

The following was presented by Jocelyn Andersen at the Seneca Falls 2 Christian Women's Rights Convention held in Orlando, Florida on July 24, 2010

Our Response to the Rationale based on the Danvers Statement and Our Affirmations

We have been moved in our purpose by the following contemporary developments which we observe with deep concern:

1. We are concerned about the widespread uncertainty and confusion within our churches regarding the divinely mandated equality between men and women and the inordinate attention given to the deeply harmful and prejudicial concepts of Biblical masculinity and Biblical femininity as perpetuated by the council on Biblical Manhood and Womanhood;
2. The tragic effects of this confusion in overturning the balance of perfect equality of men and women, within the church and marriage, is inestimable with men and boys assuming the posture of lords of creation, while girls and women fall prey to an unscriptural inferiority;
3. We are concerned about the increasing promotion given to male dominance along with accompanying distortions and/or neglect of the functional equality portrayed in Scripture between redeemed husbands and wives;
4. We are concerned about the widespread ambivalence regarding the value of women except in regards to what is perceived as their "roles" as "*vocational*" homemakers and other ministries historically performed by women.
5. We are concerned about the spurious charges that equality between the sexes leads to addiction to pornography and radical lifestyle/worldview changes in favor of homosexuality or lesbianism, which it does not.
6. We are convinced that the prevalence of abuse in within Christian families is a direct result of patriocentric theology;
7. We are concerned about the growing number of churches enforcing rigid roles for men and women that do not conform to Biblical teaching but backfire in perpetuating the oppression of women and in hindering and crippling men in their efforts at being biblically faithful witnesses;
8. We are concerned about the increasing prevalence and acceptance of hermeneutical oddities such as the trinity marriage paradigm based on the heretical Arian doctrine of an inferior Jesus.
9. These hermeneutical oddities pose a threat to Biblical authority as the clarity of Scripture is jeopardized and the accessibility of its meaning to ordinary people, is withdrawn into the restricted realm of Hebrew and Greek "scholars" who attempt with "scholarship" to refute that in Christ there is neither male nor female Jew nor Greek slave nor free but that all are *one*.

10. And behind all this, is the apparent accommodation of leaders within the evangelical church to the spirit of male dominance at the expense of biblical authenticity.

We Affirm the Following, Based on our Understanding of Biblical Teachings:

1. Both man and woman were created in God's image and are equal before God in *every* way both in theory and in practical function and application.
2. Distinctions in "masculine" and "feminine" roles are man-made ordinances and were not ordained by God as part of any "created order."
3. The man's headship in marriage was not established by God before the Fall, nor later as a result of sin. The doctrine of male "headship" does not exist in scripture.
4. The Fall introduced distortions into the relationships between men and women, the most significant being the universal dominance of males over females as both prophecy and all history attest.
 - o In the home, the husband's loving, humble, companionship tends to be replaced by domination or, if he cannot be in charge, by passivity, and if a wife does not joyfully submit to male domination, she is accused of usurping his supposed authority.
 - o In the church, sin inclines both women and men toward a worldly love of power or an abdication of spiritual responsibility, and inclines such women as are called to the ministry to view such calls as gender inappropriate and to rebel against the legitimate call of God in accepting limitations imposed upon them by the unbiblical injunctions of men.
 - o As women, we assume full responsibility for our own neglect of the use of our spiritual gifts in ignoring the call, the responsibility, and the authority to carry out *whatever* ministry God has called us to do.
5. The Old Testament, as well as the New Testament, manifests the equally high value and dignity which God attached to the work and words of godly men and women. The New Testament affirms the overriding principle that all individuals, whether male or female must work out their own salvation with fear and trembling. The patriarchal and racial hierarchy evident in parts of the Old Testament, which is exclusively prophetic and applicable to the Old Covenant Nation of Israel only, is lifted completely, in the New Testament from both Jew and Gentile by the redeeming work of Jesus Christ. There are no longer any legitimate hierarchies involved in race or gender.
6. Redemption in Christ aims at removing the distortions introduced by the curse.
 - o In the family, husbands should forsake harshness and the selfish idea that they are mandated by God to rule their families and, instead, to grow in

love for their wives; wives should forsake blind submission to the false doctrine of male headship. Wives and husbands should grow in love for each other preferring the other before themselves.

7. In the church, There are no governing and teaching roles restricted to men only. Redemption in Christ gives both men and women equal share in the blessings of salvation as well as in governing and teaching roles within the church.
8. In all of life, and in every situation, domestic or otherwise, Christ is the supreme authority and guide for both men and women. Men are not mandated by God to replace the Holy Spirit in the lives of Christian women.
9. In the church, both men and women should repent of gender prejudice and respond obediently to a heartfelt sense of call to ministry. Obedience to God should never be set aside in favor of submission to traditions of men. Commands to abstain from obeying the Holy Spirit in regards to ministry gifts and callings are blasphemous and heretical. Biblical teaching—not traditions of men—should remain the authority for testing our subjective discernment of God's will.
10. With half the world's population outside the reach of indigenous evangelism; with countless people in those societies who have never 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 can be excused for ignoring a heartfelt call to the ministry. Gender will not be excused in the day of reckoning for neglecting to fulfill any ministry to which we are called by God. With all authority, for the glory of Christ and the good of this fallen world. We should obey God and not man in all things.
11. We are convinced that a denial or neglect of obedience to the Word of God, and to the Spirit of God, in regards to the authoritative function of women, as well as men, in the home, church, and society will lead to increasingly destructive consequences within our families, churches, and the culture at large.