Ministry from a complementarian perspective:  
<https://youtu.be/o0IJlvCqr7k>
- Watch the *four* Expedition 44 videos on Women in Ministry from an egalitarian perspective:  
<https://youtube.com/playlist?list=PLqaMIwzEBwbPFdKbGbp3pqqqEw5HPFPGu>

#### 2. PRECIS: write a book report for the textbook. Pages according to degree work per degree for book report requirement:

- Master: 5
- Doctorate: 8

#### 3. PAPER: write an exegetical research paper on one of the following passages defending the position of women in ministry that you hold to: Genesis 1-3; 1 Corinthians 11:2-16; 1 Corinthians 14; 1 Timothy 2; 1 Timothy 3; Titus 1:5-9.

- Minimum pages and citations according to degree work per degree:
  - Master: 8 (cite 5 scholarly sources)
  - Doctorate: 10 (cite 8 scholarly sources)

**PAPER SAMPLE (SHORTENED)**  
**Egalitarianism Based on Creation (Gen 1-3)**

Both Complementarians and Egalitarians refer to creation to prove their views on hierarchy which leads logically to their views on leadership in the church. In this paper I will argue that based on creation and biblical eschatology that the most consistent view with the creation narratives is that Egalitarianism has the most merit based on the text. A redemptive historical view of scripture will prove this out. We will begin with the image of God in Genesis 1:27-28,

*<sup>27</sup> So God created mankind in his own image, in the image of God he created them; male and female he created them. <sup>28</sup> God blessed them and said to them, “Be fruitful and increase in number; fill the earth and subdue it. Rule over the fish in the sea and the birds in the sky and over every living creature that moves on the ground.”*

Both man and women are created equally in the image of God in Genesis 1. To image God must be understood correctly to assist in our investigation of gender roles. To image God can be understood directly from the text here as ruling and reigning with God. NT Wright also points this out connected to Psalm 8 and the glory given to humanity as the image of God to rule and reign as priests in creation.<sup>1</sup> We are called to be God’s coregents in creation to work and have relationship with each other and Him. Nothing in the image of God in Genesis 1 proves a hierarchical view of gender.

Next, we will turn to Adam and Eve in Genesis 2:18-24,

*<sup>18</sup> The LORD God said, “It is not good for the man to be alone. I will make a helper suitable for him.” <sup>19</sup> Now the LORD God had formed out of the ground all the wild animals and all the birds in the sky. He brought them to the man to see what he would name them; and whatever the man called each living creature, that was its name. <sup>20</sup> So the man gave names to all the livestock, the birds in the sky and all the wild animals. But for Adam no suitable helper was found. <sup>21</sup> So the LORD God caused the man to fall into a deep sleep; and while he was sleeping, he took one of the man’s ribs and then closed up the place with flesh. <sup>22</sup> Then the LORD God made a woman from the rib he had taken out of the man, and he brought her to the man. <sup>23</sup> The man said, “This is now bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh; she shall be called ‘woman,’ for she was taken out of man.” <sup>24</sup> That is why a man leaves his father and mother and is united to his wife, and they become one flesh.*

---

<sup>1</sup> NT Wright, *The Lost World of Adam and Eve: Genesis 2–3 and the Human Origins Debate* (Downers Grove, IL: IVP Academic: An Imprint of InterVarsity Press, 2015), 173.

The Garden of Eden is the “holy of holies” in the cosmos and Adam and Eve are the priests in His temple. The language here of working and keeping is described in the Torah in the same way as the roles of the priesthood. When we look at ideals in creation from this point of view that ideals that God has is men and women as coequals as the priesthood. When we look at the redemptive storyline of the Bible, we see the fall from Eden but in the end an Eden like state restored to all of creation. We need to ask ourselves if God’s ideals for eschatology change over the course of time so that the end doesn’t actually reflect the beginning.

The first question to ask is whether the text suggests that Adam thought of Eve as having been built from his rib. The text gives us the answer: he did not. The first words out of his mouth were: “This is now bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh” (Gen 2:23). More than a rib is involved here because she is not only “bone of his bone” but also “flesh of his flesh.” This leads us to ask then about the meaning of Genesis 2:21, which NIV translates, “He took one of the man’s ribs and then closed up the place with flesh.” John Walton concludes this regarding the rib translation that has become the tradition,

Adam’s statement leads us to inquire whether the translation “rib” is appropriate for the Hebrew word *šēlā*. The word is used about forty times in the Hebrew Bible but is not an anatomical term in any other passage. Outside of Genesis 2, with the exception of 2 Samuel 16:13 (referring to the other side of the hill), the word is only used architecturally in the tabernacle/temple passages (Ex 25–38; 1 Kings 6–7; Ezek 41). It can refer to planks or beams in these passages, but more often it refers to one side or the other, typically when there are two sides (rings along two sides of the ark; rooms on two sides of the temple, the north or south side; etc.). On the basis of Adam’s statement, combined with these data on usage, we would have to conclude that God took one of Adam’s sides—likely meaning he cut Adam in half and from one side built the woman.<sup>2</sup>

The meaning is that Eve is half of Adam- an equal half. Man was “not good” without women on the earth. This is essentially a statement of mutuality or equality.

The next issue in this passage is the meaning of “helper”. Complementarians will say that helper denotes a status of submission or subordination which is the nature of a helping role. Egalitarians look at the word *ezer* which the complementarians think as “lacking” but we see it as “strength” as it is applied to God many times and his saving power. Some examples of its meaning in scripture are,

---

<sup>2</sup> John H. Walton, *The Lost World of Adam and Eve: Genesis 2–3 and the Human Origins Debate* (Downers Grove, IL: IVP Academic: An Imprint of InterVarsity Press, 2015), 78.

- Isaiah 30:5 -God's military might
- Dan 11:34- God's protection,
- Deut 33:29- God's shield, help and sword,
- Psalm 121 and 124- help that comes from the maker of heaven and earth.

In all of these, which use the same word, it depicts strength and leadership through helping Israel. To take this work to mean subordination or something about hierarchy flies in the face of its primary meaning in scripture and fails to prove the case of complementarianism.

The final argument in this passage to be address regards the naming of Eve by Adam.

Complementarians will say that naming is a function that proves authority since God named things when He created. Since man names women that means that he is in authority or that God has given him authority.

Egalitarians will say that in Genesis 16:13 Hagar gives God a name so naming cannot be an outright expression of authority. Hagar is not in authority over God but recognizes His role as her helper and salvation. Similarly, Adam is exclaiming Eve's role in helping him, not based on hierarchy.

Genesis 3:16 depicts the consequences of the fall on humanity. It says, *16 To the woman he said, "I will make your pains in childbearing very severe; with painful labor you will give birth to children. Your desire will be for your husband, and he will rule over you."* When we look at the fall, we see God cursing the ground.

Adam and Eve both have consequences but are never said to be a curse. So, if men ruling over women was part of the created order, why do we only hear of this after the fall and because of it? Also, If Jesus came do defeat sin and the fall why do complementarians insist on roles depicted because of the fall as the created order?

Egalitarians will say gender hierarchy is a result of disorder as part of the fall and Jesus' victory should bring a reversal of that disorder.

If we look at gender roles based on creation in the New Testament Complementarians will take 1 Timothy 2:14 to mean that women were more easily deceived, and Adam was created first so that means that men should lead, and women shouldn't teach. The Egalitarians see this as a reference back to the only command in the passage- "a woman must learn" (1 Tim 2:11). In this letter there is context of false teaching in Ephesus that

involves myths and genealogies being told by the older women (1 Tim 4:7, 1:4). Paul is likely correcting the content of the popular myth in Ephesus. In the Artemis cult they believed that woman came first, and this was likely used to usurp authority in the church. The references here to Genesis 2-3 are framed by the women's need to learn and their deception by the false teachers. Just as Eve listened to the serpent the women in Ephesus are listening to and spreading false teaching and becoming like Eve. In 1 Corinthians 15 and Romans 5 Paul pins the fall and sin on Adam. So, does this mean that man should also refrain from teaching since they are also deceived? Rather than created order disqualifying women from leadership or the original sin disqualifying all from leadership, Paul's reference to creation here is based on behavior and not on gender. Those who are deceived or unlearned should not have a role of teaching in the church. The antidote to being like Eve is to learn. Paul is not saying that all women are more easily deceived (and should never teach), he's saying the women in Ephesus are acting like Eve in the creation narrative.<sup>3</sup>

In conclusion, the creation narrative has overwhelming evidence for an egalitarian reading of the text. The complementarian readings and logic are easily disproven when context, culture, and the full lens of the redemptive narrative of scripture are taken into view. When these things are taken we see a beautiful priesthood comprised of coequal men and women serving in complimentary roles without hierarchy but with mutuality in leadership of creation under God.

### Bibliography

Bartlett, Andrew, *Men and Women in Christ*, IVP, London, 2019

John H. Walton, *The Lost World of Adam and Eve: Genesis 2–3 and the Human Origins Debate*, Downers Grove, IL: IVP Academic: An Imprint of InterVarsity Press, 2015

NT Wright (Article in Walton's book), *The Lost World of Adam and Eve: Genesis 2–3 and the Human Origins Debate*, Downers Grove, IL: IVP Academic: An Imprint of InterVarsity Press, 2015

---

<sup>3</sup> Bartlett, Andrew, *Men and Women in Christ*, (IVP, London, 2019), 108