

Michele Guinness

1. Old Testament

Creation - Foundational!

Genesis Ch 1:27 God created mankind his own image - male and female. Given equal authority over creation, not over one another.

Ch2:16 - Adam given every tree except? Good and Evil. From beginning man independent, adventurous

Ch 2:18 God saw wasn't good - not poor lonely, chutchy. I will make someone who will challenge self-sufficiency and tendency to isolationism. She speaks to man's deepest need.

A "Helper" = ezer - The Lord is my helper, guard, surround, protect.

"Fit" or "suitable" - knegedu, (Neged is opposite) – prepositional clause "standing boldly opposite", face to face. eyeball – to challenge when necessary.

Ch 2:23 "bone of my bone and flesh of my flesh"

Identical, not inferior substance.

More alike than different - yet gloriously different

Ch 3:1-7 FALL - take one thing they cannot have. Separated from God and each other. End to compatibility, complementariness.

Gen 3:16 Consequences

I will greatly multiply your sorrow and sighing. Tsavon and etzev - not nec used in childbirth - parallel hard work and toil of Adam.

Tesugah

Your desire shall be for your husband - no sexual connotation. Temptress oesn't ring true. Ch 4:7 Cain - sin is lurking at the door. Its desire is for you. But you must master it. Means reaching/stretching out -co-dependency. Root of problems - addicted to relationship, need it for affection, affirmation, self-acceptance.

He will rule — very need of man enables him to make us inferior. He retreats into isolationism.

Gen ch 3 v 20- Chava = spoken word of life.

Not about marriage, about male/female

Women relational, communicators.

Deborah - davar, to speak. Bee - with sting!

Speaks life into Barak and puts steel in his soul.

Throughout history enemy vested interest in muzzling us.

But - woman, instead of speaking life, speaks death to Adam - begins to use verbal/relational gift to undermine, manipulate or domesticate men!!

Man dominates to keep her at bay and forfeits the intimacy he longs for.

Vicious cycle - More they dominate, more we manipulate

Seems little distinction between man and woman's sin and its consequences. Both make a bid for divinity, and both are condemned to hard work and grief. But for both the initial failure and its implications are different:

Woman is given dominion, authority, supremacy over the entire created order – with one restriction - not eat from one particular tree. Takes one thing not hers to have - sins in the area of authority or dominion. She forfeits dominion and authority for man will now dominate and subjugate.

Man given relationship that is key to his well-being, but sins in relationship. He colludes with Eve when he should have protected her. He dominates woman and loses an equal, a partner, and a friend, the intimacy and closeness for which his entire being will always yearn.

Socio-linguist, Deborah Tannen : Report v rapport talk.

The problem is that we women are often just too self-effacing. We admit our uncertainties - and that's seen as being indecisive. We ask for information – that shows our inferiority. We give attention to detail - that's small talk. Men on the other hand find it hard to admit weakness, never ask for information, give advice without being invited and fire facts like a gun going off. Why? Tannen says, "For most women the language of conversation is primarily a language of rapport: a way of establishing connections and negotiating relationships...For most men talk is primarily a means to preserve independence and negotiate' and maintain status in a hierarchical social order. "

Matriarchs

Wonderfully tough, strong, upfront women, But -no real power- so manipulate to get own way, and God's way! - usually over children (our weakness)

Sarah - can't wait for promise, give God helping hand.

Rebecca tricks Isaac over her boys.

Cannot trust God - Gives Him a hand - and loses Jacob forever.

When no equality women tend to resort to:

Manipulation (what devious way can I achieve this?)

Emotional blackmail. We are verbally cleverer than men!

Aggression - bullying, bull-doing, shouting, temper.

Passivity - martyr spirit, sighing, nobody loves me, I'm only a woman, little wife and mother

Alternative is *assertiveness*:

Daughters of Zeiophehad - Numbers 27:1.

Give us our rightful inheritance - risked reputation, but stood ground.

Deborah: Judges 4:4-9

No aggression - get over here or else I can make it tough for you.

No manipulation "If you do this I'll help you get that piece of land"

Not passive "I'm only woman, what can I do?"

Speaks openly - he can say no.

Ruth:

If Boaz rejects her she's finished, reputation gone, lost everything.
"You are more righteous than I am" - brings life to him and -
King David (grandmother). Only Gentile woman in Messiah's family tree -

Esther

Like Ruth risks her all - reputation, her very life.
And speaks life, salvation to an entire nation.

Women - not aggressive or threatening, not manipulative, nor are they passive victims of their circumstances?

Real godly assertiveness is to know will of God and do it, whatever it costs

Redemption

At cross God meets our deepest needs, fills grand canyon, undoes fall and tesuqahj When we find our fulfilment in him, it liberates us from pleasing men, from stereotypes put on us. Time to fulfil our calling - to speak life to neighbourhood, homes, workplace. That's the choice - to live with consequences of the fall - or to live with consequences of redemption!

2. New Testament

Jesus and Women

John 11

"If you'd been here....." Martha aggressive. Robust relationship and he loved her for it.
"Your brother will rise -" "I know he'll rise in the resurrection on the last day!" - Dan 12v2
Reveals for first time he is resurrection - to a woman
Martha now assertive - "Yes, Lord I believe You are the Messiah!" and empowers him into speaking life to Lazarus!

Luke 10:42

At home - Martha goads Jesus to confine Mary to domestic stereotype,
As Mary Stewart Van Leuwen - Gender and Grace (IVP):

"The fall ripped apart the organic unity of homes and communities and turned us into a society of commuting wage earners (mostly men) and domestically isolated homemakers (mostly women)

Mary sits at his feet. Tradition for men to sit at feet of rabbis and learn. Jesus says she has chosen best ie - prime task of any disciple, male or female, is to sit at his feet and learn to follow.

Treats women as equals - no different from men. Lets them provide financially. Woman at well - told me all I'd ever done! 5 men - tesuqah par excellence! Turns her into first Apostle!

Jesus didn't raise status of women - raised status of every human being and restored equality.

Women last at the cross, first at the resurrection!

Paul and Women

At Pentecost the spirit fell on both equally.

Galatians - Neither Jew nor Greek, male nor female - so epistles must be egalitarian.

Ministered in partnership with women.

Romans 16 v6 - roll call of great and good. Of 29, 10 are women!

Prisca the teacher, who led a church

Junia the apostle (male version of name introduced in 13th c) In prison

Phoebe, patron and leader of church at Cenchræ

Euodia and Syntyche - fellow labourers in the Gospel with Paul

Tryphaena, Tryphosa and Persis - fellow labourers, same words as for men -

Barnabus and Timothy and Silas

Four basic questions for analysing any text:

1. What did it mean in its original context?
2. What do the words actually mean?
3. How does it fit with other texts on the same or similar issues?
4. What is its meaning for today?

Headship and Submission

2 concepts allegedly giving mandate for subordination of women:

- Primarily marriage, not for single.

a) Headship - Ephesians 5:22-33.

"Be subject to one another out of reverence to Christ. Wives be subject to your husbands, as to the Lord, for the husband is the head of the wife as Christ is the head of the church....Husbands love your wives as Christ loved the church."

Head

No word headship in Scripture.

Head is a metaphor - means "like this", not is this!!!

For us "head" = boss.

No suggestion of authority here.

Had Paul wanted to he could have used the word "archon" = leader, in front, (109 times in NT).

1 Cor 11:3 "The head of every man is Christ, the head of a woman is her husband and the head of Christ is God."

Is there hierarchy in godhead? Subordinationism a heresy

Kephale (head here) = Source (of river, life).

About accountability, not authority, resourcing and releasing.

Christ is head of church reference to = Ps 118 v22 "The stone the builders rejected is the head of the corner" - support, not dominate!

b) Submission

Paul radical - compares relationship to Christ and Church - is exalting marriage, confirming mutuality - emphasise sanctity,

Hypotasso = To show responsible behaviour, eg respect.

Not about letting him make all the decisions - or even obey!
"Men love your wives as Christ loved church" as if she were your own body – radical stuff for the Romans.
Christ gave himself up completely to make her whole, liberate and release her, resource her. Women to be cherished and valued, not like other Roman counterparts.
Subjugation is pagan concept.

Paul cleverly addressed problem at fall -
Women can use words to hurt men, tendency to manipulate - told to submit, to respect, be courteous, kind, gracious.
Men tendency to dominate told to renege power and love to ultimate degree - harder!

Keep Silence and Don't Teach

Two isolated verses used to silence women:

1. Keep Silent

I Cor 14:34 - as in all the churches the women should keep silence - if there's anything they want to know let them ask their husbands at home.

Women prayed prophesied, preached, had authority over men (Priscilla). So what does this mean? Several possibilities - see *Woman, The Full Story*, Michele Guinness (Zondervan)

2. No teaching/authority over men

I Suffer Not A Woman - Richard and Catherine dark Kroeger (Baker)

1Tim2:12

I do not permit a woman to teach or have authority over men. She is to keep silent, for Adam was created first, then Eve.

Context:

Ephesus - Diana worship - could produce children without male involvement – Female was therefore superior.

A group of women confused Diana with Eve and spread serious gnostic heresy, claiming they had access to higher, superior knowledge for only known to them and to be discovered in cultic-type sex.

ch 5; 13 Busybodies = "sunergoi" = Witchcraft.

I am not permitting these women to teach.

authority = authentein

Used in Greek drama - vulgar word for solicit, lure into sex.

They're to learn to be good wives and mothers, out of mischief.

Let these women learn (radical for Roman woman) in silence. I am not permitting them to teach this heresy, or lure men into sex. Keep them quiet and don't let them proclaim themselves the originator of man for Adam was formed before Eve".

Notes from Women as God Intended, a talk by Michele Guinness, February 2007.