



**BELIEVERS CHAPEL**

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The Sermons of S. Lewis Johnson

1 Corinthians 14:33-36

"Evangelical Feminism and the Bible – Part IV"

TRANSCRIPT

[Message] Well, it's 7:30. Let's begin with a word of prayer.

[Prayer] Father, we thank Thee for the opportunity again to discuss the things that have to do with the teaching of the word of God. We thank Thee for the Scriptures and the light that they shed on our paths. We thank Thee for the way in which they minister to us, not only as individuals, but as husband and wife, as members of families, and especially in the ministry of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ in the church. We thank Thee Lord that through the Holy Spirit Thou has revealed to us the way of salvation in Christ and the way of the kind of life that is pleasing to Thee in the holy Scriptures.

We recognize, Lord, that from the beginning of time there has arisen opposition to things that are found in Scripture, because we are all sinners, we are all rebels at heart. Apart from the grace of God in Christ, and therefore it is our nature to rebel, and most of us in this room know those years of rebellion, and we are grateful Lord that Thou didst touch our hearts and turn us from rebellion to the love of the Thee and to the love of Thy word. We know that the sin principle, the rebellious sin principle still dwells within us, and we pray, Lord, that through the Holy Spirit Thou wilt curb its influence in our lives and enable us to please Thee in our lives, our family life and our life in the church of

Jesus Christ. And in our life as witnesses of the Lord Jesus in the society of which we are a part.

We pray that Thou will guide our thoughts as we discuss feminism and evangelical feminism. We recognize the importance of the subject and we pray that we may not follow any other pathway but that which is in harmony with Thy word. Give us, Lord, courage, and forthrightness, and a sense of the truthfulness of the Scriptures that will gird us and guide in our life and ministry and in our discussions with our friends. We thank Thee for this time together tonight and ask that Thou wilt minister to each one of us through the writings of the apostles for Jesus' sake. Amen.

[Message] Tonight we are turning to 1 Corinthians chapter 14, and verse 33 through verse 36 or 37 and we'll read that for our Scripture reading. We'll not spend most of our time on this passage, but at least we'll come to the discussion of it near the conclusion of the hour. But in verse 33, the apostle writes,

"For God is not *the author* of confusion but of peace, as in all the churches of the saints. Let your women keep silent in the churches, for they are not permitted to speak; but *they are* to be submissive, as the law also says. And if they want to learn something, let them ask their own husbands at home; for it is shameful for women to speak in church. Or did the word of God come *originally* from you? Or *was it* you only that it reached? If anyone thinks himself to be a prophet or spiritual, let him acknowledge that the things which I write to you are the commandments of the Lord."

These are very difficult words for our society today, and that is one of the reasons why you would rarely hear anyone expounding a passage like this. It's a passage that runs contrary to the kind of society of which we have become a part in these last twenty or thirty years or so, really I guess forty years. But nevertheless its part of the apostle's

writing and part of the word of God as we understand the word of God. Tonight this is the fourth of our series on evangelical feminism in the Bible, and I'd like to introduce the topic and ask the question again, feminism what is it? The consequences then of embracing feminism, discuss that for a bit, and then look at the case study of this passage that I have just read.

Remarkable has been the growth of the feminist movement over the last forty years. It's not a new movement. You can trace feminism back for a couple of hundred years, but nothing like the interest in it that exist today. From Rosie the Riveter, the war time worker which some of you may remember, through Betty Friedan's sensational *The Feminine Mystique* published in 1963, 65,000 hardcover copies of her book were published, but 700,000 of them were published on paper. The women's lib groups especially arose around 1968, and then we were exposed to the debate over the ERA amendment, and finally in 1982 that came almost entirely to an end. But at least from Rosie the Riveter until then all was rosy. That's a pun. [Laughter] That's very much Louis Rokeiser [ph 6:35] who on Friday night talks like that. I apologize to you.

But at any rate, the goals and the consequences of the movement while they were in our national discussion for quite a few years and quite a few months even recently, they were largely hazy and hidden. There are some things that one thinks about when one thinks about it. Of course we think about Roe versus Wade, because that bears on the topic. But in the euphoria with which the left in general greeted the ruling of Roe versus Wade, and Episcopalian Professor of Medical Ethics at the University of Virginia hailed the decision as "a welcome trend away from the sanctity of life attitude toward a quality of life ethic." I think that tells us something about the movement as a whole. It is not so much the holiness or the sanctity of life that is significant but the quality of life as we understand quality of life. And thus under that umbrella abortion finds its place.

Roxanne Dunbar, a Boston militant, in 1969 said, "Ultimately we want to destroy the three pillars of class and caste society, the family, private property, and the state, and

in order to do this, to do away with the evils of sexism." The family issue, daycare, flex time in the work place, divorce have become the albatross around the feminist movement. Some feminist and some evangelicals are seeing the light. Feminist author Susan Brownmiller, for example, wrote a book called *Against Our Will* and in that book she characterized the power relationship between men and women throughout history as rape, but now, later accused the movement of ignoring profound biological and psychological differences between the sexes. She was speaking then in the seventies. So it is possible for us to expect that some who reflect on these issues are going to change their minds.

I gave some of you the Danvers statement on the Council of Biblical Manhood and Womanhood. I'm sorry I did not have one for all of you, but you can get them, they are free of charge. If you write, and we may even have some in the book room that are being given away. But the Danvers statement was a statement by a number of evangelicals, including me, in which we sought to set forth essentially what is the doctrine of biblical manhood and womanhood. And some of the things in it are worthy of note. For example, under the rationale, "Rationale number one, the widespread uncertainty and confusion in our culture regarding the complimentary differences between masculinity and femininity we observe with deep concern. We also observe with deep concern the tragic effects of this confusion in unraveling the effects of marriage, woven by God out of the beautiful and diverse strands of manhood and womanhood." And then a third of the things that concern the council is "the increasing promotion given to feminist egalitarianism with accompanying distortions of the glad harmony portrayed in Scripture between the loving humble leadership of redeemed husbands, and the intelligent willing support of that leadership by redeemed wives."

This issue, fortunately, is the issue to my mind that will be ultimately the destruction of feminism if we see it in our day. Because if we look out over our society these are the issues that are tearing our society apart. If one looks at what has been

happening out west, or in the east, or almost anywhere, you can find that these issues of the family are the issues that are coming to the surface, because feminism cannot handle that issue. Their position is opposed to it.

The purpose of this series that I've been giving is simply to survey feminism challenge to Christian life and theology, and I want to look tonight at another text briefly, but again go over what I think are the fundamental issues. I do believe that probably many of us, I speak from my own experience, look at the things that we read in the newspapers or the things that we read in our reading about feminism and as evangelical Christians, we largely just look at them, we realize that deep down within we are not in harmony with that, but we do not give ourselves to study of some of the issues that have been raised by the feminists.

And so if you will allow me, I'd like to go back again over what is feminism? Webster has defined feminism as the "theory of political, economic, social equality of the sexes." Feminism usually says that sex differences are socially, not physiologically determined. One man whose book I have in my library is Michael Levin, and in one section of his book he points out that in feminism, and he not a Christian feminist, points out that feminism has four central tenets. First, anatomical differences apart, men and women are the same. Second, men unfairly occupy positions of dominance, because the myth that men are more aggressive than women has been perpetuated by the practice of raising boys to be oriented toward mastery and girls to be oriented toward people. Three, true human individuality and fulfillment will come about only when people view themselves as human repositories of talent and traits and deny that sex has any significant effect on one's individual nature. And finally, these desirable changes will require the complete transformation of society.

This, of course has had its influence on all aspects of our society. And we'll talk about that in just a moment. Its origins, feminism began in the late 1700's but the modern form is probably to be traced Simone de Beauvoir's *The Second Sex* written in 1949, and

Betty Friedan's *The Feminine Mystique*, the book that I referred to just a moment or two ago. Biblical feminism began in the 1970's from secular feminism. It's hard to separate the two in many cases, because it is true that secular feminists and biblical feminists have a lot in common. In fact, biblical feminists were part of the feminist movement as a secular movement until they found out it was impossible for them to have fellowship with the secular ones and they withdrew and have formed at least their own society. In fact, they've formed two because of splits that have occurred.

The issues gather around these things, first of all, the doctrine of creation and feminism. And the issues, at this point, is something I think is important. I would like for you to at least get the issue and think about it for yourself. Are role distinctions, if any, due only to the fall? Now, it is the contention of feminists and biblical feminists that the role distinctions that we know from Scripture, particularly in the epistles are distinctions that arise primarily, almost entirely from the fall. In other words, those judgments, as they look at them, that women shall be submissive to their husbands, that men shall love their wives and Christ loved the church are things that flow out of the fall. And that the redemption that Christ has accomplished is the redemption of women from the judgments that are set forth in Genesis chapter 3.

Now, the Danvers affirmations that I just read for you are designed to deal principally with that. Notice these affirmations number one and number two. And I'll read them for those of you who do not have one of the copies, "Both Adam and Eve," these are affirmations by the Council of Biblical Manhood and Womanhood, "Before Adam and Eve were created in God's image, equal before God as persons, and distinct in their manhood and womanhood, we affirm that. We affirm that 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." The third affirmation is "We affirm Adam's headship in marriage was established by God before the fall and was not a result of sin."

Now, that is one of the key issues, because the biblical feminists have sought to deny those facts, tracing the distinctions to the fall. And tracing them to the fall then the redemption of Jesus Christ is set forth as that which writes those distinctions and brings man and woman to the equality that they understand as equality. That is an equality in which there is no role distinction. So the issue, one of the issues revolves right around that, the doctrine of creation and feminism. It is the viewpoint of the council, it is my view point, I'm not trying to talk about the council only. You understand I happen to be on the executive committee of this council and do agree with most of the things that they set forth. The view of the council and the view of Scripture as I understand it is that the distinctions that exist between the man and the woman in the family and in the church are distinctions that were established in creation and not simply in the fall and redemption.

The reason for that is that when the apostles refer to Genesis chapter 2 and argue their cases they do not appeal to the fall. They appeal almost universally to Genesis chapters 1 and 2. For example, in 1 Timothy we saw that. Last week we saw that when the apostle asks for a certain attitude on the part of the women in the church there he appeals to the Book of Genesis and Genesis chapter 2. In 1 Corinthians chapter 11 the apostle again appeals to Genesis chapter 1 and chapter 2, the creation as the ground of his argument for submission and also the love of the husband for his wife. Egalitarianism and undifferentiated role interchangeability is something that biblical exegesis of the evangelical character generally have held as contrary to Scripture. It is the other way with those who claim to be biblical but are not of the same type of evangelicalism. For example, Rosemary Lauer, who represents the line of reasoning of secular feminists, but is a religious feminist has said, "A woman's soul does not differ from man's and therefore can receive the sacramental character of ordination as well as his." Now what she insists on the part of that is the equality that exists without any role differentiation whatsoever. I think you can see this is really an extremely important point.

The question is this; can we have equality and role differentiation? In other words, in our definition of equality, must we have no differentiation of role? Is it possible for role differentiation, to put it another way, to exist within equality. Now, in a moment we'll talk a little bit about that, but we'll leave it at that point. Another of the issues that is involved in the subject is the doctrine of the fall and feminism itself. And we referred to that a moment ago by speaking out of turn. But the fourth affirmation is "The fall introduced distortions into the relationships between men and women. In the home the husband's loving humble headship tends to be replaced by domination or passivity." And incidentally, all who attempt to set forth what the Bible teaches about the relationship of a husband and a wife or between males and females in the church should remember, that there have been many on the side of the males who have not carried out their relationship to their wives and to the women in the church that is in harmony with the word of God. And no doubt this has contributed to the interest of some feminists of in modification of what Scripture says, because they have been taught by actions that a man is a dominator, not simply a head, a loving head, but a dominator, and she is to be dominated. We try to deal with that.

"In the home the husband's loving humble relationship tends to be replaced domination or passivity on the part of the woman. The wife's intelligent willing submission tends to be replaced by usurpation of civility. 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." The third of the issues around which feminism, biblical feminism, gathers is the doctrine of redemption and feminism.

And now I want to say just a word about what the Scriptures say regarding the possibility of difference of role existing within equality. In my opinion, after being involved in these discussions and the problems for about five years now, this is one of the most fundamental things that stands between the biblical feminists, that is those who

claim to followers of Scripture, and other biblical evangelicals who differ with them and hold to the more historical view point. It's this question; can role distinction exist within equality?

Now, there is a passage in 1 Corinthians 11 that I think deals specifically with this, and so I'd like to read this passage and make a few comments on it. I think you will understand the point I'm trying to get over when you read this verse. Paul says in verse 2 of 1 Corinthians 11, "Now I praise you, brethren, that you remember me in all things and keep the traditions just as I delivered *them* to you. But I want you to know that the head of every man is Christ, the head of woman *is* man, and the head of Christ *is* God." Now you'll notice the relationship between Christ and the Father. He says that "The head of every man is Christ, the head of woman *is* man, and the head of Christ *is* God." Now anyone who studies orthodox evangelical Christology knows that the Christian church has held from its earliest centuries the fact that the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit are equal. They are equal in power. They are equal in wisdom. They are equal in all of the attributes that belong to deity. There is not a single attribute that the Father has that the Son does not have. There is not a single attribute that the Father and the Son have that the Spirit does not have. They differ in personality. We have the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit three person who subsist within the one God. And so we have a kind of unity and we also have a differentiation.

But we also have a differentiation in the roles as well, particularly illustrated in the coming of our Lord Jesus in the incarnation. When the Son of God comes as the second person of the trinity to carry out his ministry he comes as a mediator. And coming as a mediator he carries out his ministry under the Father. As a matter of fact, it is so much under the Father that the Lord Jesus can say some things that cause those who hold orthodox doctrines concerning the trinity to wonder about. For example, in John chapter 14, in verse 28, I think I referred to this a couple of weeks ago, "You have heard Me say

to you, 'I am going away and coming *back* to you.' If you loved Me, you would rejoice because I said, 'I am going to the Father,' for My Father is greater than I."

Now the Christian church has held the Son has all of the attributes of deity, the Son is equal with the Father. How can our Lord say, "My Father is greater than I?" Well, he can only say that because there is the role of mediator that by virtue of the incarnation and the plan of God that has become our Lord's. He is the mediator, and so he carries out the will, as the second person, of the Father, the will that has to do with the eternal purpose and involves your redemption and my redemption. The Lord may say equal with the Father. No one knows when the second coming takes place, no angel, not even the Son of Man, only the Father. Why? Why of course the Son of God in his eternal being knows the end from the beginning. That's very evident from other statements made in other contexts, but in that context he makes it very plain that as the mediator he does not know the hour of his second coming. Those are things that are revealed to him by the Father as he lives out his mediatorial life.

We know that the Apostle Paul in 1 Corinthians chapter 15 talks about this very matter and states that when the Lord Jesus comes again in his Second Advent there are going to be some things that take place that ultimately will bring us back to the beginning before the beginning of the plan of God. Listen to what we read in verse 27 and verse 28 of 1 Corinthians 15, "For *He has put all things under His feet.*" But when He says "all things are put under *Him*," *it is* evident that He who put all things under Him is accepted. Now when all things are made subject to Him, then the Son Himself will also be subject to Him who put all things under Him, that God may be all in all." So is it possible then for role distinctions to exist within equality? Why, the existence of the three persons of the trinity and the role of the Son in carrying out his ministry is the complete answer to that. As a matter of fact, when you look at the things that the Bible says about the trinity, it's the Father who initiates the plans and purposes that are carried by the executive, the Lord Jesus Christ, and those plans and purposes are administrated by the Holy Spirit. And

the distinct roles of each of the persons of the trinity all Christian theologians have affirmed down through the years, but at the same time have affirmed the equality of the Father, Son, and the Holy Spirit. So to affirm then that if we have equality we must have undifferentiated role interchangeability is just not biblical.

Now, there is another aspect of this matter that I'd like to say a word about. And I hope that you will bear with me in talking about it for a moment. I'd like to say, we just said something about the doctrine of the feminists. And I'd also like to say something about the hermeneutics practiced by the feminists. And for those of you who may not know the term hermeneutics, I presume in Believers Chapel that would have to be some visitor who has come in, because all of you know what hermeneutics mean. You know that is a term that refers to the interpretation of Scripture. Hermeneutics is simply a term that refers to the principles by which the Bible is interpreted.

There are many principles that Bible students carry out. They may differ on a few of them, but basically the fundamental ways in which we read the Bible are understood by almost all of believing Christians. Hermeneutics, of course, lead the principles that we following reading and studying the Bible, lead ultimately to the kind of conclusions we arrive at. And so hermeneutics are fundamental to the doctrines that we believe. Many of us read the Bible without any knowledge of hermeneutics, and I know in my case that's the way I first started reading the Bible. I didn't know anything about hermeneutics, I did know Greek. And I did, because I was converted with a knowledge of classical Greek, so I knew the source of that word, but no one went out of their way to say to me after I was converted, "Now Lewis, you need a course in hermeneutics." But I did practice hermeneutics because I read the Bible. And most of you when you read the Bible you follow certain hermeneutical principles. You may not realize it but you do, and so when you hear about a good hermeneutical principle, that is someone has announced it as a good principle, and you hear them say, "This is a good principle," most of the time you will say, "Well, that's in harmony with the way I've been reading the Bible."

For example, one rule, one very simple rule that almost everybody refers to sooner or later is that Scripture interprets Scripture. Now, we practice that rule. We may not know it by that term, Scripture interprets Scripture, but when we are reading the Bible, if we believe the Bible is the word of God and something given to us by the Holy Spirit at conversion. The testimony of the Holy Spirit within the heart, the internal testimony of the Spirit is that by which we come to the conviction that the Bible is the word of God. The ultimate testimony, far more significant than any kind of evidences or biblical evidences we might affirm enables us to believe in the resurrection or any of the other facts of the Bible. That's the fundamental thing that the Spirit gives to the elect. The Bible is the word of God. We may not understand much about it when that comes, but the Bible is the word of God. That's the Spirit's communication of the truth to us.

Well, we know that if Scripture interprets Scripture, the Bible is the word of God, we're not going to find the Bible in one part saying one thing and in another part saying something else that contradicts it. As a matter of fact we know that from three famous laws of thought, the law of identity, whatever is is. The law of contradiction, the British I think call this the law of non-contradiction; nothing can both be and not be. You know that. We cannot say the Cowboys last year were a bad team when the Cowboys were a good team. We recognize the contradiction. Nothing can both be and not be. And then the law of the excluded middle, everything must either be or not be. Not if you just read, if you know, and if you have those things in your mind you will be a fairly clear reader of any document in which we don't expect to find contradiction. So hermeneutics then is the way in which we read the Bible, and most of you know something about hermeneutics.

Now, among the positions of the feminists are these, that the New Testament epistolary teaching is not permanent, but may change with culture. In other words, what is held at a particular part of the ancient world may not be true at another part of the ancient world. And furthermore what is held at a particular time in the history of the

church may not be held as valid at another time. In other words, the New Testament teaching by Paul and the apostle and by our Lord may change with culture. And so we have cultural interpretation of the word of God. This is very simplistic. I know there are some of you sitting in the audience and you are very skilled and I'm not trying to minister to you, but to the rest of us who may not understand as much as you do.

A second thing that has to do with hermeneutics that touches the feminists; among the feminists there are those who affirm that Paul misinterpreted parts of the Bible. For example, Paul Jewett, an outstanding evangelical Christian man, a theologian, a graduate of a Calvinistic seminary incidentally, and a Calvinistic man, and tell it not in Goth, publish it not in Asculon, lest the uncircumcised Arminians hear about it, but a five point Calvinist. But Mr. Jewett in his later days was very active, incidentally, in teaching young life workers in Colorado for a long time. He's now with the Lord. He died a couple of years ago. A very good man, wrote some very helpful things, I confess that I'm in his debt for a number of those, but at any rate late in his life Dr. Jewett came to the conviction that Paul misinterpreted the Book of Genesis and particularly of course Genesis chapter 2 and 3, two particularly. And rather followed rabbinical teaching than the Bible itself. We may talk about that, because that's a strange view for him that the apostle followed rabbinic teaching rather than the teaching of the Book of Genesis. And in his case, I guess you can probably say that he would have said, "Yes, that's what Genesis says, but Paul followed something else." But in following it, he affirmed his own belief that the authority of the word of God was not followed by the Apostle Paul. Other, however, not so knowledgeable have said that Paul erred in understanding Genesis chapters 1, 2, and 3.

You will note this particularly in the search of the feminists for altered word meanings. For example, when the Bible says in the passage that we read from 1 Corinthians 11 that Christ is the head of the church and that the man is the head of the woman, or of his wife; that head is given a meaning, I do not think it can be justified, but

it is given the meaning of source rather than head. And that headship is not the issue but simply source. To use another illustration in 1 Timothy chapter 2, and verse 13 or so, where we read these words, verse 12, "And I do not permit a woman to teach or to have authority over a man, but to be in silence." The biblical feminists have sought to find an altered word meaning for *authenteo*, which is the word that means to have authority. It cannot stand in my opinion, and the council in the articles, in the book *Recovering Biblical Manhood and Womanhood* have articles that touch on those points.

These things, as you probably realize can become a kind of watershed in the interpretation of the Bible. Because if you do believe that the Bible is an inerrant word from God, if you believe it is authoritative, and if at the same time you begin to hold that the Bible is in error here or there, I think that you can see that that has tremendous consequences if one follows that out. Frances Schafer, in one of his books, makes reference to a high rocky place near where he lived in Switzerland, a rocky ridge, and in order to illustrate the importance of certain points that seemed rather insignificant he says that "In the winter time if you walk up on this high snowy ridge you will see a blanket of snow and you cannot really tell the difference that exists when that snow is gone. It looks as if it is one unified blanket of snow. But the snow sitting on top of a ridge on one side, when the snow melts, the snow moves to the north, ultimately flows into the Rhine River," those of you who have been to Switzerland know that the Rhine goes all the way up into Switzerland and has its origins along that way. "The water flows into the Rhine and then flows out of the Rhine, finally flows out of the Rhine into the cold waters of the North Sea. But on the other side of the ridge, just a few inches," like our own western part of the United States, "the snow there flows down the banks of that ridge into the Rome Valley and from the Rome Valley into Lake Geneva, Lake Lemon, and out of Lake Genevieve and in the Roan Rive and finally makes its way into the warm waters of the Mediterranean Sea." So certain things followed out to their logical conclusion turn out

to be far more erroneous, far more dangerous than one realizes if we only look at a few things such as the snow that's gathered on the top of the ridge.

If I, for example, were to take and put in a statement what biblical evangelicals believe about the Bible and then put over here another statement about what some biblical evangelicals who are feminists say about the Bible, if you just looked at those two statements you would probably say, "If one finds any difference in that, he is really just like a theologian." He's trying to find something wrong, but those statements say essentially the same thing. But sometimes if you wait until the snow melts you will find that it's not that at all. And that is true with reference to the hermeneutics. The hermeneutics lead ultimately to a distrust of the Scriptures and finally to a distrust of the doctrines that the Scripture teach. And that is why it's so important to hold to the authority of the word of God soundly and firmly.

Let me just say a few words about the practical consequences of embracing feminism. Some of the things that you read about in our newspapers, I'll just mention them because I know you've read these things in the newspapers and I don't have to go into details. But there are societal consequences that are very great. The destruction of the structure of society ultimately rests in the destruction of what we find taught in holy Scripture. Fortunately our country, from its beginning rested very strongly upon some of these societal structures that were found in the word of God. Because the earlier people who came to this country were basically, while they differed on many religious points, were in harmony over the Judeo Christian viewpoint.

We have recently in our newspaper *The Dallas Morning News* and article by William Merkesan, for example, on single moms. Many of you may have seen that, in which the force of his article, the point of it is that single moms are not all Murphy Brown's that we all praise and say here is a new way of life we can all live, but they are all, to put it in Mr. Merkesan's terms, singles moms are victims not heroines. And he goes on to make the point through the rest of his article, maybe not the most elegant way of

putting it, that article, but nevertheless the point I think, was a genuine point that he sought to make. William Buckley last week had an article in our *Dallas Morning News* that was very striking, to my mind. Mr. Buckley said, "The things that the politicians are not saying are the things that ought to be said." He said that "The politicians were actually afraid to say the things that ought to be said, particularly with reference to the Los Angeles riots."

He said, "Really, ultimately the problem that was raised by the Los Angeles riots is the problems of bastardy, that what we really have is a society in so many places that is the product of no marriage whatsoever. The free kind of living that characterizes a great deal of our society." He has set out some percentages that I don't have in my mind. I thought I clipped that article; I did not, so I don't have it. But in the course of it he said that some years back the illegitimate births of white people in the United States were relatively small. As a I remember they were under ten percent. But now they're above ten percent. But the illegitimate births among the blacks were, now this is something of a guess, were twenty or thirty percent ten years or so ago, but now have arisen above sixty percent. Think of that. Think of the result in the life of the society when children are brought to life without a father, without even knowing their father in most cases. And we're not surprised at all at the things that happen in Los Angeles. But who is going to stand up among the politicians and say something about that? That is really one our great problems and its traceable back to the same thing that we're talking about, the fact that the United States of America has turned away from the Judeo-Christian faith and the things that are set forth in the word of God concerning family relationships.

Politicians may talk about family, but they cannot talk about the really fundamental details of it, they are so afraid they will lose a vote or so. But this is really in my opinion one of the fundamental problems of our society today. That's why it's so important for us as evangelicals to proclaim that the Bible has to say about the essentials of the family relationship according to the word of God.

Another consequence is Ecclesiastical or church-wise. Turmoil has entered the churches of evangelicals, or at least professing evangelicals because of the distinctions that have sought to be proclaimed by the feminists in such matters as the ordination of elders and deacons and the ministry of the word of God in our churches. As you know in Believers Chapel we do not believe in the ordination as a practice of the apostles, that is in a kind of rite by which a person is ordained. But we do believe in the ordination of elders and so these matters touch the life of all of our churches, those that do ordain men to the ministry and those that ordain elders and those that ordain deacons. For example, in the Presbyterian church which ordains pastors and ordains, well they ordain elders actually, but they call one the ruling elder, and they call others who teach teaching elders. They believe only in the ordination of elder, but nevertheless they tend to call teaching elders pastors. But they believe in the ordination of deacons as well. And this issue is another one that the feminists have raised.

Personal issues, of course, are things that we all know about as well. Family issues of divorce, abuse, and adultery flow from the doctrine. Micah Levin, a man I quoted much earlier said, "After increasing for twenty years the divorce has stabilized at the high rate of nearly five per one thousand people in the United States. One out of two new marriages ends in divorce. This phenomenon has many causes of which feminism may itself be a further effect, but feminism's ongoing diabolization of marriage." That's an interesting word, isn't it? Making marriage diabolical, "diabolization of marriage is almost certainly a factor."

Now, I said we would take a brief look at 1 Corinthians 14: 33. I thought I would do it five minutes before now. But I'll try to take a look at it at least, because you at least deserve some kind of treatment of it. This is a text that one of my evangelical friends probably the outstanding evangelical New Testament scholar today, in my opinion, says in to an easy text. Well, it's by no means easy as Dr. Carson has said. The interpretative problem of the text is simply this, that in 1 Corinthians chapter 11 Paul apparently permits

utterance in the meeting of the church by the women when he says in the earlier part of 1 Corinthians 11, "Every woman who prays or prophesies with her head uncovered dishonors her head, for that is one and the same as if her head were shaved. And that appears that seemingly to indicate that a woman might pray and prophesy in the meetings of the church.

Now, I have certain views about prophesying which would indicate that that would not apply to a church as I understand the church, because prophecy was a gift that was given in the days of the apostles. The apostles did live in such a time, but since the days of the apostles those gifts, so far as I can tell, have not been given. Lots of claims have been made. Tilton makes a lot of claims; he's a happy one to bash these days, evangelicals to bash him. You can make the point just by mentioning his name so you don't have to waste time talking in more detail, but there are many more of that kind of who do believe that these early gifts are still in evidence. I do not believe that that is justified. Tongues is not speaking in known tongues, which have not been learned. And that's what the Bible has to say about that. It's not speaking in the kind of gibberish that ecstatic speech that the charismatics think is speaking in tongues. Even Jehovah's witnesses and Mormons claim to believe in that, and that kind of speech was in existence before the time of the apostle himself.

But nevertheless that passage in the eyes of many seems to permit utterance. It may mean simply, of course, we don't have enough to know, it may mean simply that they are praying in the sense that they are participating with those that are leading in prayer. But unfortunately we cannot make that point. The textual question, however, is something else. It's a little more of a problem. I hope I can explain this to you in two minutes. It's the contention of some biblical feminists who affirm that they believe in the inspiration of Scripture, that these verses verse 34 and verse 35, "Let your women keep silent in the churches, for they are not permitted to speak; but *they are* to be submissive, as the law also says. And if they want to learn something, let them ask their own

husbands at home; for it is shameful for women to speak in church" are not really Pauline words. It is the contention of Gordon Fie who has the commentary on 1 Corinthians in the New International Commentary that these verses are a non-Pauline interpolation.

Now, an interpolation is a word that means something that is an altering of the text by an insertion of something. Inter means to enter, has the idea of entering, and the palatian part of it comes from a Latin word polio which means to polish. So what it means is that the text has been polished up a bit by the insertion of these words. So it's Dr. Fie's contention, he teaches on the same faculty that Bruce Waltke teaches on, for example, to give you an idea of where he stands with reference to evangelicalism. It's his contention that Paul didn't write these words, that they were inserted later by someone. In other words, the text has been altered by an interpolation, by insertion.

Now, it would take us too long to go into the reasons why this is probably not true. There are some problems. For example, the text seems to be speaking about tongues and then suddenly it talks about something else, and then after verse 35 again, the other subject is resumed and someone might say, you see, someone has inserted these words here. It destroys the flow of the context. I don't think that's true, but nevertheless one could possibly make that case. But the weakness of the view is that of all of the Greek manuscripts of the New Testament that we have, and we have many Greek manuscripts and many quite early, not a single one of them has this interpolation, except some western manuscripts which have these words after verse 40. But no manuscript, not a single has these words in any other place except in that western family of manuscripts, which have the words but have them after verse 40. So the evidence favors the inclusion, overwhelmingly, if you could find one Greek manuscript that did not have these words at this point, then you might say there is some reason for thinking they don't really belong here and are not Paul's but are really an interpolation. But all of the manuscripts have these verses here at this point, except as I mentioned the westerns, which have these

words at the end, some of the western ones at the end of verse 40. But they all have these words.

What Dr. Fie wants to do is to eliminate the words entirely because he does not like the expression, "Let your women keep silent in the churches." He was a Charismatic, and you might expect him to not like these words, "Let your women keep silent in the churches." The evidence favors the inclusion.

Now, Dr. Carson has said the interpretation of the text is not easy. I agree. Paul, where are you, is what I would like to say almost every time I come to this. Paul, stand by me and tell me exactly what you meant, because it's not easy to harmonize 1 Corinthians 11, and 1 Corinthians 14. And I think it's honest for us to admit that. There may come some enlightenment in some other way, some young scholar like a Dan Duncan, may ultimately find a resolution to this problem. That's a heavy burden on your shoulders Dan, but I'm leaving it on yours. Let me just give a few suggestions real quickly. It's been suggested that Paul demands silence for local or cultural reasons. That is, the women were evidently too noisy, and then some have added to that that the women generally then were uneducated, and so it was necessary for the apostle to say this because in the freedom that they had in Christianity they were exploiting their emancipation from the Law. And so the apostle had to calm them down. There's not much support of that. It is an interpretation. Be quiet Martha. [Laughter]

Verse 34 and 35 are parts, someone has suggested, are parts of the Corinthians views, and that Paul horrified at these views rejects them in verse 36 by saying, "Or did the word of God come *originally* from you?" In other words, those words are taken by these interpreters to be words of the Corinthians, and Paul is now objecting to them by saying they are absurd. Incidentally, the professor of theology at Wheaton College holds that view. That will give you some idea of how in our evangelical institutions the feminists have important positions.

Others have suggested that Paul commands silence when the prophecies are being weighed in the church. Now, this is a chapter that has to do with prophecy and how prophets should carry out their ministry. As you know, chapter 14 has to do with the relation of the gifts, and then with the ways in which the gift of prophecy should be exercised and how it should be done in an orderly fashion, concludes on that note; let all things be done decently and in order." And so it has been suggested, and many evangelicals follow this view point now. In fact some of the men on the Council for Biblical Manhood and Womanhood follow this viewpoint, that verses 34 and 35 are simply verses in which the apostle says that the women are to be silent. They can pray and prophesy but they are to be silent when the prophecies are being weighed, that is what they prophecies say are being interpreted by the body. Because the interpretation falls into the category of teaching with authority and so therefore at that point Paul commands the women to be silent, because they are not permitted to teach, as he says in 1 Timothy chapter 2. It might infringe the male's teaching authority.

There's one final possibility. It has had some objections as well. But nevertheless I think there is a possibility of some truth that lies within it. In 1 Corinthians chapter 11, when the apostle says in verse 5, "But every woman who prays or prophesies with *her* head uncovered dishonors her head, for that is one and the same as if her head were shaved. For if a woman is not covered, let her also be shorn. But if it is shameful for a woman to be shorn or shaved, let her be covered." So what seems to be the permission to pray and prophesy might be a permission that is given in more informal gatherings of the church. It may be that the first part of chapter 11 is not really designed expressly for the official meeting of the church. Because if you'll notice verse 17, when this section ends, Paul says, "Now in giving these instructions I do not praise you, since you come together not for the better, but for the worse." And then goes on to talk about the Lord's supper and the requirements there. So it has been held by some that verse 2 through verse 16 of chapter 11 has to do with informal meetings and in those informal meetings

the women may pray and in those days may prophesy, but now since the church in the church meeting the apostle in other places, 1 Corinthians 14 says he doesn't suffer a woman to speak, that now in the official church meeting they are not permitted to speak, and thus there is a harmonizing of the two. Verse 17 does use a term that has to do with the coming together, and it's the point of that verb here, in their opinion, that says here is where Paul begins to discuss the official church meetings.

I often wonder what to say when I'm teaching people, and I have to say to them I don't know. I don't like to say that. Many of you who know me know that I rarely have ever said it. I like to talk about being dogmatic, and now I say it with a smile. Back in the early days I didn't smile. So there has been some growth, some practical growth. But I ran across a good statement by a well known French interpreter. It's in a book C.K. Barrett, and after discussing 1 Corinthians chapter 11 this French commentator says, I won't give his French words, because there's somebody here who may know French real well and you may not like my pronunciation. But he said this, after he finished his discussion giving his interpretation, he said, "If someone gives a better interpretation I will align myself there." So I offer it as a challenge to you, if you give a better interpretation I promise to align myself there where your interpretation is.

I'm sorry to have kept you over five minutes. I didn't anticipate that. I hope it has not been too grating upon your patience. Let's bow together in a word of prayer.

[Prayer] Father, we are grateful to Thee for Thy word, and we acknowledge Lord that there are many things in the word of God that we do not understand. Deliver us from discouragement; give us Lord patience and diligence to seek to find the meaning of the Scripture that Thou hast put in our hands. We thank Thee that the great truths in the word of God are patently clear to us, the greatness of our triune God, the greatness of the atonement by Christ, the greatness of the salvation that is given to us in grace. Help us Lord, who have received that salvation, to be instruments for the preservation of the truth

of the word of God, and for the dissemination of the gospel of Christ. Give us, Lord, the  
courage and...

**[RECORDING ENDS ABRUPTLY]**