

**KINGDOM LEADERSHIP PRINCIPLES: MULTIPLYING
GOD'S LABORERS TO COMPLETE GOD'S MISSION**

By

Leslie Anne Neal Segraves

A Dissertation Presented to the
Faculty of the School of Intercultural Studies

FULLER THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

In Partial Fulfillment of the
Requirements for the Degree
Doctor of Missiology

May 2009

ABSTRACT

Segraves, Leslie Anne Neal

2009 “Kingdom Leadership Principles: Multiplying God’s Laborers to Complete God’s Mission.” Fuller Theological Seminary, School of Intercultural Studies. Doctor of Missiology, pp. 202.

Millions continue to live without access to the Gospel. Out of compassion, Jesus told his disciples to pray for God to send more laborers into the harvest. Though not enough laborers, the Church continues to debate whether God calls and empowers women in leadership. In this dissertation, I seek to establish a kingdom of God perspective on leadership in order to multiply the harvest force for the sake of completing the Great Commission. I sought to extrapolate kingdom principles of leadership from both the Bible and from contemporary contexts to discover how these applied principles affected the Great Commission.

In Part One, I offered my theoretical construct of the kingdom of God. I demonstrated that the unified Triune God created humanity in the *imago Dei* – interdependent and mutual in blessings and responsibilities. At the Fall, the harmonious and unified creation fragmented. The Fall destroyed humanity’s interdependence, but Jesus provided redemption. God gave the Church both the message and ministry of reconciliation, empowering both males and females with spiritual gifts to complete his mission. Because all sound missiology must find its foundation in theology, I began my research with biblical case studies—Deborah and David. I extrapolated leadership principles from their selected narratives demonstrating that God called, equipped, and empowered leaders based on internal, rather than external features.

In Part Two, I offered four descriptive case studies from India and China. I sought to extrapolate leadership principles employed by these leaders and the effect on the Great Commission when they either released or restricted women's leadership. Case study One, Two, and Four placed no restrictions on female leadership; the data and findings revealed the Church gained synergy and momentum in God's mission when the Church equipped, empowered and released females to use their leadership gifts. After integrating my findings from both the biblical case studies and the contemporary case studies, I offered ten kingdom leadership principles and made recommendations to both the Church and individual believers to enable them to multiply the labor force, working with God effectively and strategically to complete God's mission.

Mentor: R. Daniel Shaw

Word Count: 343

DEDICATION

To Chad, my true partner from God,

May our unity reflect principles of God's kingdom.

To Joeli, my precious daughter, the Truth has set you free,

May the Lord anoint you, give you dreams, and may you make a difference!

To Joy, my special baby already with Jesus,

May your memory push me to live joyfully for Jesus in faith. My hope is your reality.

To those committed to partnership between males and females,

May God strengthen you as you live prophetically in a fallen world.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I could not have achieved this goal without the help of many people over the past four years.

Every year I appreciate even more the gift of Chad in my life. As my partner in marriage, ministry, and parenting; I appreciate Chad's humility, solid commitment to Christ, and unceasing devotion to reach the least reached people groups. He inspires me.

To my parents, Alan and Jinna Neal, who grew confidence, character, and integrity in me and my two sisters. Because of the example they set of hard work, family loyalty, putting others first, and devotion to issues that matter; I learned that I could and should make a difference in the world. They are some of my best friends.

To family who helped me in numerous ways as I wrote my dissertation with a new child! I could not have accomplished this goal without the help of my niece and friend Madison (14 years old) who watched Joeli often. Also, parents (the Neals and Segraves), my sister Ashlee, and my grandmother and papaw Margie and Thomas Dockery offered invaluable help and encouragement.

The 10/40 Connections Board of Directors encouraged me throughout the past four years and graciously offered me the time needed to travel, research, and write the dissertation.

My special "Doctoral Prayer Team" who prayed for my stamina, wisdom, and perseverance as I pursued this goal alongside Chad, while we worked full-time and grew our family. I also appreciate the generosity of the Vernie Faulker Acker Memorial Fund committee who annually gave finances to help defray some costs. Thank you!

I give special thanks to the professors at Fuller who offered missiological experience and theological reflection. In particular, I thank Dan Shaw for his consistent encouragement, hard work, and spiritual depth and insight. I appreciated his academic rigor as well as his compassionate recognition of other events that took place in our lives. Dan Shaw demonstrated Christ-like support with both the miscarriage of Joy and the double surgery of our daughter Joeli one month later. I also thank Doug McConnell for envisioning this new Doctor of Missiology program. I thoroughly enjoyed his breadth of missiological and leadership knowledge and the empowerment he offered. I also thank Betsy Glanville for her leadership insight and organizational skills.

I also thank my Indian friends who consistently display and live out kingdom culture, regardless of the cost. I appreciate their willingness to allow me into their lives.

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INTRODUCTION

On a small row boat in the lake of Kashmir, my husband Chad and I watched as a little village emerged from sleep. We traveled to Kashmir to teach two sessions about the power of unity and reconciliation to a group of church planters plagued with internal disunity. We disembarked from our boat and watched a fisherman prepare his large net for the new day. Chad asked, “How much for your net?” The fisherman replied, “This net is my work.” Chad said, “I know. Would you take \$20 for it? You can then buy a new one.” The man smiled and excitedly handed us his smelly fishing net. That day we used the net as a symbol to teach the church planters how God wanted believers to unite together, each holding their portion of the net to bring in the harvest.

Jesus described the kingdom of God as a net “that was let down into the lake and caught all kinds of fish” (Mt. 13:47). The net in Jesus’ day, as in the Kashmiri example above, required many people to hold the net to bring in the harvest of fish. In the same way, the fulfillment of the Great Commission¹ requires the participation and service of all who claim allegiance to Christ. The call to God and allegiance to God’s kingdom elicit outward response. Discipleship “is not for its own sake; it enlists the disciples in the service of God’s reign” (Bosch 1991:4). Simply, God calls people to salvation and then sends them into service, equipped with spiritual gifts to extend his reign on the earth.

Many church traditions throughout the generations prescribe limits or restrictions on women’s leadership in the Church, using the Bible as its source. Yet, these restrictions

¹ The Great Commission serves as part of the overarching mission of God. I will develop these ideas later in the dissertation. At times, I use these terms interchangeably, but I recognize that the mission of God involves a full, comprehensive plan of God to reconcile all things to Christ – both the natural created order and humanity. The Church must complete the Great Commission, to make disciples of all ethnic groups, as part of the comprehensive mission of God on the earth.

and limitations continue to devalue both the identity of females and their contributions.²

Juliet Thomas, an Indian Christian leader, states:

Women have regretfully testified ‘that though their leadership qualities are sought after and used in the secular fields, they shrink into insignificance, when they are in the church.’ In a world where women serve as prime ministers, ambassadors and business executives, as well as carry out their responsibilities in their home, some are rightly questioning the Church on the prescribed limits within which women must often serve (Thomas 2005:189).

Does the release of women or the restriction of women using leadership gifts impact the Great Commission?³

As an atheist in the nation of China, Ms. G. came to know Jesus Christ. Though her husband and children ridiculed her for years, eventually they also believed. Ms. G., a gifted teacher, gathered people in her home and shared the Scriptures. Before long, their church grew to over 200 people. Her husband, a great cook and wise counselor, served wholeheartedly.

The church grew until a Western man attended the service and noticed the structure of Ms. G.’s group. He approached Mr. and Ms. G., “You are not doing church in a biblical pattern. It is not right for Ms. G. to teach and lead. It is not right for Mr. G. to cook, serve, and only give wise counsel. You are not following the biblical mandate for a man and woman’s roles.” Heartbroken that they had disobeyed God’s rules, Ms. G. stopped teaching and Mr. G. began to teach. Eventually, the church dwindled in size. Finally, another Western couple enabled Mr. and Ms. G. to look at Scripture through new eyes and understand how God expects gifts to be used. Ms. G. again taught, and Mr. G.

² An American woman in her thirties recently stated, “I always knew I was smart, talented, and gifted. But I just figured that God didn’t really need me because I was a woman.” A ten-year old girl who attends a Christian school asked with a furrowed brow. “Leslie, does God love boys more than girls? I felt like it when the teacher told the story. The boys started rubbing it in that they were better than girls and used the Bible to do it.”

³ In this dissertation, I deal only with the controversial gifts for women – leadership that involves women either teaching or exercising authority over men.

began to serve again with hospitality and wisdom. The church now has over 1000 members and has sent their own workers to unreached areas of China.⁴

Despite the urgent need for the Church to equip, empower, and release more laborers for the countless millions in need of a Savior, important questions arise that deserve the Church's attention and reflection. Does God distribute spiritual gifts based on one's gender? Does God give leadership gifts to females? Can a woman only lead children and other women? If "Mission is the result of God's initiative, rooted in God's purposes to restore and heal creation" (Guder et al. 1998:4), then how does Christ's crucifixion heal and impact redeemed males and females and God's purposes for them?

Through the research that enabled me to write this dissertation, I sought to personally study and reflect on the above questions in order to grasp God's strategies for equipping, empowering, releasing, and multiplying laborers for increased effectiveness in accomplishing God's mission. I looked at both biblical case studies and contemporary case studies in both the Indian and Chinese context. Out of a missiological conviction that the globalized Body of Christ can and should learn from one another, I chose international case studies to communicate to the North American audience, since the North American Church continues to struggle with what women can and cannot do in God's mission.

God has used the Western Church powerfully as the West has sent its people and resources to many nations around the world. Yet, the globalized Church now has stories and models that can challenge, inspire, and instruct the Western church.

⁴ I met this couple after this new Western couple disciplined them for a couple of years. Both Mr. and Ms. G. served according to their gifts when Chad and I met them and shared their story with us. They asked us to lead a seminar about marriage to their house church network. After teaching that in the Genesis 3 account God did not curse the man or woman (only the serpent and ground), Ms. G. ran up to us during a break. "I have been set free! I am not cursed and I always thought I was since I am a woman! This truth needs to be taught to millions!"

Through the act of storytelling we recognize that those in the dominant culture have constructed the church to fit their needs, and their voices have been heard from pulpits, theological classrooms, books, and denominational hierarchies. Now it is time for others to be heard as well. An encounter is the place for shared experience. This means letting the silenced stories be heard. This exercise repositions our perspectives by allowing other perspectives to be heard (Conde-Frazier, Kang, and Parrett 2004:178).

Service in God's reign requires believers to understand the standards, principles and worldview of kingdom culture so that the Church might better reflect God's reign. By listening to and learning from others' stories, God can reshape and transform the globalized Church more to the standards of God's kingdom. "The continual conversion of the church happens as the congregation hears, responds to, and obeys the gospel of Jesus Christ in ever new and more comprehensive ways" (Guder 2000:150).

Jesus' mission "is the good news of God's love, incarnated in the witness of a community, for the sake of the world" (Bosch 1991:519). I often ponder and reflect upon how the Church can more effectively complete the Great Commission as I travel into many areas of the world that desperately need Christ. My study arises out of my desire to see the Church's momentum increase as it displays the kingdom and passionately and effectively pursues the Great Commission. Increased momentum will allow all ethnic groups to more quickly experience the transforming power of Jesus Christ. May the Church around the world listen to one another, may it encounter Christ through shared stories, and may the Church demonstrate unity as it works together. May the Church reflect God's kingdom and complete God's mission on the earth.

Purpose

The purpose of this study is to extrapolate kingdom principles of leadership from both the Bible and from contemporary mission contexts and to discover how these principles applied can affect the Great Commission.

Goal

The goal of this dissertation is to offer practical and effective kingdom principles of leadership that emerge from my research, enabling the Church to reflect strategically on how to advance the redemptive purposes of the *missio Dei* more effectively.

Significance

I believe this study contains missiological significance for both the Church at large and the organization I co-direct. I hope my research, conclusions and recommendations will serve as a catalyst for missional churches, enabling them to reflect on their leadership practices that affect the completion of the Great Commission. Though I have read some literature that communicates the need to release all men and women for the sake of the Great Commission, I seek to demonstrate through my research whether this claim holds validity in particular contemporary contexts. As a result of both my biblical research and my contemporary contexts, I hope others will reexamine their own leadership models in light of the biblical and contemporary data. In future years, I hope extended research can enable the Church to more fully understand male-female reconciliation and its link to the Great Commission. Hopefully this clear link will encourage churches to establish leadership models that fully embrace the participation of both males and females.

My premise for the full release of women gifted in leadership to God's service does not arise from my commitment to seek justice (Matt. 6:33), though the Psalmist describes justice as the foundation of God's throne (Ps. 89:14). Instead, my premise stems from a desire to see the Church obey God and complete the Great Commission. With a determination to see the Great Commission completed, I hope to offer a dissertation that serves as a catalytic tool enabling missional churches and agencies to release more laborers, thereby multiplying the labor force.

This dissertation also provides missiological significance for the mission organization I co-direct called 10/40 Connections (10/40). 10/40 cultivates connections in a fragmented world, increasing the Church's momentum to extend the hope of Christ among the least reached.⁵ 10/40 commits itself to practical theology. My theoretical construct of the kingdom of God allowed me to study more deeply the theological issues of the kingdom of God, human community and the Church, the blessing and responsibility of reconciliation, and the importance of looking at Scripture to discover what God sought to reveal about himself through biblical narratives. The research also enabled me to study the opposing side and come to a fuller understanding of what the opposing side fears if the Church fully releases women. The field research allowed me to reflect on models in use that practice the release of women in leadership gifts.

10/40 often serves as a catalytic organization. I see this dissertation and the outcomes of it enabling 10/40 to "stir things up," enabling churches and Christians to reconsider their beliefs and traditions, allowing God to transform them where necessary, for the sake of more effectively participating in the Great Commission. By adding a solid theological stance on gender reconciliation and its links to the Great Commission, 10/40 can offer strategies for churches and agencies who desire to join God in his mission more effectively, strategically, and prophetically in the fragmented world.

Central Research Issue

The central research issue is to derive biblical principles of male and female leadership from a kingdom perspective and to recognize their impact in contemporary mission.

⁵ 10/40 seeks to cultivate three primary types of connections: (1) *Ekklesia* – The Called Out Ones – Connecting the Church to the world based on God's mission. (2) *Ish/Isha* – Male/Female – Connecting males and females based on God's ideal and (3) *Ethne* – Ethnic Groups – Connecting least reached groups to God through both the word and deed.

Research Questions

1. What does biblical literature say about the community between males and females in the context of leadership in the kingdom of God?
2. What does God intend to teach us about principles of leadership through the biblical personalities of Deborah and David?
3. What principles of leadership do contemporary leaders employ in specific contexts of India and China?
4. As these leaders practice these biblical leadership principles, what is the missional impact on the Great Commission in their contexts?

Definitions

Missional – “Mission is the result of God’s initiative, rooted in God’s purposes to restore and heal creation. ‘Mission’ means ‘sending,’ and it is the central biblical theme describing the purpose of God’s action in human history” (Guder et al. 1998:4). Christopher Wright states, “Our mission (if it is biblically informed and validated) means our committed participation as God’s people, at God’s invitation and command, in God’s own mission within the story of God’s world for the redemption of God’s creation” (C. Wright 2006:22-23). “Missional” is an adjective and refers to how the Church lives out the *missio Dei*, to restore and heal creation. Jesus invites and commissions the church to participate in this restoration by spreading the kingdom of God among all ethnic groups (Matt. 24:14; 28:18-20).

Kingdom of God – The kingdom of God is the rule and reign of God. Jesus demonstrates the reign of God by his teaching and actions. Though the Scriptures reveal many aspects of this reign, the principles of the kingdom I seek to discover revolve around how the kingdom of God impacts leadership and the male-female relationship in the community of God.

Contemporary Mission – I seek to describe three contemporary cases that embody missional living and whose understanding of God’s mission provides them a framework for leadership in their movements. Case Studies One and Two occur in India – Uttar Pradesh and Mumbai. Case Study Four occurs in China. Case Study Three occurs in Delhi, India and describes a young woman who moved from an understanding and practice of gift-based ministry to gender-based ministry.⁶

Leadership – The ability to influence and guide others based on relationships and purposeful actions for the future (Kouzes and Posner 2002:xxvii). Leadership stems from authority to influence and can imply a position.

Delimitations

Instead of a comprehensive analysis of leadership, in this study I look for God’s intentions in choosing leaders around the specific issues of calling, power, influence, and authority based on kingdom principles.

Though I deal with a kingdom perspective throughout the study, I will not look at all dimensions of the kingdom of God. I am delimiting my research to how the kingdom of God impacts relationships, particularly the relationship between males and females.

My international case studies comprise movements that multiply the church through either the cell church or the house church model. Though I recognize other factors also contribute to the success of these models, I simply examine these models based on their understanding of whom they equip, empower, and release into leadership.

⁶ Gender-based ministry refers to role differentiation based on gender. Gift-based ministry implies ministry based on God’s gifting of a person—regardless of gender.

Assumptions

1. I assume, according to the Scripture and the creeds and traditions of the reputable church Fathers, that the Persons of the Trinity are co-eternal, co-equal in power and authority, and without ontological or functional hierarchy; and thereby provide a model for the community of Christ followers.
2. I assume that God created males and females in the *imago Dei*, and thus no inequality should exist in the Body of Christ due to gender, ethnicity, or class.
3. I assume that the Holy Spirit continues to give spiritual gifts to the Body of Christ; therefore, believers receive gifts according to God's will, irrespective of gender, for the building up of the Body for God's purposes in the world.⁷
4. I assume that Jesus' kingdom ethic of power, authority and leadership defies the world's systems and exists as the standard for all subsequent models.⁸
5. I assume that the release of women into full participation in the Church, regardless of gender, will multiply the labor force and thus positively affect the completion of the Great Commission.⁹
6. Throughout this work, I chose to deal with the more fundamental issues that dictate how a man or woman can be used, rather than debate the difficult passages in the New Testament. My assumptions about the power of the crucifixion and resurrection lead me to believe in God's willingness to equip both males and females for leadership, without restrictions to either simply based on gender.

⁷ I understand that there is theological position that believes in the cessation of spiritual gifts. Due to space, I will not deal with this theological position.

⁸ My first four assumptions surround assumptions I have about God. These first four assumptions form the rationale for my last two assumptions which impact my field research.

⁹ This assumption based on my theological understanding impacts my hermeneutics on both the kingdom of God and the redeemed relationship between males and females. Due to this bias, in Chapter 4, I discuss the methods I used in my research to counter this bias.

Summary

In this dissertation, I explore how the kingdom of God impacts leadership. I highlight the missional effectiveness that occurs when believers empower and release believers based on God's kingdom principles of leadership.

In Part One, I explain my theoretical construct of the kingdom of God and derive kingdom principles of leadership from biblical case studies. In Chapter 1, I explain the community of the Triune God and its impact on God's creation of the human community in the *imago Dei*. I also explain how the Fall affects the human community and then how on the cross, God offers reconciliation to the world. I also explain how God reveals kingdom principles of power and authority. In Chapter 2, I explain how the Spirit empowers the Church to fulfill the *missio Dei*. I also demonstrate the Gospel's respect of culture, yet the prophetic voice of the Gospel that challenges all cultures with the standards and principles of God's reign. I also briefly express the contrarian view to my assumption that the release of women positively affects the Great Commission. In Chapter 3, I use narrative theology to extrapolate God's intentions in choosing both Deborah and David and from this data I discover kingdom principles of leadership.

In Part Two, I indicate my methodology for research, share the findings of my field research in contemporary mission, and develop conclusions and recommendations based on my findings. In Chapter 4, I define my methodology for research acquiring my field research. In Chapter 5, I report my findings from my Indian context through ethnographic interviews and three Indian case studies. In Chapter 6, I integrate my findings and make comparisons between my Indian case studies and my Chinese case study. I then compare and contrast these findings to my findings from my biblical case studies. I conclude my paper by offering conclusions and recommendations based on my findings.

I trust that this study will encourage missional Christians to re-examine their theology from the redemptive, prophetic spirit of the kingdom of God. Hopefully in the process, the Church will multiply its labor force by releasing all believers based on gifts, rather than gender, thereby increasing its momentum and synergy.¹⁰

¹⁰ Recognizing the ideas presented in this paper conflict with many believers' understanding about women and their participation in the Church, I chose to strategically write this dissertation with Everett Rogers' "diffusion of innovation" in mind. Views about women and their participation in the Church involve worldview issues that stem from both biblical hermeneutics and culture. Rogers' "diffusion of innovation" concerns itself with new ideas and moving those ideas through a social system (Rogers 1983:5). Rogers explains five characteristics of innovations that enable a new idea to take root in a social system: 1. Relative advantage "is the degree to which an innovation is perceived as better than the idea it supersedes." By displaying my contemporary research, I demonstrate the relative advantage to the Church in its mission if the Church fully embraces, equips and releases women. 2. "Compatibility is the degree to which an innovation is perceived as being consistent with the existing values, past experiences, and needs of potential adopters." By using biblical case studies, I tried to demonstrate the contemporary context by using case studies that are compatible with the Scriptures. 3. The more simple an idea, the quicker the idea diffuses across a system. "Complexity is the degree to which an innovation is perceived as difficult to understand and use." To reduce complexity, I used stories to illustrate. 4. "Triability is the degree to which an innovation may be experimented on a limited basis." I used contemporary case studies to demonstrate how some believers today use the innovation and its effect on the Great Commission. 5. Observability "is the degree to which the results of an innovation are visible to others" (1983:15-16). I highlight the international case studies enabling others to observe models in use today.

PART I

THE KINGDOM OF GOD AND BIBLICAL LEADERSHIP

In Part One, I explore the kingdom of God through the lens of the *missio Dei*, the reconciled community, and power. I also study two biblical characters in order to extrapolate principles of kingdom leadership from the Scriptures. In Chapter 1, I explain the community of the Triune God and its impact on the human community created in the *imago Dei*. I also explain how the Fall affects human community and then God's work on the cross to offer reconciliation to the world. In Chapter 2, I explain how the Holy Spirit empowers the Church as the Triune God sends the Church into the world to fulfill the *missio Dei*. I also demonstrate the Gospel's respect of culture, yet the prophetic voice of the Gospel that challenges all cultures with the standards and principles of God's reign. Recognizing the controversy that surrounds the topic of female leadership, I also briefly define some of the terms, passages and concepts of the contrarian view. In Chapter 3, I use narrative theology to extrapolate God's intentions and purposes in choosing both Deborah and David as leaders.

CHAPTER 1

THE KINGDOM, THE *MISSIO DEI*, AND COMMUNITY

In 2001, I walked in Allahabad, India where on one “holy” day; twenty-four million Hindus dipped in the Ganges River. They chanted, “Behold the Mother Ganga who takes away the sins of the world.” I prayed, “Jesus, what do you think when you see these masses of people?” Immediately my mind remembered Matthew 9:36, “When he saw the crowds, he had compassion on them, because they were harassed and helpless, like sheep without a shepherd.” Jesus told his disciples to pray for God to send out more workers, realizing more laborers could provide direction and hope to the harassed and helpless masses on the earth. With the heart of a shepherd, Jesus demonstrated in this passage both compassion for the lost and a commitment to work with humans to complete the *missio Dei*—the Triune God’s purposes to redeem, restore, and heal creation.

The Father, committed to the kingdom, sends Jesus to embody and live out the exact representation of the Triune God (Heb. 1:3), enabling humanity to relate personally to God. Jesus, committed to the kingdom, represented God’s sacrificial commitment to offer reconciliation and established God’s reign on earth by his life, crucifixion, and resurrection. The Spirit, committed to the kingdom, empowers the Church to live out God’s kingdom. Workers in God’s vineyard released and empowered to reflect God’s image and his kingdom, receive the commission to serve as co-regents and preach the kingdom of God to all ethnic groups.

The Kingdom of God and the Missio Dei

The kingdom of God and the *missio Dei*, though deeply related do not exist as synonymous terms. Rather, these missiological and theological truths coincide with one another. Jesus defined the kingdom – its standards and practices according to the reign and rule of God. The *missio Dei*, traced throughout the Scriptures, encompasses God’s purposes to establish his reign on the earth among all ethnic groups. Paul Hiebert states, “At the heart of the kingdom is mission. The church is a community called by God to invite people to enter the kingdom of God” (Hiebert 2008:283). Kingdom theology, defined by Jesus, serves as the theological foundation for understanding God’s mission and God’s standards of leadership practices in the Church.

I believe all missiological praxis in the world must root itself in the Word of God. Therefore, in the next two chapters, I lay out a biblical theology for kingdom, mission, and the community which I believe form the foundation for how the Church can and should practice leadership.¹

The Kingdom of God

To understand the kingdom of God, the Church must begin with Jesus, the King. Through his parables and conversations, Jesus taught principles of the kingdom and revealed God’s character; and through his actions, Jesus demonstrated the kingdom’s standards and ethics and showed believers how to live God’s reign practically. E. Stanley Jones states, “A rediscovery of the kingdom without the discovery of the King would... be a half-discovery, for it would be a kingdom without a king....Jesus shows us what God is like and also shows us what the kingdom of God is like in operation. The kingdom

¹ Note that as I develop my argument, I use the main text of both Chapters 1 and 2 to describe the theoretical construct that impacts my research. In the footnotes, I at times give a contrarian viewpoint to my hermeneutic. At the end of Chapter 2, I offer in the main text the contrarian view, while in the footnotes I note scholars who refute that idea. In my biblical case studies, in the main text I offer my understanding of the text based on my research, while I place most of the contrarian understanding in the footnotes.

of God is Christ-likeness universalized” (Jones 1972:34). The kingdom of God played a central role in “Jesus’ understanding of his own mission” (Bosch 1991:31).² While on the earth, Jesus established the Church to serve as a sign and a witness to the kingdom. Because of this urgent, strategic, and vital commission; the Church must commit to keep Jesus as the “ultimate reference point” in their quest to understand and live out the kingdom with a countercultural, prophetic voice (Hiebert 2008:279).³

Some scholars, and I concur, believe the kingdom serves as a “central, overarching theme of the Bible” (Glasser et al. 2003:20).⁴ The kingdom motif binds together the Old and New Testaments; the Old Testament offers a beginning and hope, and the New Testament offers completion and fulfillment (Bright 1981:197).⁵ In both

² Bosch claims that two features must be understood about Jesus’ ministry if a Christian wishes to appreciate Jesus’ own self-understanding of his ministry – 1. “God’s reign is not understood as exclusively future but as both future and already present,” and Jesus’ ministry “launches an all-out attack on evil in all its manifestations” (Bosch 1991:32). Paul Hiebert writes that Christ’s arrival on the earth brought the presence of the kingdom, but the fullness and final establishment of the kingdom will not occur until Jesus returns and establishes his final rule on earth in the future (Hiebert 2008:278-279). George Ladd speaks about the “already” and “not yet” realities of the kingdom (Ladd 1959:16-18).

³ Hiebert highlights that a weakness to the view that the kingdom is the central theme of scripture is that the kingdom could lose its countercultural, prophetic voice if the term is used to justify our own culture or worldview (Hiebert 2008:277). He maintains, “The church has always been in danger of equating the kingdom of God with kingdoms of the earth” (2008:280). I agree with Hiebert. I have noticed in the past ten years more emphasis on the kingdom of God, but find different people with conflicting biblical hermeneutics expressing their view as the kingdom of God. This danger should encourage Christians to maintain humility with how they understand God and the kingdom and to commit to listen and learn from others to continually allow God to bring fuller understanding and transformation.

⁴ See Arthur Glasser for greater understanding of the kingdom of God and Jesus the King. Glasser ties God’s mission to the kingdom of God. Glasser points out that the kingdom of God is explicitly taught about in the New Testament, but the Old Testament can also be understood with this perspective as God desires to destroy evil and grief experienced by humans. This Old Testament perspective enables believers to understand the kingdom in the New Testament more completely (Glasser et al. 2003).

⁵ Glasser establishes 7 axioms that link God’s mission in the Old and New Testaments that I believe build onto John Bright’s ideas: 1. God is sovereign in his kingship, 2. God’s sovereign rule demands personal commitment, 3. God’s subjects must constitute a “servant” community, 4. The Old Testament community of the King becomes the New Testament Body of Christ, 5. God’s people are called to mission, 6. God’s sovereign rule will be relentlessly resisted and opposed, 7. The direction of God’s sovereign rule is always into the future (Glasser et al. 2003:23-28).

Genesis 1-2 and Revelation 22 in the new Eden, the reign of God fully resides on the earth.⁶ When God reigns; righteousness, peace, and joy prevail (see Rom. 14:17).

Because the reign of God defines the kingdom of God, and Jesus told his followers to pray for the kingdom to “come on earth as it is in heaven,” Jesus revealed his intentions that the culture of heaven permeates the earth’s cultures. Jesus expects his followers to live out God’s reign in obedience in all contexts and cultures.⁷ As the King defined the kingdom with his words and actions, Jesus also commissioned the Church to proclaim the kingdom to all ethnic groups (Matt. 24:14); thus Jesus gave the Church the task to extend the *missio Dei*. Since the *missio Dei* consists of restoring the kingdom on earth “as it is in heaven,” the Church must live with the kingdom at its heart. I believe since the Church is the Body of Christ, the kingdom motif impacts the community between God and people and among people.

The Missio Dei

The kingdom of God traced through Scripture gives a better understanding of “God’s mission through God’s people in God’s world” (Glasser et al. 2003:12). John Stott states, “Mission arises from the heart of God himself and is communicated from his heart to ours. Mission is the global outreach of the global people of a global God” (Stott 1992:335). Christopher Wright recounts how God’s character, as revealed throughout the pages of Scripture, demonstrates a God who is “personal, purposeful, and goal-oriented” (C. Wright 2006:63). I concur with these missiologists and scholars and believe that

⁶ See Genesis 1:26-28 and Revelation 22:5 which exist as bookends in the biblical text. God’s story begins in a Garden at creation and ends in a Garden. In the midst of the biblical narrative, the concept of the Garden surfaces. Jesus’ agony of accepting the cup of God’s wrath occurred in a Garden. The women mistake Jesus for the gardener when they see the resurrected Christ. In Revelation 22, rivers, trees, sinlessness, and the presence of God describe the New Eden paralleling the Garden before sin entered.

⁷ E. Stanley Jones writes about the idealism and the realism of the kingdom. Jones believes God does not just give an idea about the kingdom but gives the Church the mandate to live out kingdom reality (see Jones (1972)).

Christ desires and expects his followers to live with a commitment to God's mission and purposes in the world, which Paul defined as God's desire "to reconcile the world to himself in Christ" (2 Cor. 5:19).⁸

The *missio Dei* originally meant "the sending of God."⁹ The Father sent Jesus, and the Father and Son sent the Spirit; later the Triune God sends the Church to the world to fulfill God's purposes (John 20:21). Within God's nature a "sending" dynamic exists, which believers reflect when they live for God's purposes.¹⁰

God invites humanity to work with him to fulfill his mission on earth – to see his kingdom proclaimed and lived out among all ethnic groups. God's invitation began with the Israelite people whom God chose as "a treasured possession... a kingdom of priests and a holy nation" (Ex. 19:5-6). In the New Testament, God issued an invitation to the Church to live as a community of God who are "a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, God's special possession" (1 Pet. 2:9). God called the Israelites and later the Church to reflect the sending nature of God and to serve as a kingdom of priests on

⁸ In my research, many scholars (Ladd, Bright, Wright, Bosch, Hiebert, and Glasser to name some premier scholars) noted that this reconciliation included evangelism and the social gospel. I concur believing that the word and deed comprise the whole Gospel. Thus, this full Gospel (demonstrated in Luke 4 and Isaiah 61) provides what Hiebert classifies as the mission of God – the restoration of the kingdom on earth (Hiebert 2008:278).

⁹ The term *missio Dei* was first coined by a German missiologist named Karl Hartenstein who wanted to summarize Karl Barth's theology that connected mission to the Trinity. Both Hartenstein and Barth wanted to portray that mission was grounded in the Trinity (Wright 2006:62). The original meaning of *missio Dei* began with an understanding that because God's very nature is a sending God, God then sends the Church out with his mission. This definition eventually became weakened, as some concluded that the *missio Dei* was simply God's mission and therefore did not refer to any specific work of the Church. This understanding eventually excluded evangelism. Wright seeks to reaffirm the biblical truth of the *missio Dei* and the original understanding of this phrase (Wright 2006:63). The mission is God's, but God gives the Church the Great Commission as part of God's mission to reconcile all things to himself.

¹⁰ Because God's nature is to send, the Church also in reflecting God must send and empower others to engage in God's mission. Because of this characteristic of God, I believe every new believer and every new people group to enter the kingdom must be encouraged, equipped, and empowered to go and take the Gospel to another person or people. At times however, missionaries take the Gospel and the sending stops with those to whom the missionary traveled. The new believers seldom receive their commission to go and make global impact themselves! I believe this methodology steals from new believers the blessing and responsibility of working with God in his mission.

behalf of the world and God. God offered both the blessing and the responsibility for the Church to serve as the messengers and the ministers of reconciliation (2 Cor. 5:18-19).

Christ expects his mission to immerse all aspects of the Church, or the Church reduces the purposes of God for the Church. Johannes Verkuyl states, “Subversion of the missionary mandate one encounters in various contemporary missiologies and models of theology of religion must simply be called what it is: betrayal of Jesus Christ” (Verkuyl 1993:77). Those who pledge allegiance to Jesus Christ must involve themselves in the *missio Dei* (Glasser et al. 2003:223).

Throughout the Scriptures, God revealed the character of the Triune God. The Triune God hates evil, injustice, oppression, poverty, bad character, the worship of other gods, and pride. The Scriptures reveal God cares for the oppressed, the poor, the widow, the orphan, and the downtrodden. The mission of God defeats the evils that violate God’s kingdom of righteousness, peace, and joy. A believer or church who chooses to work with God; revealing his nature, his character, and the principles of his kingdom; “involves, from the beginning and as a matter of course, making new believers sensitive to the needs of others, opening their eyes and hearts to recognize injustice, suffering, oppression, and the plight of those who have fallen by the wayside” (Bosch 1991:81).

In this dissertation, I focus on a narrow aspect of the kingdom – how reconciled males and females live out the community of faith committed to the *missio Dei* and how the kingdom impacts the Church’s practice of Christian leadership. The Church, consisting of a covenant community of reconciliation, must crush hostilities between races, classes and genders through the power of the cross (Hiebert 1993:160). Jesus’ shed blood makes peace between males and females. As males and females reflect community in God’s kingdom, they together extend the *missio Dei*.

To understand how God crushed the hostilities that exist between genders, I will first examine the intra-Trinitarian relationship of the Godhead. I will also examine the

relationship of the male and female in the ideal family, the fallen family, and the redeemed family. From this basis, I will demonstrate the beauty of God's willingness to empower and commission the redeemed family to carry out the *missio Dei*.

Community Within the Kingdom of God

I cannot discuss the kingdom as defined by Jesus and the mission of God as lived by Jesus without also discussing the theological concept of community. Community, as exemplified and created by the Triune God, impacts how the Church both lives in a fallen world and embraces redeemed people into God's mission. The Triune God resides in community and then created humanity in community to reflect the *imago Dei*. I approach this section as a critical realist. I agree with Paul Hiebert that critical realism enables the community of faith to move closer to a biblical worldview, though no community ever fully arrives. A critical realist realizes "we can and do speak of truth but recognize that our understanding of it is partial and finite" (Hiebert 2008:275). Critical realists believe that truth exists and understand some of that truth, but recognize that they see through a glass darkly. Thus, critical realists recognize the need for a hermeneutical community to dialogue with, enabling each community to recognize one's biases that come from respective cultures. The dialogue enables each community to arrive closer to the divine truth. With that stated, I now move forward to express my understandings of a kingdom motif of community that impacts my research.

God Relates in Community

Trinitarian theology undergirds a kingdom-centered theology (Verkuyl 1993:72).¹¹ While living in Egypt during 2002-2003, I often spoke my faith with Muslims. My Muslim friends would state their understanding that Christians “worshiped three Gods” which they considered “*shirk*”—a serious blasphemy arising from associating anyone with God.¹² During this time, God enabled me to appreciate both the mystery and the beauty of the Trinity. Only a God who exists as three Persons could experience and display shared love, power, and service within God’s self and pass these essential characteristics along to his creation.¹³ This view displays more relational warmth than strict, cold non-Trinitarian monotheism.

Becoming Like the God We Worship

The Psalmist in Psalm 115:8 states, “Those who make them will be like them, and so will all who trust in them.” An Indian friend of mine became a believer in Jesus after God enlightened her to understand that she would become like the god she worshiped. As an avid devotee of Krishna, she realized Krishna cheated on his wife and beat her. One day she thought, “I will become like this god that I worship – disloyal, a cheater, and an abuser of others.”

¹¹ In this section, I simply state my thoughts about the Trinity briefly, demonstrating my assumptions of the equality and mutuality within the Persons. For a fuller display of my understanding of Trinitarian relationships, see Chad Segraves’ doctorate dissertation (Neal Segraves 2009:15-43). Chad acknowledges the mystery of the Trinity and gives a description of interdependence modeled by the Trinity that can impact human relationships.

¹² The Islamic faith is monotheistic. Muslims believe the Christian’s Trinity demonstrates tritheistic belief. They believe Jesus is a Prophet – not God. Norman Geisler and Abdul Saleeb state, “It is due to this uncompromising emphasis on God’s absolute unity that in Islam the greatest of all sins is the sin of *shirk*, or assigning partners to God” (Geisler and Saleeb 2002:20).

¹³ Stanley J. Grenz offers a detailed and thorough theological study on the Triune God’s relationship within the Godhead that I believe forms the basis for understanding relationships among humanity on the earth (Grenz 1994).

The Church can easily read its own fragmented community back into their understanding of God. Therefore, I recognize I must carefully allow God to continually transform my theology about God in order to more accurately reflect the character of God. Grenz propagates that “through our connection with our Lord, we have been given the responsibility and privilege of reflecting the very nature of the triune God....The members of the church, as now being transformed into the image of God in Christ (1 Cor. 15:49; 2 Cor. 3:18; Col. 3:10)” (Grenz 1994:180). Seeking to appreciate the complexity of the mystery of the Triune God, the Church honors God by trying to reflect the *imago Dei*.

The Triune God’s Differentiation and Integration

Together, each Person of the Trinity works to accomplish the *missio Dei*. The Persons of the Trinity, differentiated in relation, remain united as One Being with the primary goal of accomplishing God’s will on God’s earth through God’s people.

The Father functions as the ground of the world and of the divine program for creation. The Son functions as the revealer of God, the exemplar and herald of the Father’s will for creation, and the redeemer of humankind. And the Spirit functions as the personal divine power active in the world, the completer of the divine will and program (Grenz 1994:67).¹⁴

Though Grenz depicts the Persons with specific functions, the Trinity relates in a *perichoretic* fashion.¹⁵ Thus Grenz believes, and I agree, that holy love permeates the Persons of the Triune God. “The unity of God is nothing less than the self-dedication of the Trinitarian persons to each other. Indeed, God is love—the divine essence is the love that binds together the Trinity” (Grenz 1994:69). Though the Persons of the Trinity have

¹⁴ While I affirm Grenz’s statement, I do not hold to some of his ideas based on his Eastern Orthodox leanings which promote a monarchical priority of the Father.

¹⁵ *Perichoresis* describes the inter-penetration of the three Persons of the Trinity. As one Person of the Trinity acts, the others act with that Person. This interpenetration implies all three Persons engage in each Person’s differentiated task.

differentiated relation, all three exist as co-equal and co-eternal with agape love binding them together.

Each is essential to the life of the others, and to the life of the Trinity. They are bound to one another in love, *agape* love, which therefore unites them in the closest and most intimate of relationships. This unselfish, *agape* love makes each more concerned for the other than for self. There is therefore a mutual submission of each to each of the others and a mutual glorifying of one another. There is a complete equality of the three (Erickson 1995:331).

Though many scholars advocate equality in the Persons of the Trinity, some advocate for a hierarchy.¹⁶ Yet, “The great theologians of the past and the creeds and confessions all recognize...that the three divine persons are inseparable in operations or functions and indivisible in power and authority” (Giles 2006:30).¹⁷ The Athanasian Creed states “...in this Trinity none is before or after, none is greater or less than another” (Kelly 2004:79).¹⁸ The example of the Triune God can serve as a model for the Church’s community in relationship between males and females.

The Triune God creates humanity to reflect the *imago Dei*—differentiated yet integrated. The Trinity demonstrates a kingdom ethic of power by empowering the redeemed to engage in the *missio Dei*—to live with purpose as co-regents in the world to accomplish God’s ultimate purposes. “It is only as God shares with us his own essence—love—that we are able to engage in the work of the triune God in the world. This he does

¹⁶ In contemporary scholarship, scholars such as Wayne Grudem, Robert Doyle, Bruce Ware, Wayne House, and George Knight advance an eternal hierarchical relationship between the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. For example, Grudem states, “the subjection of the Son to the Father for all eternity, a subjection that never began but always existed, and a subjection that will continue eternally in the future...” (Grudem 2004:423).

¹⁷ Giles offers an in-depth study on the intra-Trinitarian relationship of the Godhead (Giles 2006).

¹⁸ Athanasius worked tirelessly to express the equality and mutuality in the Persons of the Trinity. Scorgie expresses that the Nicene Creed of 325 AD demonstrates this equality and is used today to demonstrate the orthodoxy of the Christian faith. The Nicene Creed states clearly that Christ is “of one substance with the Father.” The Nicea-Constantinople Creed of 381 added to the Nicene Creed by stating that the Spirit is also to be glorified and worshipped with the Father and Son. Scorgie summarized the understanding, “the church declared that there are no graded levels of God-ness in the Trinity” (Scorgie 2005:43).

through the Holy Spirit who dwells within God's people" (Grenz 1994:97). By realizing the cooperation and mutuality within the Trinity, the human community can better reflect God's image in the world by modeling the Trinity's relational patterns. The way God relates in differentiation and integration serves as a model for how redeemed people can relate and operate guided and empowered by the Holy Spirit. I now turn to God's creation of humanity, created to reveal and reflect the community within the Trinity.

God Creates Community

In Genesis 1-2 God created people in perfect harmony—perfect harmony with God, with others, with self, and with the earth. The Triune God reigned supreme over the creation, and while demonstrating the essence of community in the Godhead, the Triune God said, "Let *us* make human beings in *our* image, in *our* likeness...So God created human beings in his own image, in the image of God he created them; male and female he created them" (Gen. 1:26, 27). God created both male and female in the *imago Dei*. The primary reflection of the *imago Dei* consists of God in community (Glasser et al. 2003:35). The Genesis 2 creation account shows God fashioning the man and then the woman sequentially—not to demonstrate a hierarchy but to reveal that the man and woman need one another in order to reflect the *imago Dei* (Groothuis 1997:137).

Together the man and woman manifested the community of the Trinity (Barger 2003:130).¹⁹ God built into the male and female "the unity-in-diversity and mutuality that characterize the eternal divine reality...Humans-in-relation or humans-in-community

¹⁹ Lilian Barger makes the case that while God created both male and female in the image of God, it is together that they manifest his image more fully (Barger 2003:130). I agree with this in that when human community relates with mutuality and unity, it more clearly reflects the image of God since the Triune God relates in community.

ultimately reflect the *imago Dei*” (Grenz 1994:171).²⁰ In Genesis 1-2, God gave the man and woman mutual blessings and responsibilities, while demonstrating intentional movements to lower power distance between himself and humanity. The issues of power distance serve to enable the community of God to live issues of power according to God’s reign.²¹

Mutuality of the Man and Woman

In Genesis 1:28, God issued five commands (Qal impv. 2 m.p.) to both the man and woman regarding their shared blessings and responsibilities on earth: procreate (*feru*), multiply (*rebu*), fill (*mileu*), subdue (*kibesh*), and rule (*radu*) the creation. By these words, “God calls all who bear his image to the role of vice-regents over this world, to participate responsibly in this task” (Glasser et al. 2003:38). The Hebrew word *samar* (used in Gen. 2:15) denotes the meaning of “keep” or subdue and can signify a

²⁰ Some authors (Wayne Grudem, John Piper, Bruce Hurley, Thomas Schreiner, and John M. Frame for example) believe that though God created both male and female in the *imago Dei*, God’s design and created order created the woman subordinate to the man. Frame states that though both the man and woman exercise some authority or control of the earth, man is to hold authority over the woman. As she submits to his authority, she represents a characteristic of God’s image (Frame 1991:230). Frame also states that the vast majority of imagery about God is male. Frame states that the reason for this masculine imagery is because God wants us to think of God as Lord and since Lordship demonstrates authority, God must be seen predominately in masculine terms (1991:229). Later Frame states, “Stereotypes aside, men and women do differ in personality and in the distribution of their spiritual gifts” (1991:232). He goes on to state that a woman’s physical body reinforces our understanding that a woman has “inner meekness and quiet strength” (1991:232). Frame states, “We would, I think, sense something odd if Mother Teresa’s personality were found in the body of, say, Sylvester Stallone, or vice versa”(1991:232). I want to point out that Mother Teresa led a movement that included 610 missions in 123 countries. She led both males and females while demonstrating Christ. Christ demonstrated strength even in his meekness.

Therefore, I take a different view from Frame of male/female relationships implied by the relational structure I understand of the Trinity. While I seek to understand these author’s viewpoints, I wish to emphasize the value of mutuality and unity as expressed when males and females work together in ministry on behalf of God’s kingdom. I cannot find in Scriptures where God gives males and females different spiritual gifts as Frame contends. I also can only find one list of spiritual fruits for both males and females in the kingdom of God – love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control (Gal. 5:22-23). In my opinion, Frame’s understanding comes from his cultural worldview more than a biblical worldview, or his culture impacts his biblical worldview.

²¹ I will discuss the concept of power distance later in more detail.

militaristic word for protecting what God has created.²² Together, the man and woman defend the Garden, protect it, and serve God in it (2003:38).²³ God gave the man and woman power to “Edenize” the earth and to create culture together (Van Gelder 2000:93).

In Genesis 2, Moses²⁴ gives a more detailed account of God’s prime creation—humanity. In these scriptures, peace, harmony and the celebration of God surrounds God’s creation of woman.²⁵ In Genesis 2, God created the woman as the man’s *ezer k’neged* which in Hebrew denotes “equal strength” (Cunningham and Hamilton 2000:96). *Ezer* means “helper” or “strength.” In the Hebrew context, the audience heard *ezer* as a word of strength, not weakness. Writers of the Old Testament used the word *ezer* twenty-one times in the Old Testament as a noun, and sixteen of those times *ezer* referred to the help God gave to a weaker party (Hamilton 1996:771)²⁶ Moses placed the word *k’neged* before the word *ezer*, to denote the meaning of equal, complementary, or beside. This

²² Glasser, Van Engen, Gilliland, and Redford believe the cultural mandate upon the male and female includes ecological responsibility with which I concur (Glasser et al. 2003:38). I believe that evangelism and social responsibility exist together and not as separate or competitive tasks for Christians. When the Church practices both the Word and the deed of the kingdom, including taking care of the earth, the Church resounds as a prophetic and powerful voice on the earth.

²³ In the recent past, I thought all believers understood the co-dominion of males and females as expressed in Genesis 1-2. However, at a recent forum with both complementarians (those who believe males are over females) and egalitarians (those who believe in both positional and practical equality between males and females), I heard several complementarians use Genesis 1-2 to state that though God gave both the male and female dominion on the earth, God gave the male different dominion than he gave the female. One complementarian stated, “Men were given the primary responsibility to have dominion over the earth. We are to protect the earth and protect our families. Women were created to help men do their task well.” Though this man was kind as he spoke these words, I questioned whether his interpretation displayed eisegesis in that he applied his prior understanding of male supremacy and female subordination to draw out meaning in Genesis 1-2 instead of allowing the text to speak on its own. Since then, through my studies, I discovered that many scholars who take this view believe the order in which God created the man and woman (created order) demonstrated that God wants men to lead since they were created first. I will discuss this view later in Chapter 2.

²⁴ Many scholars view Moses as the author of the Pentateuch, and I hold to this view. I do not choose here to become involved in the JEDP discussion. For further discussion and study on JEDP, see (LaSor, Hubbard, and Bush 1996:6-13).

²⁵ The account of the creation of woman is in stark contrast to other creation accounts of women. For example in *The Theogony*, a curse and punishment on men results in the creation of women (Hesiod 1936).

²⁶ See Appendix A for a detailed list of these Scriptures where *ezer* is used in reference to God.

phrase *ezer k'neged* does not bring the female into a lesser status but an equal one. According to Jensen, “Both mutuality and reciprocity of the male/female relationship can be seen in the description of the woman as an equal strength and the intrinsic unity of the male and female in the human race” (Jensen 1993:214).²⁷

A Hebrew literary construct further illustrates the mutuality of the male and female. The Hebrew book-end literary device consists of placing one issue at the beginning of a text with a parallel issue at the end, with lesser issues of importance in-between. By this device, the author demonstrates that the first and last issues are reciprocal mirror images.²⁸

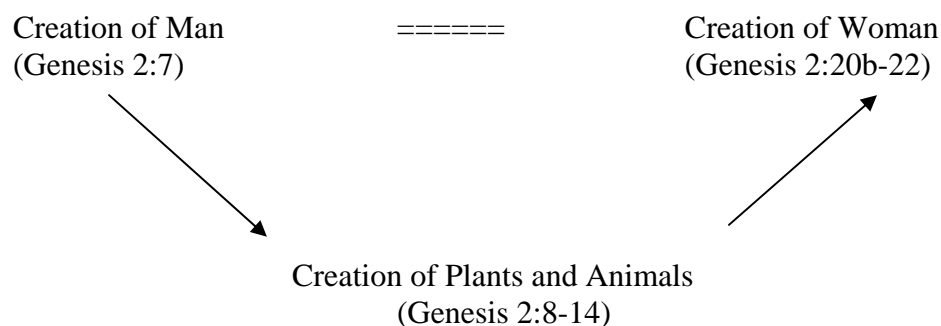


FIGURE 1

CHIASM OF GENESIS 2

²⁷ Ray Ortlund states, “The man was not created to help the woman, but the reverse. Doesn’t this striking fact suggest that manhood and womanhood are distinct and non-reversible?” (Ortlund 1991:101-102).

²⁸ Scripture uses the book-end literary device in various places. One example includes Genesis 1-2 and parallels Revelation 21-22. Psalms 1, 8, 121, 146, 147, 148, 149, and 150 are other examples of the book-end literary device.

Power in the Ideal Community

Examining the Genesis 1-2 texts from the grid of Geert Hofstede's power distance,²⁹ power, dominance and subordination exist when hierarchies exist based on ontological inequality, reflecting high power distance (Hofstede 2001:98). An obvious order exists in Genesis 1-2 as God created the world and then offered the human community some dominion on the earth (Genesis 1:28). Moses described God as the Creator high above and apart from all creation. However God, who deserved to treat humanity with high power distance, actually humbled himself and moved to a lower power distance. God reflected his character of love, honor, respect, and care for humanity by this intentional move to reduce the power distance so that a relationship can exist between God and humanity. God created in his image and enabled humanity to relate to him in a meaningful way (Klein 2001:36).

God created the man and woman with minimal if any power distance in Genesis 1-2. God commissioned them both to serve as co-regents of his creation.³⁰ In God's mission, God created the man and woman with the responsibility to exercise stewardship over the whole earth.³¹ Glasser holds to the mutual mandate for the male and female in Genesis 1-2 and says, "It is significant that whereas the cultural mandate commands that people subdue and have dominion over everything on the earth—whether animate or inanimate—human beings are excluded" (2003:39). God never desired human beings to

²⁹ Hofstede's grid does not demonstrate power distribution but rather how people perceive power differences. See Appendix B for a table that outlines Hofstede's power distance from a social view point. Though I find Hofstede's ideas about power distance helpful, I do not believe they fully define the relationship between God and people and between people. He states that in low power distance, hierarchy may mean an inequality of roles which are established for convenience, while high power distance incorporates a hierarchy of existential inequality. I believe God demonstrates low power distance by giving power away to humans; yet humans and God do not have equality in either roles or intrinsic value. Among the man and woman, I do not believe they are to practice power distance in that of inequality of function or inequality of value. I do not see any power distance from the man and woman in Genesis 1-2. Hofstede's views are still valid however in examining how God lowers the distance and how redeemed humans after the Fall can, through his Spirit, seek to give power away and in effect continue to lower power distance.

³⁰ God intends for humans to lovingly steward the earth, not dominate it.

³¹ The word "culture" derives from the Latin word *collere* which means cultivate. God gives cultural development to both the man and woman (Conde-Frazier, Kang, and Parrett 2004:52).

dominate one another in the original creation, but created them to serve as mutual counterparts in God's beautiful, harmonious creation.

God gave both the man and woman the opportunity to have some authority over God's creation. Holding, exercising, sharing, and giving power and authority away demonstrates characteristics of the *imago Dei*. Applying this reality to the male/female situation means that denying women mutual dominion on the earth essentially denies the *imago Dei* within her. "By virtue of the fact that they bear God's image, humans are delegated to exercise some of his authority over creation. They are authorized to act as God's commissioned agents" (Bilezekian 1985:24). Bilezekian believes that Moses permeated the text with hierarchical organization (such as God gives authority of animals to humans), yet Moses did not grant authority to the man over the woman. This fact "indicates that their relationship was one of mutuality in equality and that considerations of supremacy of one over the other were alien to it and may not be imposed upon it" (Bilezekian 1985:25).

Simply allowing the text to speak for itself, the author's intent of Genesis 1 highlights the ascending order of creation leading to the crowning of creation—humanity. The Genesis 2 narrative focuses on God's provision to end human solitude (Grenz 1994:162). In both Genesis 1 and 2, God demonstrated his intentions that the male and female live in a community that reflects the Trinity. Moses did not develop a narrative that contrasted the male and female into particular roles. Lilian Barger states:

The passage [Genesis 1-2] is mysteriously silent on the content of maleness and femaleness. It fails to define specific roles or the nature of femininity and masculinity, allowing for great freedom in expression of individual uniqueness. What the passage does do is to put the male and female in sexual correspondence" (Barger 2003:130).

Love, celebration, joy, unity, and harmony describe Genesis 1-2 as God created and then commissioned both the male and female to serve as co-regents. Sadly, the man and woman chose to live independently of God, and the harmonious community crashed.

Community Crashes

Genesis 3 details the most tragic narrative in the Bible – choices and actions that destroyed the perfect harmony God intended and left the world fragmented. Unified community crashed between God and people, among people, and between people and the earth. As I examine the text, I will take special note of how the Fall marred the shared authority between the man and woman.

God's Prescription or Description?

God spoke to the man and woman as individuals indicating that he held them both responsible for their disobedience. The man answered God with five “I” statements indicating his broken relationship with the woman and blamed both God and the woman for his downfall.³² The woman blamed the serpent for deceiving her. In the midst of the narrative, the tragic results of the Fall become obvious. The man and woman no longer live as interdependent people reflecting the community of the Trinity; they live now as independent people in a world of brokenness.

Most scholars, on both sides of the debate, recognize that Genesis 3 serves as a tragic text as disunity results between the man and woman; Genesis 3 simply describes (rather than prescribes) the results of the Fall on both males and females. Some scholars (Gordon Fee, Gilbert Bilezikian, Stanley Grenz, and Paul Hiebert) believe Genesis 1-2 teach a mutuality between the man and the woman, therefore the tragedy of the Fall

³² In Genesis 3:10, 12 the man answers God, “*I* heard you in the garden, and *I* was afraid because *I* was naked; so *I* hid....The woman you put here with me—she gave me some fruit from the tree, and *I* ate it” (italics mine).

involves the broken interdependence of the man and woman and their broken co-dominion. Other scholars (Wayne Grudem, John Piper, and George Knight) believe the created order gives primary leadership to the man. Grudem states, “Prior to their sin, they had lived in the Garden of Eden in perfect harmony, yet with a leadership role belonging to Adam as the head of his family” (Grudem 2004:40). He believes that Genesis 3 reveals that because of the Fall, “God introduced conflict in that Eve would have an inward urging and impulse to oppose Adam, to resist Adam’s leadership....And Adam would respond with a rule that was forceful and at times harsh” (2004:40). Both sides of the debate believe Jesus’ crucifixion and resurrection transforms this disharmony. For those who hold to the created order argument, the crucifixion enables men to not violate their headship and empowers women to again willingly submit as the helper to men. For those who hold to the Genesis 1-2 mutuality argument, the crucifixion restores the interdependent relationship and mutual dominion originally given by God.

God said in Genesis 3, “Your desire will be for your husband.” The Hebrew word for desire, *t’suqah*, means *turning* and implies that women, because of the Fall, would have a tendency to turn away from God and place their dependence on men.³³ Some scholars believe the correct rendering of this passage reads, “You are turning away [from God!] to your husband, and [as a result] he will rule over you [take advantage of you]” (Kaiser et al. 1996:98). Some scholars also note that the Hebrew translation reveals only a future action, hence “will” rather than a prescriptive command “shall.” This means that

³³ Solid evidence exists that the translation of “desire” should actually be “turning.” “Seldom has so much mischief been caused by a translation error that became institutionalized” (Kaiser et al. 1996:97). See Genesis 4:7 and Song of Solomon 7:10 to see other places authors used this word. In the twelve ancient versions of these texts, “almost every one (twenty-one out of twenty-eight times) renders these three instances of *t’suqah* as ‘turning,’ not ‘desire’” (1996:97). Church fathers (such as Clement of Rome, Irenaeus, Tertullian, Origin, Epiphanius and Jerome, along with Philo) “seem to be ignorant of any other sense for this word *t’suqah* than the translation of ‘turning.’ Furthermore, the Latin rendering was conversion and the Greek was apostrophe or epistrophe, words all meaning ‘a turning’” (Kaiser et al. 1996:98). The meaning of the word changed to “desire” when an Italian Dominican monk named Pagnino translated the Hebrew Bible in 1528. Since that time, every English version uses the meaning “desire” except for Wycliffe’s 1380 English version and the Douay Bible of 1609 (Kaiser et al. 1996:98).

only some husbands will take advantage of their wives, and therefore the mandate that all husbands must rule over their wives becomes invalid. The Hebrew grammar gives only a “simple statement of futurity; there is not one hint of obligation or normativity in this verb” (Kaiser et al. 1996:98). If the word should be translated “shall,” the same word must be used for the earth - “it *shall* produce thorns and thistles,” thus followers of God should condemn weed-killer (Kaiser et al. 1996:98). This explanation also reveals God only describes what might happen, but does not prescribe God’s ideal.

God said in Genesis 3:16b, “And he shall rule over you.” The Hebrew word *mashal* means rule and connotes dominion. In Genesis 1-2, God gave both the man and woman dominion over the earth, but in Genesis 3 only the man appears to have dominion over his wife. Overall these pronouncements demonstrate the fragmentation of harmony and unity.

The response of God to their excuses and disobedience included a detailed series of predictions of what would inevitably result from the divisions that would overtake them (3:16-19). Women would become increasingly burdened and passive, as a result of their priorities of childbearing and nurturing. Men would become aggressive as they sought to make the “cursed” earth productive. Inevitably, the more they drifted apart, the less they would understand each other (Glasser et al. 2003:41).

The consequences of sin taken as descriptive reveal that men will have a tendency to take control and authority away from God and dominate women. Women will have a tendency to turn from God and give allegiance to men in a desire for relationship.³⁴ Women, with a distorted view of relationships, then abdicate their rightful dominion and turn from God and turn toward a man to find fulfillment, security, and purpose.

³⁴ Some scholars believe that the woman’s sin primarily consisted in her taking her husband’s “rightful role” rather than in eating the forbidden fruit. Ray Ortlund Jr. states, “Satan struck at Adam’s headship” (Ortlund 1991:107). However, in Genesis 1-2, God specifically said to not eat the forbidden fruit; but God gave no commands about headship. Grenz states, “Ortlund goes beyond the explicit point of the narrative. He imports into the text his own understanding of what motivated our first parents to sin” (Grenz 1994:165). When this is done, attention moves away from the tempter to state that the problem originated in a male-female role reversal (1994:165-166).

Power in the Fallen Community

Some scholars, such as Raymond Ortlund, believe that women should not teach or have authority over men because the serpent deceived the woman, and she sinned first. Since God questioned the man first, God demonstrated males have authority over females (Ortlund 1991:95-112). However the serpent did not question the man's authority over the woman, but God's authority on the couple. Again, the intent of the narrative seems to set up a larger story about the battle between God's kingdom and Satan's kingdom. The intent of Genesis 3 was not "an abdication of divinely instituted hierarchy but the loss of loving harmony between the man and the woman" (Hess 2005:90). The man and woman, "jostle with each other for power, influence, and prominence, or as we allow ourselves to be robbed our dignity and sense of worth. In short, sin alienates us from each other" (Grenz 1994:208).

In Genesis 3, the shift in the male/female relationship resulted in high power distance. According to Hofstede, power distance is "the extent to which the less powerful members of institutions and organizations within a country expect and accept that power is distributed unequally" (Hofstede 1997:28).³⁵ In high power distance; arguments, discouragement, and frustration often occur where domination and subordination exist. However, God does not allude here or in Genesis 1-2 that an ontological hierarchy *should* exist between the man and woman.

In Genesis 3, a display of unified community or shared power no longer exists. Yet the life, death, and resurrection of Christ inaugurate a new Way; Jesus inaugurates the reality of God's kingdom and his intentions that those who pledge allegiance to Jesus will accept and reflect this new "way of life."

³⁵ Understanding power distance enabled me to understand why many females in the Church do not question the restrictions placed on women. Many simply accept the unequal distribution of power.

Because male domination is not a morally binding injunction – a result of the Fall and not an order of creation – we can anticipate that the new creation will include the reshaping of male-female relationships. With the coming of the Savior, the effects of the Fall can be overcome. Christ's redemption includes liberation from hierarchy as the fundamental principle of male-female relationships (Grenz 1994:169).

God sets the stage for full redemption and restoration to come through Jesus Christ that will reconcile the human community not only to the Triune God but also to one another.

Jesus Reconciles the Community

In 1998, my husband Chad and I applied to a mission agency. On the application, we stated that we mutually love, honor, serve, submit, and respect one another in marriage. The interview committee felt our words did not reveal that Chad “led our marriage,” and I did not “follow or submit to his leadership.” We expressed that we believed we brought God glory by working as a unified team since Jesus prayed for unity (John 17).³⁶

The interview continued for three hours as the men questioned me (not Chad) about every difficult passage in the Bible about women. Though only twenty-four years of age, God enabled and empowered me to answer each question in a way that I believe expressed the redemptive intent of God in the Scriptures. Near the end of the interview, I silently told God that I felt exhausted. God's presence encouraged me with the most profound peace, and I heard deep in my spirit, “Thank you. You are speaking on behalf of my crucifixion and resurrection. Keep going.”

This powerful statement has served to encourage me through many discouraging and disappointing experiences as I seek to follow Christ in a Church that often continues

³⁶ Many Christians argue that without a hierarchical structure, potential chaos exists. However, I can see no chaos from the Trinity as they mutually share love, power and respect. A couple committed to practice the “one another” principles of the kingdom of God will not find chaos in their marriage but a unified existence where both partners find value and purpose in themselves, their relationship, and their lives.

to show favoritism to males and discrimination toward females, albeit usually through subtle messages. However, these subtle messages affect both males and females and their perception of how God values, gifts, and uses females in his mission.³⁷ For women gifted in leadership; the exclusion, lack of full participation, or participation steeped in difficulties cut deep. Yet, the literal broken body of Christ creates a new community that again lowers power distance and enables the Church to live God's ideal.

The Broken Body of Christ

Described as the Redeemer, Jesus restored broken relationships by his sacrifice on the cross (Bright 1981:92).³⁸ Though reconciliation between people and God remains the most vital need of the human heart, I believe the crucifixion of Jesus provided and affected even the social fabric of human community.³⁹ “The reconciling work of Jesus extends to human relationships today. On the cross, he destroyed the barriers dividing human beings (Eph. 2:11-22)”(Grenz 1994:348). The broken Jesus carried in his Body, the brokenness of community at all levels.⁴⁰

The *missio Dei* climaxed at the death and resurrection of Jesus. At this juncture, Jesus bought back and restored the possibility of a redeemed humanity. The cross of

³⁷ However due to power distance, many males and females will not even be able to notice the favoritism or discrimination, since high power distance causes the less powerful in a society to accept the distance as the way things are “supposed to be.”

³⁸ A Christian worker taught a course in Africa about women in leadership. During the discussion, an African pastor stood up, exasperated about the teaching and its implications. He said, “It is true that Christ is the Redeemer of anyone and anything – except women!”

³⁹ I believe the Lord's Supper provides the strongest illustration of the effects of Jesus' broken body on humanity. Eating “the body” and drinking “the blood” enables the Church to reflect on the brokenness that occurred at the Fall and how Jesus' broken body offers both reconciliation and healing. God became broken so that broken humanity could be made whole.

⁴⁰ Karl Barth, a Swiss theologian, provided a compelling theology on the power of the cross. In Barth's understanding, Jesus' death on the cross was so powerful that no one can escape its power. His thoughts led to his belief in universalism (Barth 1975). I agree with Grenz who states that though Jesus died for all, humans must choose allegiance to God because they are set at enmity with God. Humans must be reconciled to God who reconciled the world to himself (2 Cor. 5:19-20) (Grenz 1994:350).

Christ offers a challenge to all believers who desire to live reconciled community between males and females.

What our Lord proclaimed in his teaching and modeled in his life – that the fullness of community lies in the giving of one’s life – his death gloriously displays. Not only is he the Revealer of life-in-community, Jesus is also the effector of that community. As the one who opens the way for us to participate in true fellowship, our Savior authors among us the divine design for human life (Grenz 1994:351).

Allowing Jesus’ sacrifice to restore the possibility of males and females living in community based on God’s ideal in Genesis 1-2, requires both males and females to lay their lives down.⁴¹ Yet, when believers build community the way God originally created, they display the kingdom of God (Barger 2003:186). Barger states:

Our protest must be based on faith that an invisible kingdom is being made visible in the bodies of the men and women who actively follow the crucified and resurrected one.... Instead we will honor the *imago Dei* in ourselves that allows us to speak up and build culture both locally and globally” (Barger 2003:186).

By re-creating community between males and females based on the works of Christ, we undo the works of Satan.⁴²

The New Creation

Jessie Penn-Lewis communicated about the scandal of the cross that led to the “new creation” which Paul wrote about in Galatians 3:26-28. “The Cross is a stumbling-block, and its message likened to a sword or knife, for it cuts deep into the very core of the pride of the old creation. God’s cure... Nothing but the Cross will bring about the

⁴¹ This restoration to Genesis 1-2 requires a man to humble himself, recognizing his need for a relational partner to co-rule with him. A woman must humble herself and rise up, realizing God wants her to not only engage in relationships but also to take her place in the stewardship of the earth.

⁴² As I reflect on the power of the cross, I remember that God created woman by taking a piece from the man’s side. While Jesus died on the cross, a sword pierced his side to determine if he were dead. As the spear pierced his body, I wonder if God chose to symbolize that a new creation had been formed through this second “Adam’s” side? Though this speculation may be difficult to prove, the Bible certainly makes clear that Jesus’ broken body provides the pathway for a new creation, a restored community.

unity he desires” (Penn-Lewis 1946:37). Paul recognized that Jesus’ crucifixion destroyed the dividing wall that existed between races, classes, and genders thus restoring the possibility for the reconciled believers to experience community in God’s original creation design. When Paul wrote Galatians 3:28, he attacked the hierarchical status quo prevalent in his society. Every morning devout Jewish men prayed the *Baraka* which stated, “Blessed is He who did not make me a Gentile; Blessed is He who did not make me a woman; Blessed is He who did not make me an uneducated man (or a slave).” In Galatians 3:28, Paul acknowledged each section of the *Baraka* and reframed it. According to Paul, Jesus destroyed status, privilege and opportunities based on external features.⁴³ Paul primarily dealt with the practical equality of Jews and Gentiles, yet believers in subsequent generations must not stop simply with ethnicity. Howard Snyder captures the need to continually progress in what redemption means to all types of people.

That initial, historic reconciliation shows us that God reconciles alienated persons and peoples to himself through the blood of the cross. It started with the reconciliation of Jews and Gentiles, but that was only the start. Through Jesus, by the Spirit, reconciliation extends to free and slave, man and woman, black and white, rich and poor, educated and uneducated (Gal. 3:28; Col. 3:11). This is central to the meaning of the gospel (Snyder 2004:70).

⁴³ Scholars use Galatians 3:26-28 to both support (Fee 2005:172-185) and renounce gender equality and mutuality (Johnson 1991:154-164). Fee states that the argument of Galatians as a whole and in this text specifically indicates “this text has to do with Paul’s ecclesiology: what it means to be the people of God under the new covenant brought about through Christ’s death and the gift of the Spirit ... Paul’s new creation theology embedded in this text, which sounds the death knell to the old order, even though its structures remained in the surrounding culture...In Paul’s view, one can serve Christ well within such limits. What he disallows is giving significance to structures and roles as such...And to give continuing significance to a male-authority viewpoint for men and women, whether at home or in the church, is to reject the new creation in favor of the norms of a fallen world” (Fee 2005:184-185). Paul King Jewett calls Galatians 3:28 “The Magna Carta of Humanity” (Jewett 1975:142). Johnson strongly disagrees with both Fee and Jewett. He states, “There is no reason to claim that Galatians 3:28 supports an egalitarianism of function in the church. It does plainly teach an egalitarianism of privilege in the covenantal union of believers in Christ. The Abrahamic promises, in their flowering of the Redeemer’s saving work, belong universally to the family of God. Questions of roles and functions in that body can only be answered by a consideration of other and later New Testament teaching” (Johnson 1991:164).

In Galatians 3:26-28, Paul does not deny that differences exist in social status. Paul seeks to communicate that while humans do not change in their created being, the relationship between humans change. But just as the Trinity in differentiation remains unified and mutual and equal, so “the new humanity must use the differences to bless and raise up instead of destroy and disadvantage” (Webb 2001:149). The new creation affects every relationship and serves as an “all-encompassing eschatological reality of “the new order,” in which all these diverse expressions of being human are made one” (Fee 2005:178-179).⁴⁴

Some scholars believe this passage propagates ontological equality,⁴⁵ but does not propagate functional equality.⁴⁶ In 2006, a man served on one of 10/40’s teams in India. He told Chad, “I don’t see what all the argument is about women in the church and what they can do. These arguments don’t need to exist. They distract from Jesus. Women just need to be happy they are a part of the Body of Christ and not worry about what they are allowed to do in church.” Chad looked at the man and said, “What I am about to say may end the conversation, and I am sorry about that. But say your statement again but this time instead of the word *woman* use the word *African American*. That’s why the issue matters.” N.T. Wright claims:

We must think and pray carefully about where our own cultures, prejudices, and angers are taking us, and make sure we conform, not to any of the different stereotypes the world offers, but to the healing, liberating, humanizing message of the gospel of Jesus (N.T. Wright 2006 20.4:9).

⁴⁴ In Galatians 3:26-28, slaves could become free and Gentiles could become Jews. Females could not become males. I do not believe this passage seeks to deny male and female, but instead to denounce values and structural norms that limit women from full participation in the Body of Christ.

⁴⁵ Ontological equality refers to equality in essence, being, or essential personhood. Functional equality refers to equal opportunity in practice, responsibilities, duties, and actions.

⁴⁶ S. Lewis Johnson, Jr. asserts that though Paul gives credence to the equality of male and female because of Christ, this passage does not nullify role distinctions. Johnson asserts that the marvelous truths are that male and female form one body. This truth does not reach into the practical domains of allowing women to lead or teach which are functions reserved for males (Johnson 1991:154-164).

The new creation, initiated by the shedding of Jesus' blood, affects every schism in human relationships.

All people "made one in Christ" served as a radical counter-cultural statement in Paul's day when position and status claimed vital importance. Shame occurred (instead of honor) when people crossed those boundaries. Paul boldly stated the prophetic nature of the new creation that obliterated hierarchy and differences in ontology and function based on external features.⁴⁷ David Scholer believes the Galatians 3:26-28 passage serves as the "window text" for all other Pauline texts. This window serves to enable the Church to better understand Pauline texts that include exegetical, historical, and cultural difficulties within Paul's setting (Scholer 2005b:126). Scholer claims, "Galatians 3:28 is, against all traditionalist attempts to discount it, the fundamental Pauline theological basis for the inclusion of both women and men as equal and mutual partners in all of the ministries of the Church of Jesus Christ" (2005b:130).⁴⁸ Yet, the Church continues to use Pauline Scripture to exclude women from certain domains in the church leadership structure.⁴⁹

⁴⁷ James Borland does not agree that Paul obliterated functional hierarchy. He stated that "when moral issues were at stake, Jesus did not bend to cultural pressure....But Jesus was not averse to breaking social customs when He felt it necessary" (Borland 1991:120). Borland seeks to demonstrate that Jesus could have changed the rules and allowed women to serve as his chosen disciples, but his choice of only male disciples demonstrated Jesus believed in a clear role distinction between males and females, regardless of the new creation. Borland's statement concerns me because nowhere in the Gospels does Jesus speak against slavery. Did Jesus not see the abolition of slavery necessary? Or, as I believe, in the Gospels and in later New Testament writings, do Jesus and later authors plant seeds to enable the Church to later fully transform to the culture of God's kingdom?

⁴⁸ See Scholer for a fuller explanation of how this text serves as a framework and includes not only positional but practical equality to women (2005b:121-135).

⁴⁹ Del Birkey (2005) and William Webb (2001) trace the idea of redemptive elements inside the Scriptures to enable biblical readers to understand the original intent of the passages. Webb demonstrates, and I agree, that on the issues of slavery and women, a progressive theology exists as the Church learns more about God's ways with freedom granted to both slaves and women. However, like Webb, I agree that there is no progression for the acceptance of homosexuality and it becoming an acceptable practice. Scriptures teach that homosexuality (just as any immoral act) has no part in the kingdom of God (Gal. 5:19 and Rom. 1:24-27). Just because Jesus did not give explicit teachings about slavery or equality and freedom for women to use leadership gifts publically, seeds of these kingdom values exist within the Gospels. See Appendix O that portrays Jesus planting seeds of the kingdom as he confronts his Jewish culture with his actions and words to women.

Table 1 demonstrates how I believe Jesus invites his redeemed people, based on the crucifixion and resurrection of Jesus, to live transformed relationships as redeemed males and females.

TABLE 1
THE IDEAL, FALLEN, AND REDEEMED FAMILY

| Person/Thing/Animal | The Ideal Family | The Fallen Family | The Redeemed Family |
|----------------------------|--|---|--|
| Serpent | All animals under the dominion of humans. | Cursed. Crawl on the ground and eat dust. | Messiah will crush the head of Satan once and for all! |
| Ground | Ground given to humanity to till and steward | Ground is cursed; produces thorns. Rom. 8:19, 22; Creation groans in expectation. | New heavens and a new earth – Fulfilled in Revelations |
| Man | Made for relationship – Gen 1:28; 2:23-24 | Loses mutual partner. | Should love and value his wife. Eph. 5:25 Shared authority - 1 Cor. 7 |
| Man | Made for shared dominion – Gen 1:28 | Potential domination of wife. Pride | Priesthood of Believers – 1 Pet 2:8-9 The humble see God – Matt. 5:5 |
| Woman | Created to bear children | Pain in childbirth Restricted to biological functions. | Worth and value not based on biology but on obedience – Lk. 11:23 |
| Woman | Made for relationship – Gen 1:28; 2:23-24 | Desire for husband – tendency to turn from God and place man in place of God | “One in Christ” Gal. 3:26-28 |
| Woman | Made for shared dominion | Potential domination of man over woman | Priesthood of Believers – 1 Pet 2:8-9 |

Though the Scriptures clearly reveal the sin of homosexual behavior, Scriptures do not reveal anywhere that the female gender in itself is sinful. Thus, because of this, I and many women and men, find it offensive when believers state that if women are allowed to exercise leadership, the Church will then continue to slip in their standards and thus condone practicing homosexuals to leadership positions. I have heard this argument by several believers.

Power in the Redeemed Community

God has infinite power, resources, and authority. Yet, God demonstrates throughout the Scriptures a desire to minimize the power distance between God and humanity as he continually invites people to work with him to accomplish his purposes. Jesus demonstrated power in the kingdom by turning the world's systems on their head. In Genesis 1-2, minimal if any power distance existed between the man and woman, but the Fall resulted in high power distance between the male and female.

Janet Hagburg discovered six stages of personal power—powerlessness, power by association, power by achievement, power by reflection, power by purpose, and power by wisdom.⁵⁰ According to Hagburg, “True leadership does not begin until the later stages, in which power can be seen as infinite and valuable insofar as it is given away” (Hagburg 2003:x). I concur and believe this definition of true leadership describes leadership in the kingdom.

Hagburg realized that both men and women often identify and remain at a particular stage, thus often never truly rising to the stage of real power. I believe her research findings relate theologically to the Fall. Hagberg's research demonstrates that women prefer power that comes by association. People at this stage are dependent on their supervisor or leader and often demonstrate reluctance to make decisions because of their insecurity and preference to follow (Hagburg 2003:4). The Church often teaches that God created women as dependent on men, and therefore women must follow men. Hagberg states that some women don't like themselves and may even allow themselves “to be used, physically, emotionally, or intellectually, in order to obtain love or attention” (Hagburg 2003:249). A woman's turning to her husband at the expense of following God with utmost allegiance, coincides with the “power through association” description. Lack

⁵⁰ Janet Hagberg looks at the individual leader and how a leader grows in his/her comfort, understanding, and use of power as he or she matures in leadership. She states, “Through a combination of external power (the capacity for action) and internal power (the capacity for reflection), a person becomes personally powerful and thus reaches their full potential (Hagburg 2003:xxi).

of confidence and need for security often hold women back from moving onto the next stage of power and hinder them from finding their purpose, destiny, confidence and security in Jesus Christ alone.

Hagberg's research indicates that males feel most comfortable in stage three—power by achievement. Hagberg states that ambition, courage, control, greed, and egocentric behavior describe this stage. People in level three lead by charisma and personal persuasion, inspire a winning attitude, and require loyalty (Hagburg 2003:90). In Genesis 3, God revealed males' tendency to dominate their wives. Instead of seeing the woman as an "equal strength" (*ezer k'neged*), males typically expect and the Church often teaches that God created women to help men fulfill what God calls men to do, and God commands men to hold dominion (or leadership) in their homes, churches, and society. At the same time, the woman who is stuck in stage two and dependent on the leader often concedes to this idea and does not seek to use or improve her skills or gifts as readily.

Jesus reversed these fallen ideas of power by stating leaders actually serve and lay their lives down (Matt. 20:20-28)! Both males and females must lay their lives down, though for each the actions may look different:⁵¹

Christian men live 'the life laid down' by elevating and serving their Christian sisters, demonstrating a key virtue of the kingdom. Christian women demonstrate kingdom ethics not only through servanthood but also through freely, boldly exercising their gifts in the cause of Christ, which also is a kind of sacrifice (Snyder 2004:125).

Glen Scorgie states the difficult reality both males and females face when seeking to live against their fallen nature:

⁵¹ How males and females lay their lives down and live the kingdom ethic of power may look differently in diverse cultures. Though I believe the application may look differently, the kingdom understanding of power must prevail. Jesus teaches and demonstrates that those who claim allegiance to the kingdom of God lay their lives down and have a different standard of authority and power from the world's cultures.

It is very difficult to give up advantage and preeminence in a hierarchical system in order to practice the opposite, which is mutual submission. It is just as difficult for those who have been beaten down into a mentality of subservience to learn to exercise responsibility within relations of shared leadership. In both case, there is a need for renewal of the mind and of self-sacrifice” (Scorgie 2007.4:12).

In the “new kingdom of God which Jesus inaugurated, any hierarchical worldview of human power and authority over others in not a redeemed one” (Birkey 2005:62). David Hamilton states, “If we’re preoccupied with maintaining our status, if we’re trying to protect the privileges of some hierarchy taught by our particular culture, we are acting in a non-Christian way. These reactions are the opposite of the Gospel message” (Cunningham and Hamilton 2000:139).

The redeemed community lives a different pattern of leadership and authority—servanthood defines power, authority and leadership in the kingdom. These new patterns lead to missional effectiveness. “Shared leadership, mutuality, empowerment, and cooperation result in synergy: much more than the sum of its parts—more leadership, authority and power for each believer involved and more for the cause of Christ” (Gill and Cavaness 2004:186). God’s view of power involves the release of power, not the pursuit. Scholer states, “The foundational pattern of authority in the early church is that which enables and empowers every believer to do the work of the Gospel for the church and the world” (Scholer 2005c:29-30).⁵²

Kouzes and Posner describe the paradox of power as “we become most powerful when we give our own power away” (Kouzes and Posner 2002:284). Nancy Ortberg concurs, “Leaders use their power in service to others, not in service for themselves” (Ortberg 2004:90). A focus on God, rather than gender, and his reconciling redemptive purposes enable the Church to live with outward focus for the purposes of God. A

⁵² Ray Ortlund states, “Authority does not authenticate my person. Authority is not a privilege to be exploited to build up my ego. Authority is a responsibility to be borne for the benefit of others without regard for oneself” (Ortlund 1991:112). This quote comes from Ortlund’s article where he defends male headship and authority.

kingdom understanding of power, authority, and leadership multiplies the laborers in God's harvest and thus the effectiveness of the Church in completing the *missio Dei*.

Summary

God created the world in perfect harmony and community that reflected the *imago Dei*. While the Fall destroyed this unified community, the power of Jesus on the cross not only provided reconciliation between God and people but also among people. The kingdom's definition of power conflicts with the world's systems.

Christiane Carlson-Thies summarizes the powerful unity and harmonious interdependence in which God created humanity and then later provided redeemed males and females:

The creation account of Adam does not support a hierarchical ordering of male leaders over female helpers (the complementarian bias). But neither does it support an individualist notion of independent, undifferentiated men and women entering into contractual negotiations to manage their equal relationship (the secular egalitarian bias). Instead, it opens up the very exciting perspective of humanity as a community of man and woman in union together. This perspective, in turn, confronts faithful followers of Christ with the challenge of exercising their authority and responsibility in home, church and society such that our unity as humanity and our diversity as male and female can both flourish as we implement our redeemed identity and calling (Carlson-Thies 2004:9).

The interdependence of the male and female in the redeemed home and the Church reflect the interdependence of the Trinity. I now turn to see how the Spirit empowers the reconciled community to further the *missio Dei* and the responsibility of the Church to represent Christ and his kingdom prophetically within each culture of the world. I conclude with a brief but more thorough explanation of the contrarian view that believes in male headship and male authority.

CHAPTER 2

THE CHURCH'S INVITATION AND GOD'S LABORERS

Jesus commissioned the Church to make disciples of all nations as part of God's plans to accomplish the *missio Dei* (Jn. 20:21).¹ This invitation demonstrates God's intentional strategies to lower power distance between himself and humanity as he invites humanity into his purposes to "restore and heal creation" (Guder et al. 1998:4). Jesus sends the Church to contextualize its message as it speaks prophetically to all cultures.

The Community—Empowered to Heal

As stated previously, God plans to reconcile all things to himself. God created humanity to serve as co-regents on the earth; therefore God continues this initiative by giving the responsibility to the Church to work with him in the *missio Dei*.

Message and Ministry of Reconciliation

In 2 Corinthians 5, Paul wrote to the Corinthian church about the marvelous plan of God to include them in accomplishing the *missio Dei*. Paul expressed that God, the Reconciler, gave believers the ministry and the message of reconciliation. The community of God both reflects and spreads the message and ministry of reconciliation.

The gospel has been committed to a community, is transmitted by that community, and demands a community experience. Without community

¹ Quoting Isaiah 61, Jesus expresses in Luke 4:18-19, what he was sent to do. He later says in John 20:21 that he sends his followers as he himself was sent. With this reasoning, the church also should define its ministry with characteristics similar to Luke 4 and Isaiah 61. These passages describe the *missio Dei*.

there cannot be a living representation of the gospel. It is the community of believers that announces the kingdom of God as a reality, which proclaims a new order of life under the sovereign action of God (Costas 1989:134-135).

While in Pakistan in 1995, God enabled me to catch a greater glimpse of the humbling invitation God offers the church to partner with him. As recorded in a 1995 personal journal:

Tonight I stood on my rooftop in the place where I am staying...The physical darkness reminded me of the intense spiritual darkness. It is so intensely dark here...I believe God revealed something to me tonight which I have never considered fully. As I complained to God about my loneliness and my frustration, I also revealed to him that the burden I felt in my heart for these people felt like a knife piercing my heart. In a moment of silence, God's Spirit spoke deep in my heart, "Leslie, what you feel is only a small portion of what I feel when I see these people." I am amazed to imagine God's pain for the lost. But what amazes me more which will require much more reflection was the question that I know I heard, "Leslie, will you share the burden with me?" All my life I have asked God to share my burden. And yet tonight, I felt God asked me to share the burden in the heart of God – God's burden for the nations. I think tonight for the first time I realize that God truly wants a friendship with his people, so much so, that God willingly reveals his heart.

God not only gives the responsibility of the message and ministry of reconciliation to the Church, but God willingly equips and empowers the Church to do this noble task through the Holy Spirit. The church "exists by the grace (*charis*) of God and is built up by the gifts of grace (*charismata*) bestowed by the Spirit" (Snyder 2004:73). Jesus continually gives life to the Body of Christ. Paul called Jesus the "head of the church." In the English language, "head" typically means "boss." However, upon studying the contextual and historical meanings of *kephale*, authors in antiquity most often used *kephale* to mean "source" or "origin."² If authors wanted to convey *authority*, they usually chose the word *exousia*. In each passage where authors stated Jesus as the

² Catherine Clark Kroeger explores classical and Christian antiquity and expresses that *kephale's* meaning as "source" is well documented and accepted by scholars (Kroeger 1987). Grudem explores the meaning of *kephale* arriving at the conclusion that it means "authority" (Grudem 2004:552-599).

Head of the church, the texts all refer to the Church as a body nourished by Jesus as their source of life.³ The Church receives power and life through Christ.

As seen biblically, the church is not structured the same way a business corporation or university is. Rather, it is structured like the human body—on the basis of life. At its most basic level the church is a community, not a hierarchy; an organism, not an organization (Mt. 18:20; Rom. 12:5-8; 1 Cor. 12; Eph. 4:1-16; 1 Pet. 4:10-11) (Snyder 2004:73).

The Holy Spirit fills both males and females with spiritual gifts to fulfill his mission. Appendix C reveals a brief breakdown of these gifts into supernatural gifts, motivational gifts, and equipping gifts based on the lists of spiritual gifts in 1 Corinthians 14, Romans 12, and Ephesians 4.⁴ Debate exists about the way the Church exercises these gifts. Paul encouraged believers to seek the supernatural gift of prophecy (1 Cor. 14:1). However, some scholars believe prophetic giftings have less authority than teaching gifts. Therefore some scholars believe women can prophesy but not teach, while others claim that if women can prophesy—the highest of the gifts—then every job in the church becomes open to females.⁵

³ See Colossians 1:18-20, 2:10, 2:19 and Ephesians 4:15-16. In Colossians 2:19, the word “over” is inserted into the English translation but it is not present in the Greek.

⁴ Paul states in Ephesians 4:8-9, “when he ascended on high, he took many captives and gave gifts to his people,” and links the Spirit’s giving of gifts to the passage in Psalm 68. Psalm 68 contains many verses that refer to the Messiah. The literal translation of Psalm 68:11 states, “The Lord announced the word, and great was the company of women who proclaimed it.” Many translations change the feminine word used here and simply state “great was the company of those who proclaimed it.” It seems significant that the primary text Paul quotes when communicating about spiritual gifts in Ephesians 4 referred to a Psalm that announced women as those who proclaimed the message of God.

⁵ John Piper and Wayne Grudem, referring to Deborah and Huldah, state, “Moreover in the case of each woman referred to above, we have an instance of a charismatic emergence on the scene, not an installation to the ordinary Old Testament office or priest, which was the responsibility of men” (Piper and Grudem 1991c:72). I find this interesting as a “charismatic emergence” denotes the presence of God. This statement could reveal their worldview of not placing as much credence in charismatic, or Spirit-filled moments.

In all three passages about spiritual gifts (1 Cor. 14, Rom. 12, and Eph. 4), Paul reminded the Church that the Spirit gave gifts just as the Spirit decided. The Spirit gave gifts based on his grace, not a believer's merit. The Spirit gave gifts for the edification of the Church and its service in the world. In each of these passages, the Greek does not indicate differentiated spiritual gifts for either males or females. Most believers, regardless of one's stance on women in ministry, believe God gives both males and females spiritual gifts.⁶ The tension arises around women using gifts that give them authority over males. However, upon examination of even the equipping gifts (commonly related to offices in the Church) listed in Ephesians 4, the biblical text mentions women who use each of the equipping gifts.⁷ See Appendix D for a list of women using each of these public gifts in the Bible.

The intent of each of these passages reveals Paul's desire to show that God is the power source (the *kephale*) behind the gift. These passages also demonstrate God's intentions in giving spiritual gifts which equip the Body of Christ to fulfill the *missio Dei*. Scriptures abound that claim fruit cannot be gained by any vessel of God without God's power (2 Cor. 4:17). Jesus said flesh counts for nothing (Jn. 6:63), Peter stated that God

David Hamilton espouses that if God uses a woman once in a specific task, then that ministry becomes open to all women gifted for that task (Cunningham and Hamilton 2000:52). Thomas Schreiner disagrees with Hamilton's approach. He states that when women participated in ministries in Scripture, "their ministry was a complementary and supportive ministry, a ministry that fostered and preserved male leadership in the church. Thus, the ministry of women in the church was notable and significant, but it never supplanted male leadership; instead, it functioned as a support to male leadership. This view does not rule out all ministry for women. Instead, it sees the ministry of women as complementary and supportive" (Schreiner 1991b:215).

⁶ Some believers believe in the cessation of spiritual gifts. I am not dealing with that group here.

⁷ David Hamilton does a thorough investigation of the three most difficult passages about women and exegetes them thoroughly using grammatical, historical, and cultural analysis. Hamilton demonstrates that Scriptures support women in leadership (Cunningham and Hamilton 2000). Thomas Schreiner has written an article that focuses on the valuable ministries women can participate in within the context of male leadership. In his article he examines a variety of ministries such as prophetesses, teachers, fellow-workers and laborers, female deacons, elders, and apostles. With each ministry, he demonstrates how women did these tasks as a way to support and enhance male leadership. He states, "The ministries women do become involved in, however, should be complementary and supportive of the male leadership in the church" (Schreiner 1991b:222).

does not show favoritism (Acts 10:34), and Peter also said that believers needed to use every gift given to serve others (1 Pet. 4:10). When the church embraces all believers and the gifts that each has, the Church becomes stronger, resulting in more synergy as more laborers extend the mission of God. The Church advances in unity, and the world knows God's love (Jn. 17:21).

Exclusion or Embrace?

The way the Church lives as a community between males and females, engaging in God's mission, models either the exclusion or the embrace of God's people. In 2005, I attended a meeting in Indonesia called *Ethne*. Chad did not go. Upon leaving the conference, I rode to the airport in a bus with a man from Colorado. He asked about our ministry. When I told him, he responded, "So what are your husband's spiritual gifts that enable him to do this?" Another time I sat at a table with a leading apologist from the USA. Again, Chad was not there. I shared about our ministry, and he remarked, "So I need to meet your husband. What are his spiritual gifts?" In both of these instances, I felt invisible and excluded in the Body of Christ.

Though the Church formally endorses ontological equality,⁸ the social practices of some believers demonstrate functional inequality. The functional inequality hints at ontological inequality. Yet, "we must both affirm equality between men and women and seek to change social practices in which the inferiority of women is embodied and through which it is perpetuated even when their equality to men is formally endorsed" (Volf 1996:185). In the illustration above, I believe these solid Christian men believed in the ontological equality of Chad and me, but their words reflected they assumed male and female functional inequality.

⁸ When I state I believe Scriptures teach both ontological and functional equality, I do not condone the androgyny of the sexes. I believe male and female are distinct. However, the distinctives between males and females should not determine how one is valued or how one can serve.

During a membership class taught to potential members of a church in Tennessee, the leader of ushers came by to explain the usher ministry. Discussion followed in which it became clear that only males could usher in this church. Someone asked, “Are you telling me that a five year old boy can usher in our church simply because he’s a boy but a mature woman in the faith cannot usher because she is a female?” During this session, several potential members became upset and questioned their membership as they heard simple tasks in the Body of Christ denied them. One woman later told me, “I am not sure I can go to this church now. I do not want my 13 year old daughter to hear she has such limits on her service simply because she is female.”⁹

The exclusion or embrace offered to males or females based on gender strikes at the issues of identity and can determine how people believe God values females in the context of his mission. An Indian woman stated:

One highly qualified woman I know, who was much sought after, even by the government of the country for her input and expertise, said in despair: ‘When I come home, I am nobody! And I am silenced in my church! I would have given my life to serve the church, but I am not allowed to speak or participate in anything (Thomas 2005:693).

Another woman recently told me, “Sundays are the saddest days of my life. I feel unaccepted and of little value when I walk into church.” The Church’s embrace of women (and all redeemed peoples in its midst) has the potential to demonstrate the power and truth of reconciliation to a broken world, while the exclusion can simply mimic a fragmented world.

⁹ A Chinese sister stated to me, “I am amazed at how excited women in your country become if their church allows women to take up the offering. Our women are leading millions and in your churches, some think taking up the offering is a big deal.”

The Great Commission in the Context of Culture

God values culture and a unified, diversified Church glorifies Christ. Jesus came and resided in one culture. Yet, Jesus' actions and words often planted "seeds of the kingdom" for further transformation.¹⁰ Paul's letters demonstrate a church leader committed to the study of context in the midst of declaring the Gospel, and yet also displayed a leader not afraid to confront culture as in Galatians 3. Paul also planted seeds of the kingdom. Believers from every ethnic group gather around the throne to worship the Lamb of God. The global Church united in one faith in Jesus Christ exemplifies a global God committed to the whole world.

Yet, as believers make their way through the early church in Scriptures, the disturbing complex reality of a global Gospel in diverse contexts immediately surfaces. Though God loves many qualities of human cultures, God desires his enduring kingdom culture to transform all cultures. Jesus tells his followers to pray "your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven" (Matthew 6:10). Understanding social theory enables a global citizen (who values human culture and commits to kingdom culture) to better comprehend the various frameworks that comprise cultural contexts.

Social Theory

The Gospel must penetrate a wide diverse array of cultures. Thompson, Ellis, and Wildavsky (TEW) use Mary Douglas's grid-group typology and then create a system for defining five different "ways of life" enacted by members of cultures or societies. Group refers to how individuals fit into bounded units. The more incorporated the individual, the more group determines choices over the individual. Grid refers to the way an individual's

¹⁰ In Matthew 13, Jesus teaches multiple parables about the kingdom of God. In the parable of the sower, the parable of the weeds, and the parable of the mustard seed; Jesus refers to seed. When I refer to "seeds of the kingdom," I refer to teachings of Jesus that begin as small seeds but eventually lead to a good crop or a large tree. Jesus, and later Paul, plant seeds that they believe will result in full transformation of the Church.

life is arranged based on externally imposed prescriptions (Thompson, Ellis, and Wildavsky 1990:5). According to TEW, cultural bias refers to the shared values and beliefs of people within a culture. Social relations refer to patterns of interpersonal relationships. TEW combined cultural bias with social relations and established five “ways of life” (Thompson, Ellis, and Wildavsky 1990:1).

Sherwood Lingenfelter built upon TEW’s work but changed their “ways of life” to “social games.” Each social game exists in a quadrant marked by group and grid: authoritarian (high grid, low group), hierarchist (high grid, high group), egalitarian (low grid, high group), individualist (low grid, low group), and hermit (which resides outside of these four quadrants) (Lingenfelter 1998:31).

I believe no social game can claim to display God’s kingdom in totality. At the Fall, humanity fragmented and thus all human “social games” fall short of displaying relationships as originally created with harmony and unity. Jesus came pronouncing the kingdom of God which I believe supersedes all social games.

Gospel and Culture

Some scholars like Charles Kraft and Marvin Mayers hold a neutral view of culture, believing that cultural structures cannot be termed either inherently good or evil. Mayers states “It is entirely possible that the gospel can enter a life and a society without change being called for” (Mayers 1987:251).¹¹ Lingenfelter, on the other hand states, “Culture is created and contaminated by human beings; culture is the pen of disobedience from which freedom is possible only through the gospel” (Lingenfelter 1998:17). Hiebert

¹¹ Though I respect these scholars for their work in missiology, I do not agree with their assessment of culture. If any culture existed that did not need transformation, the crucifixion would not be necessary for that culture. Yet, God clearly states, “For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God” (Romans 3:23). Though Kraft and Mayer are speaking of culture here and not of individual sin, sinners comprise and create culture; thus every culture on earth contains fallen aspects and the Gospel calls for change.

does not seem to agree with either viewpoint but instead states, “A truly indigenous theology not only affirms aspects of culture but also challenges aspects of culture that are evil fallen expressions of God’s intent for humans (Hiebert 1985:56). My assessment of culture and the Gospel lines up most to Hiebert’s ideas. In every culture, various aspects of the culture either line up or conflict with the Gospel.

No one can escape in totality from one’s cultural bias. However, as I have traveled, interacted, and partnered with believers from various cultures, I have become more aware of my own cultural blinders and adapted my ways after learning from my global sisters and brothers. My global sisters and brothers have also become aware at times of their own cultural biases that have blinded them to aspects of the Gospel and also have changed their ways. Lingenfelter states, and I agree, that a believer can live with a significant degree of freedom if one adopts a pilgrim lifestyle, seeking to live as a pilgrim and alien in the world (Lingenfelter 1998:36-37). Thus, a pilgrim plays within the social games, but the Gospel shapes their standards and actions.

I agree with Hiebert’s analysis that the Gospel must distinguish itself from all human cultures because of its divine revelation, yet the Gospel must also express itself in cultural forms so that all cultures can embrace it. The Gospel calls all cultures to change because “the kingdom of God stands in judgment of all cultures” (Hiebert 1985:55).

The Kingdom’s Prophetic Nature and Transformation

When the Gospel lives out its nature, dynamic tension exists between the Gospel and culture. God’s character and action defines God’s reign, and the Gospel demands that every culture line up to God’s standards (Guder et al. 1998:90). The Gospel must remain both contextual and prophetic. If the Gospel does not do both, either it reduces the Gospel to its own culture or it reduces the Gospel of its transforming power. Realizing the truth

of cultural bias, the Church around the world needs to learn from one another in order to discover the full transforming power of the Gospel, enabling it to reflect the reign of the King more completely.¹²

The Prophetic Gospel

The prophetic nature of the Gospel challenges the Church to live by the standards of the kingdom. “Where the gospel has lost this prophetic voice, it is in danger of being wedded to beliefs and values that distort its message” (Hiebert 1985:56). Because of the Gospel’s prophetic purpose, I propose the question, “Has the relationship lived out between redeemed males and females prophetically influenced the culture, or have fallen cultures influenced the Church’s understanding of male and female relationships?” On Delhi University’s campus, a young woman approached me. “I have two questions for you. In my culture both Islam and Hinduism state that men are here and women are here (she used her hands to show males as higher than females). In your religion, what does God believe about men and women? What do followers of your God practice?”

With hundreds of people groups still considered unreached, I believe the Church needs to seriously reflect upon the prophetic nature of the reign of God and allow God’s eternal reign to judge its attitudes, actions, and traditions regarding males and females. Then the Church can more effectively penetrate a dark world with solid theology and practical missiology.

¹² I watched a display of mutual learning and discovery as I watched Chinese leaders and Arab leaders meet for the first time. In 2004, we took five leading house church leaders to meet Arab leaders to encourage the Chinese in their vision to send cross-cultural workers to the Muslim world. The Arabs asked the Chinese how they experienced signs and wonders and how they thrived during persecution. The Chinese humbly told the Arabs to go out and preach to Muslims, and signs and wonders would follow. The Chinese asked the Arabs how to share the Gospel with Muslims and came away saying they realized their model in China would probably not work in the Middle East. Each side both listened and shared their expertise.

Guder believes the Church needs continual conversion as it seeks to reflect Jesus to a hurting world. As the church transmits the message of the kingdom prophetically, transformation will continue to take place in the Church and in society. “The transforming work of the Prince of Peace is to create a community that would not be humanly possible, where there is neither Jew nor Greek, male nor female, slave owner nor slave, as the tangible evidence of the in-breaking kingdom” (Guder 2000:69). Though the practical outworking of the transformation may look different from culture to culture, God’s character, rather than culture, serves as the starting point. The kingdom is founded on the very nature of God. Thus, the kingdom becomes the “way of life” or the “social game” for the people of God.

Global Transformation—a Metatheology

Because Jesus Christ preached and lived the kingdom, I believe the kingdom of God serves as a meta-theology for all churches in all cultures. However, because no church in the world completely understands the kingdom in totality, and each sees dimly through his or her cultural biases, the church in context needs the global church. “Churches in different cultural and historical contexts must test their theologies with the international community of churches and the church down through the ages. The priesthood of believers must be exercised within a hermeneutical community” (Hiebert 1985:103). The international community of churches enables churches to test certain theologies to determine what beliefs simply reflect cultural assumptions and which ones model kingdom standards. The willingness to dialogue at this level with a globalized church and to listen to stories from the globalized church may move the Church further in

its understanding about males and females and how God desires to use them based on his kingdom reign.¹³

The practice of these principles may look different in various contexts and cultures, but the standards and the principles remain. The nature of theology revolves “around the goal to understand the unchanging nature of the gospel – the absolutes that transcend time and cultural pluralism” (Hiebert 1985:103). Hiebert states that this embrace of the priesthood of all believers which requires the Church at large to evaluate one another’s theologies may disturb churches that exist within an ethnocentric bubble. He states:

It will remind us that the kingdom of God is always prophetic and calls all cultures towards God’s ideals, and that citizens of that kingdom are to form living communities that manifest the nature of that kingdom. In such communities, understanding the Word of God must be an ongoing and living process that leads to discipleship under the lordship of Christ in every area of life (Hiebert 1985:103).

This humble approach to the Gospel demonstrates a desire and a willingness to embrace the whole Church for the sake of the whole Gospel in the whole world.

The Contrarian View to the Theoretical Construct

In the previous pages, I developed certain theoretical propositions regarding the kingdom of God, community in God’s kingdom, the mission of God, and God’s laborers.

¹³ The global Christian movement continues to dialogue about this topic. In the Lausanne Covenant written in 1974 by multiple writers and signed by numerous leaders in the world issues a statement: “We therefore should share his concern for justice and reconciliation throughout human society and for the liberation of men and women from every kind of oppression. Because men and women are made in the image of God, every person, regardless of race, religion, colour, culture, class, sex or age, has an intrinsic dignity because of which he or she should be respected and served, not exploited” (The Lausanne Covenant 1974).

The Manila Manifesto produced in 1989 in two of its affirmations alludes to the need for the Church to diminish barriers of exclusion: “We affirm that we who claim to be members of the Body of Christ must transcend within our fellowship the barriers of race, gender and class. We affirm that the gifts of the Spirit are distributed to all God’s people, women and men, and that their partnership in evangelization must be welcomed for the common good (*The Manila Manifesto*).

However, I realize that not all followers of Christ arrive at similar conclusions. While I believe God calls, equips, and empowers both males and females with leadership gifts, other followers of Jesus believe that while God gifts both males and females, God places some restrictions on how females can use certain gifts. Because believers on both sides of the discussion desire to accomplish the Great Commission, I will present the opposing side's understanding of how women can engage in the Great Commission. I will then give a brief synopsis of the contrarian view based on key biblical terms (*kephale*, *authentain*), key biblical passages (1 Cor. 11, 1 Cor. 14, 1 Tim. 2) and key concepts (created order, equal but differentiated roles, and the Trinity).

The Great Commission

Those on both sides of the debate show commitment towards the Great Commission. The Council for Biblical Manhood and Womanhood, comprised of several evangelical leaders, published the Danvers' Statement as a clarification of their beliefs regarding their complementarian position.¹⁴ This statement reveals limitations and restrictions placed on females in the home and church. Regarding Gospel proclamation, the Danvers' Statement reveals:

With half the world's population outside the reach of indigenous evangelism; with countless other lost people in those societies who 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 (CBMW 1991:470-471).

¹⁴ I am using the word *complementarian* to describe those who believe in male headship and female submission in both the home and church. However, I believe the mutuality God desires for males and females based on kingdom principles cannot be defined with either the word *complementarian* or *egalitarian* terminology. The kingdom principles of a relationship between the man and woman demonstrate an interdependence, mutuality and harmony only possible by the Holy Spirit's indwelling.

Thus, other than a few restrictions, the Denver's Statement acknowledges multiple ministries open for women. The Church should restrict women from performing any ministries that involve teaching or authority “ in settings or ways that dishonor the calling of men to bear the primary responsibility for teaching and leadership” (Piper and Grudem 1991b:70).

John Piper encourages women to not “measure your potential by the few roles withheld, but by the countless roles offered” (Piper 1991a:57). Piper desires, “that the vision of manhood and womanhood presented in this book is not meant to hinder ministry but to purify and empower it in a pattern of Biblical obedience” (1991a:59). Piper developed a list of ministry in which women can engage. See Appendix E for this list which he states is incomplete but a start in demonstrating how many opportunities exist for women's service.

Wayne Grudem also develops three lists that rank the levels of authority in governing, teaching, and public tasks. Though some might restrict women from all the tasks listed, Grudem believes the Bible limits the top sections of each list to males, while women can participate at the lower levels of the lists. I include these lists in Appendix F.¹⁵

Piper openly acknowledges that at times a woman will influence a man. He states, “It is simply impossible that from time to time a woman not be put in a position of influencing or guiding men” (Piper 1991a:50). Piper gives an example of a housewife that gives directions to a man who has lost his way near her home. She has superior knowledge and thus she influences the man. Piper states, “We all know that there is a way for that housewife to direct the man that neither of them feels their mature femininity or masculinity compromised” (1991a:50). A woman can influence provided that she

¹⁵ Though I respect his hard work, I find these lists cumbersome in that the level of authority assumed by each category must be examined to determine if a woman can participate or not. How can authority be measured?

affirms “the responsibility of men to provide a pattern of strength and initiative” (1991a:51).

The scholars in this camp also love God and desire to see the Great Commission completed. Yet, they fear that when women demonstrate leadership or authority over men, the overall society may experience instability. “There are roles that strain the personhood of man and woman too far to be appropriate, productive and healthy for the overall structure of home and society” (1991a:51).¹⁶

Biblical Terms

Though scholars differ on the interpretations of various words in the gender debate, here I will only focus on the terms *kephale* and *authentain*. Upon the interpretation of these words, scholars place themselves on either side of the gender debate.

Kephale

Much debate surrounding males and females in the home and church centers around the concept of “headship.” Ray Ortlund defines male headship as “in the partnership of two spiritually equal human beings, man and woman, the man bears the primary responsibility to lead the partnership in a God-glorifying direction” (Ortlund 1991:95).

The concept of headship comes from the Greek word *kephale*.¹⁷ Some scholars (Grudem, Piper, Ortlund, Patterson, Knight, Schreiner) believe the word carries the

¹⁶ I question whether their fears influence their worldview or their biblical interpretation.

¹⁷ Depending on the author, *kephale* has a range of meanings. Those who hold to a hierarchical view of males and females generally emphasize the *authority*, *boss*, or *leader* definition of *kephale*. Contrary to this position, some scholars emphasize *source*, *origin*, or *come from* as the primary definition of *kephale* which the Greek audience understood at that time. For further reading on the source/origin perspective, see Kroeger (1987), Bilezekian (1985), and Mickelsen (1986).

primary meaning of *authority over*.¹⁸ Other scholars (Fee, Kroeger, Bilezekian, and Scholer) believe *source* better defines the word.¹⁹ Much of the debate centers around which Greek lexicon the scholar used.²⁰

Authors who promote the “authority over” definition believe male headship began with creation and later Christ redeemed the broken aspects of authority and submission that took place because of the Fall. Piper and Grudem state, “The redemptive thrust of the Bible does not aim at abolishing headship and submission but at transforming them for their original purposes in the created order” (Piper and Grudem 1991b:65). Ortlund believes that God established male headship by creating males and females both equal and not-equal:

So, was Eve Adam’s equal? Yes and no. She was his spiritual equal and unlike the animals, ‘suitable for him.’ But she was not his equal in that she was his ‘helper.’ God did not create man and woman in an undifferentiated way, and their mere maleness and femaleness identify their respective roles. A man, just by virtue of his manhood, is called to

¹⁸ In Wayne Grudem’s examination of 2,336 instances of *kephale* in Greek literature, identifies forty-nine instances in which *kephale* refers to a person of superior authority of rank (Grudem 2004:544-551). Gilbert Bilezikian then examines each of these forty-nine instances and interpretations to determine the accuracy of each instance Grudem cites. Bilezikian concludes from this study that the word *kephale* never means “authority over” in the New Testament. He goes on to note that, “*kephale* is used within the metaphorical system of the New Testament in a variety of settings that give it some conceptual flexibility, but always with the notion of serving the body in a creational, nurturing or representational dimension” (Bilezekian 1985:249-250).

¹⁹ Catherine Kroeger’s article demonstrates that the translation of head/*kephale* as “source” is “well-documented in both classical and Christian antiquity and has long been accepted by scholars” (Kroeger 1987:267). This definition fits with the Greeks’ thoughts that human life (tiny humans) resided and originated in the male brain (1987:270).

²⁰ Berkeley and Alvira Mickelsen explain the two lexicons mostly used. The most complete Greek-English lexicon was compiled by Liddel, Scott, Jones and McKenzie, first published in 1843. It examines Greek words from thousands of Greek writings over a period of 1600 years. This lexicon gives twenty-five possible meanings for *kephale* outside of the physical head. “The list does *not* include ‘authority,’ ‘superior rank,’ ‘leader,’ ‘director,’ or anything similar as a meaning...Apparently, ordinary readers of Greek literature during New Testament times would not think of ‘final authority,’ ‘superior rank,’ or ‘director’ as common meanings for the word translated ‘head.’” Today the most common lexicon used by pastors and Bible teachers is the *koine* Greek lexicon by Arndt and Gengrich, known as Bauer’s. This lexicon is less than half the size of the one mentioned above. Their second possible definition of *kephale* is a word used to denote superior rank. To read more of the Mickelsen’s understanding of what *kephale* means in the New Testament, see (Mickelson 1986:97-117).

lead for God. As woman, just by virtue of her womanhood, is called to help for God (Ortlund 1991:102).

Authentein

Authentein exists as a second Greek word which guides much of the male headship perspective. Paul used the word *authentein* only once in the New Testament (1 Timothy 2:12),²¹ which has caused the debate since little is known about the word. But scholars who hold to a male headship view in the home and church believe that this verse holds much weight for their argument of male headship and female submission. A major study of the Greek *authentein* by George Knight in 1984 provided a solid defense for the male headship interpretation (Scholer 2005a:201) and for the prohibition of female authority in the church. Authors who interpret *authentein* as normative definition teach that women should not exert authority over males in any circumstances.

Scholars such as Scholer, Kroeger, Wilshire, and Perriman emphasize the negative connotations of *authentein*, stating that women should not dominate, usurp, demand, instigate violence, or exhibit other inappropriate behavior (Scholer 2005a:200-204).²²

Biblical Passages

Those who emphasize male authority use 1 Corinthians 11:3-16, 14:33-36 and 1 Timothy 2:11-15 as three primary passages to support their view. Below I give very brief summaries of the interpretation of these verses that support the male authority view.

²¹ “I do not permit a woman to teach or to have authority over a man. She is to keep silent” 1 Timothy 1:12.

²² Scholer states, “I am convinced that the evidence...establishes *authentein* as a negative term....Therefore the text is not a transcultural, normative establishment of male headship” (Scholer 2005a:204). No leader, whether male or female, should practice leadership with domination, demands, or exhibiting inappropriate behavior.

1 Corinthians 11:3-16

In 1 Corinthians 11:3, Paul uses the word *kephale* three times indicating that Christ is the *kephale* of every man, the *kephale* of the woman is man, and the *kephale* of Christ is God. Proponents of male authority point to this passage and define the translated word head/*kephale* as “*authority*.” They emphasize that Christ is the authority over man, males are in authority over females (either husband/wife or in all contexts), and God is the authority of Jesus. They point out also in 1 Corinthians 11:9 that woman was created for man, instead of woman for man.²³

Thomas Schreiner comments that 1 Corinthians 11 teaches the male role of leadership and the female role of responding to male leadership. He states the problem of women taking full leadership “inevitably involves a collapsing of the distinctions between the sexes...Paul rightly saw...that there is a direct link between women appropriating leadership and the loss of femininity. It is no accident that Paul addresses the issues of feminine adornment and submission to male leadership in the same passage” (Schreiner 1991a:139). According to Schreiner, when a woman leads, she loses her femininity.²⁴

1 Corinthians 14:33-36

1 Corinthians 14:33b-36 also serves as a passage that bolsters the traditional interpretation that women should remain silent in the churches. In the Greek, the scribes did not use punctuation; thus, translators chose where to place the period in verse

²³ Other scholars interpret *kephale* in 1 Corinthians 11 as *source* or *origin*. Claiming that Christ “came from” God causes no Trinitarian problem such as an eternal subordination that resembles the Arian heresy. Also contextually, in 11:11-12 Paul says that woman comes from man, man comes from woman, but everything comes from God, which further substantiates the *source* idea in this passage. For more reading, see (Cunningham and Hamilton 2000:159-175) or Gordon Fee’s commentary on 1 Corinthians 11 in (Fee 1987).

²⁴ Though I practice leadership in my ministry and home, I also believe I maintain my femininity. Though Chad shares leadership with me in both marriage and ministry, he maintains his masculinity. We seek to keep our focus on God, his giftings and his mission. I believe Chad and other men who willingly work with women demonstrate humility.

14:33.²⁵ Based on the placement of punctuation, D.A. Carson believes that Paul gives a universal rule in 1 Corinthians 14:33b-34 to all churches for all times. Women must remain silent.²⁶ Carson believes that in the Greek public meeting, women were not allowed to speak at all, whereas in Paul's church women could speak (as in 1 Corinthians 11 they could prophesy) but that prophecy does not carry the same authoritative status as teaching. Carson states, "In that sense, Paul was not trapped by the social customs of Corinth: the gospel, in his view, truly freed women from certain cultural restrictions. But that does not mean that all distinctions in roles are thereby abolished" (Carson 1991:153).

1 Timothy 2:11-15

1 Timothy 2:11-15 provides the strongest impetus for the traditional viewpoint that women should not teach or have authority over men with the use of *authentain*. Those who promote male headship interpret this passage as a universal command for all cultures and time. They believe that when Paul links his instruction to the case of Adam and Eve, he universalizes his commands to Timothy and the church in Ephesus.²⁷

²⁵ The period can also go after "people" which emphasizes Paul's general principle of peace and order, "For God is not a God of disorder but of peace - as in all the congregations of the Lord's people. Women should..." Placing the period here, allows Paul to start a new thought beginning with "Women." Others believe the period goes after peace which states, "For God is not a God of disorder but of peace. As in all the congregations of the saints, women should remain silent in the churches" (1 Cor. 14:33-34). The placement of the period changes the meaning.

²⁶ Because of the ambiguity of punctuation, the passage carries multiple possible interpretations. According to Gordon Fee's commentary on 1 Corinthians, Fee believes that verses 14:34-40 were added later and should therefore be excluded from the passage. I agree more with David Hamilton who explains 1 Corinthians 14:34ff in the context of Paul's *chiastic* structure of limiting, then freeing, three groups: tongue speakers, prophets and women (Cunningham and Hamilton 2000:185-193). Hamilton concludes that a certain Greek symbol used throughout 1 Corinthians 14 is "explicative of dissociation" which strongly corrects false ideas of the Corinthians. Paul uses the symbol twice in 14:36. Thus Hamilton posits, Paul corrects the false teaching of some of the Corinthians who said women could not speak in church. If this interpretation is correct, then those who continue to limit women's voices in the church using this passage are spreading a heresy that Paul was adamant to correct.

²⁷ For the opposing view that Paul does not universalize this instruction, see Gritz (1991). She offers a study of 1 Timothy 2:9-15 looking at the religious and cultural milieu of the first century. She states that Paul addressed the Cult of Eve in this passage which taught women were created first, women were not deceived but enlightened, and women did not sin by eating the fruit. This cultural understanding can greatly impact the interpretation and application of this passage in contemporary contexts.

Douglas Moo states, “1 Timothy 2:8-15 imposes two restrictions on the ministry of women: they are not to teach Christian doctrine to men and they are not to exercise authority directly over men in the church. These restrictions are permanent, authoritative for the church in all times and places and circumstances as long as men and women are descended from Adam and Eve” (Moo 1991:180).²⁸

Concepts

The concepts of created order, equal but differentiated, and the Trinity comprise three concepts that initiate different interpretations. Below I will briefly define the contrarian view on these three concepts.

Created Order

Proponents of male headship and female submission believe God expresses this ideal for the relationship between the male and female because of created order. They believe that the order in which God created the male and female demonstrates that God intends for males to lead and women to follow. Grudem states, “According to Scripture itself, then, the fact that Adam was created first and then Eve has implications not just for Adam and Eve, but for the relationships between men and women throughout the church age” (Grudem 2004:30). Grudem believes that male headship existed as God’s plan from the beginning and not as a result of the Fall.

Grudem’s perspective mirrors that of George Knight who “sees that Paul is concerned with origin and not with mere chronology” (Knight 1977:41). “Not only for Paul but also for Adam and Moses – as well as for God, who created woman in such a

²⁸ 2 Timothy 2:2 states if translated from the Greek, “And the things you have heard me say in the presence of many witnesses entrust to reliable people (*anthropos*) who will also be qualified to teach others.” Thus, 2 Timothy 2:2 states Christian leaders should entrust reliable people to teach others. In this passage, Paul does not place restrictions that only women can teach women.

way and evoked the responses and principle applications—the created order and relationship is a most important factor” (1977:41-42).²⁹

Equal but Differentiated Roles

Those who hold to male headship as God’s design presuppose that gender roles define which activities males and females can perform in the Church and that roles serve as the primary means for differentiating males and females.³⁰ The Danver’s Statement, mentioned previously, defines this position: “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” (Grudem 2004:470).

In 1977 George Knight began the vocabulary of “equal but different.” He stated, “Equality and role differences are compatible” (Knight 1977:14). Before this time, theologians typically opted to describe males as superior and females as inferior. Knight managed to break this understanding into two parts—essence and function. With this division, he described men and women as equal in essence/being but different/unequal in role or function. By combining the concepts of “role relationship” and “equal but different” Knight effectively built the foundation for contemporary theologians to talk about the male/female relationship.³¹

²⁹ Groothuis, who does not agree with male headship, states, “The man and woman were created sequentially in Genesis 2 in order to demonstrate the need they have for each other, not to justify an implicit hierarchy” (Groothuis 1997:137).

³⁰ Deddo states that eternal differentiation within the eternal Trinity cannot be based on temporal, external action, performed in a time-bound creation. In the same way, humans made in God’s image must be differentiated not by roles (activities) but by the fact that they exist as male and female. See (Deddo 2008:4-13).

³¹ See Chad Segraves’ dissertation where he demonstrates how both Muslims and patriarchal Christians both use this same term “equal but different” to defend male headship and female submission (Neal Segraves 2009:144).

The Trinity

A third concept which informs the male headship position involves a new interpretation of the authority, power, and will of the Triune God. Some scholars who promote male headship/female submission advocate that the Persons of the Trinity are equal in essence and being, but different/unequal in authority. This understanding impacts the male and female relationship. Grudem states:

The subjection of the Son to the Father for all eternity, a subjection that never began but always existed, and a subjection that will continue eternally in the future, does not nullify the full deity of the Son....Therefore equality in being and in value and in honor can exist together with differences in roles between husband and wife as well (Grudem 2004:423).

Grudem also notes, “Just as God the Son is eternally subject to the authority of God the Father, so God has planned that wives be subject to the authority of their husbands (2004:46). George Knight similarly applies his understanding of the Trinity to the husband/wife relationship. Knight says, “For the basis of man’s headship and woman’s submission, the apostle Paul appeals to the analogy of God the Father’s headship over Jesus Christ” (Knight 1977:26).³² Thus the perspective that promotes a hierarchical Trinity substantiates a theology of loving male headship and respectful female subordination.

Summary of the Contrarian View

Though both sides of the debate desire to see the Great Commission accomplished, each determines how males and females can be used in God’s mission with a different hermeneutic of Scripture. In this section, I tried to demonstrate through key biblical terms, select biblical passages, and guiding concepts the perspective of those

³² Contra to the eternal subordination of the Son to the Father, see (Giles 2006), (Erickson 1995), and (Bilezekian 1997).

who believe in male headship, female submission, and more restrictive ministries for women.

Conclusion

The masses in need of Christ demand the Church's attention. The Church, as messengers and ministers of reconciliation, can reflect powerfully the community of the King, thus providing an authentic model for the truth and power of the Gospel. As millions wait to hear the message of the kingdom, the church must mobilize and release more laborers. According to ethicists Stassen and Gushee, gender as a foundational point on determining one's service in the Church fades when one looks at the enormous task for the church to complete world evangelization (Stassen and Gushee 2003:323). "The criterion for who may pursue these precious kingdom goals is simply the whole body of Christ, with specialization directed by spiritual giftedness" (2003:323).

I believe the Church needs to discover the deep level worldview reasons for the limits and restrictions placed on women. The speed of completing the Great Commission may depend upon it.

If the Church continues to fail to develop and use women, the Church will not be deeply deprived of this vast untapped potential, but she may well lose them instead to the services in the world which are wide open for them. In this emergence of women's leadership today, the Church which should have been ahead, is lagging far behind instead! Will the Church awaken to this gentle nudging of the Holy Spirit? May the Breath of the Holy Spirit breath again, to restore them to life and active service!" (Thomas 2005:189).

The Kingdom of God calls all believers to ultimate and final allegiance to Jesus Christ—no matter how it conflicts with human culture or traditions. E. Stanley Jones summarizes kingdom living succinctly, "The Absolute Order [Kingdom of God] meets us in the Absolute Person [Jesus Christ], and the obligation laid on us is Absolute Surrender" (Daniel 2005:229). I now examine both Deborah and David to discover what

God tries to teach the Church with his appointment of these unlikely leaders in their own respective contexts.

CHAPTER 3

GOD'S MISSION THROUGH DEBORAH AND DAVID

As discussed in previous chapters, the kingdom of God serves as my theoretical construct for examining and reflecting on God's purposes for God's world through God's people.¹ By weaving reflection, action, with even more reflection, faithful Christians can discover "how the church may participate in God's mission in God's world" (Van Engen 1996:26). Theology of mission seeks to understand the *missio Dei* from the standpoint of God's purposes on the earth and how God works through his people to accomplish his purposes for the world.

Theology of mission simply and yet profoundly allows the Bible to "question, shape, guide, and evaluate the missionary enterprise" in a particular context and time in history (Van Engen 1996:24). I will examine God's Word in light of two biblical characters, Deborah and David, enabling me to answer research question two, "What does God intend to teach us about principles of leadership through the biblical personalities of Deborah and David?" I will seek to understand *why* God chose these particular leaders and *how* God used them in his redemptive plan. I will propose that the characteristics God looked for in Deborah and David and God's willingness to empower

¹ Van Engen believes the integrating theme is the central idea that impacts the three realms of missiology – Word, world and church. This theme "is selected on the basis of being contextually appropriate and significant, biblically relevant and fruitful, and missionally active and transformational" (Van Engen 1996:23). This theme enables the reader to more faithfully move between the Word and the church as the "rereading of Scripture to praxeological action-reflection in order to discover the missiological implications of our rereading of Scripture" (1996:23). The kingdom of God serves as my integrating idea. I examine Scripture from this viewpoint and seek to understand how the kingdom impacts how the Church prophetically models and practices leadership.

them for his mission and their responses to God's call, serve as the standards God uses when selecting and empowering leaders today. This understanding could affect how the Church in response equips, empowers, and releases God's people for mission in various contemporary contexts.

Narrative Theology

In order to examine God's intentions in choosing Deborah and David, I use narrative theology. Narrative theology is "discourse about God in the setting of story" (Fackre 1983:343).² In a culture that often practiced female exclusion, God chose Deborah to serve as a prophet, military leader, and judge. In a culture that often chose the eldest son, God chose David, Jesse's youngest son. Through narrative theology, I will seek to discover *why* God chose such unlikely vessels to do his work while negating many social rules of the day. What do these stories teach the Church today about God – his nature and his purposes?

The value of narratives, particularly biographies, is the "true-to-life capability of portraying meaning *through* the narrative process" (Duke 1986:147).³ Biblical narrative is rooted in history, yet biblical narrative conveys a deeper meaning, "a deep-level revelation of the nature and purposes of God who breaks into human history" (Van Engen

² Gabriel Fackre defines three types of narrative theology - canonical story, life story, and community story. From his definition, I believe the narratives I used for my biblical case studies primarily fall into the canonical story description. Fackre describes canonical story further, "Indeed the hand of God is in the action, but that means real drama in the theatre of divine glory, not the strings of a puppeteer. As tension and surprise are elements in the development of plot, so, too, they appear in biblical storytelling in a compelling way" (Fackre 1983:365). For more information on narrative theology, see (Fackre 1983). In my biblical study, I looked for God's hand in these narratives, Deborah's and David's responses, and their culture's acceptance of God's choice. All these elements combined bring drama into the texts enabling the reader to discover God's intent.

³ Van Engen encourages his readers to understand scriptures reveal truth about God. He cautions his readers to distinguish this clear instructive from those who seek to reduce biblical narrative to simply a story (Van Engen 1996:53-54). Narrative theology must lead believers back to God and what God intends to demonstrate about himself through the biblical stories. I hold to this conviction as well which causes me to look for God's intentions and instructions about leadership from two selected biblical characters to better understand God's strategic purposes to extend the *missio Dei* throughout the earth today.

1996:52). This deep-level meaning can then have a profound effect on the Church's theology in various contexts and times of history. Recognizing the value of the story and its ability to convey meaning "can be a valuable corrective to the dominant tendency in western theology to abstract and to analyze" (Moberly 1986:77). As the stories of Deborah and David teach truths about God, these truths serve "to build bridges both between the various horizons in Scripture and from Scripture to our day" (Van Engen 1996:45). Simply, these truths may impact how the Church understands God's nature and purpose today.

By learning about God from the narratives, hopefully the Church can better interpret God's continual in-breaking into human history. Van Engen summarizes it well:

Because of God's acts in history, because of God's ultimate and final revelation in Jesus Christ, and because of God's illumination by and in the power of the Holy Spirit, we believe (we trust in faith and respond in obedience) that the Scriptures are in fact doing what they intend to do: they refer to and show us the nature of the God of the Bible. And one of the most profound ways this referential activity occurs in Scripture is through the narrative (1996:55).

I turn now to Deborah and David, trusting in God to teach the Church about himself and his purposes through his chosen instruments.

God's Mission through Deborah

During the time of the Judges, the biblical text shares a story about a judge named Deborah. To derive God's intent in this narrative, I will quickly examine the context of the story.

The Time of the Judges

The period of the Judges began with the death of Joshua and ended when Saul became king. As Israel entered into their new land, they clustered in small villages and

had few fortifications. Largely decentralized and existing as semiautonomous tribes, the Israelites maintained communal ties with other villages. Surrounded by other ethnicities and religious blocks, they mostly practiced their own forms of maintaining order and peace in a time of political instability. When enemies attacked, leaders emerged whom God raised up to save the people (Peterson 2004:70).

During the time of the Judges, a cyclical pattern unfolded. The people of Israel rebelled against Yahweh, outsiders oppressed the Israelites, the people repented and cried out to God for mercy, and God raised up Spirit-empowered leaders to rescue the Israelites (Judges 2:16-18).⁴ In Judges, God intended to show that he is the Savior, and saves not because of people's merit, but because of his goodness.

The word judge "was a general term for leadership combining the executive (including military) and judicial aspects of governing. Thus the judges of Israel were primarily military and civil leaders, with strictly judicial functions included as appropriate" (Lindsey 1985:374).

The office of the Judges resembled that of the Roman dictator, to which it has been compared, with this exception, that the dictator laid down his power as soon as the crisis that had called its exercise had passed away: but the Hebrew judge remained invested with his high authority throughout his life (Unger 1988:724).

God desired the judges to serve as spiritual leaders who encouraged and embodied true worship and morality. God raised up the judges as "God's Spirit came to empower the Judge to deal with a particular situation" (LaSor, Hubbard, and Bush 1996:155). The judges acted as regents of the King as God directly commissioned them to do a specific task for his people (Unger 1988:724). The judge's authority originated from Yahweh.

Old Testament writers wrote not only positive qualities of the characters in the Bible, but negative ones as well. This honesty creates validity in the text. The authors did

⁴ Appendix G highlights the judges that God raised up to deliver the people.

not hide human failure nor did they stop at portraying aspects of God's character that they deemed vital to their purposes (Pratt 1990:135).⁵ Only aspects of the characters that fit the author's intent and purpose find inclusion in the text by the author. Richard Pratt believes the biblical author of Judges arranged the judges to demonstrate the declining character among the judges which led to the need for a king for stability. Deborah, classified as an ideal judge along with Othniel and Ehud, fulfilled their duties "without a flaw," enabling the Israelites to experience peace for many years (Pratt 1990:134). With this understanding, I now focus on the ideal judge named Deborah.

Deborah – the Judge

Deborah entered the scene in Judges 4 when the Israelites again did evil in God's eyes, and the Canaanites under the control of Jabin of Hazor oppressed the Northern tribes for twenty years. Judges 4:4 states that Deborah led Israel during this time. The Israelites cried out to God, and the Lord responded to their cries by providing Deborah.

Deborah served as a judge eight to ten miles north of Jerusalem between Ramah and Bethel in the hill country of Ephraim. This strategic location served as a location other prophets and judges served as well.⁶ The text says that "Israelites went up to her to have their disputes decided" (Jud. 4:5). Deborah worked as a judge, similar to the way Moses served as a judge (Ex. 18:13-16). Both Deborah and Moses held court and practiced publicly. People understood and trusted Deborah's abilities. Though I could find no one who questioned Moses' career as a judge or that stated he only served in

⁵ Pratt exemplifies this idea by sharing how the biblical author speaks of God's wrath or anger at his own people (see 2 Sam. 12:11-12, 14; 1 Kgs. 11:9-13; 2 Kgs. 17:1-23; 1 Chron. 21:1-22:1) if it helps convey the message.

⁶ See 1 Samuel 7:16, 2 Kings 2:3, 17:28, and Amos 7:10-13 to see how this exact location was used by other prophets and judges.

private, detractors from Deborah state she simply did her judging at home and in private.⁷

Yet, I cannot exegete that the text makes any such distinction.

Deborah's prophet/judgeship was not a private little cottage industry being practiced out of her home. In view of the text there can be little doubt that Deborah was the recognized, appointed leader/judge of the Israelites at that time. I mention this fairly obvious fact only because of the persistent rejection or downplaying of Deborah's authority by traditional patriarchalists: Deborah does not fit into their male "headship" theory of God's economy (Campbell 2003:8).

God clearly chose and worked through Deborah, and the Israelites responded to her work. The Israelites did not refuse her services because of her gender but rather they sought her out for her services, nor did she only give council or direction to women.⁸

Deborah – Prophetess and Military Leader

Deborah also served as a prophetess. A prophet/prophetess did both foretelling and forth-telling, and both Old and New Testament prophets resembled preachers (Matthews 1998:52). Prophets heard from God and revealed God's words to the people. Prophets also held important roles in battle. They inspired the troops and often declared when to begin the battles (Frymer-Kensky 2002:48).⁹

In Judges 4, Deborah summoned Barak and presented him with God's instructions. Barak hesitated, refusing to go unless Deborah accompanied him. Barak's

⁷ Schreiner states that Deborah simply sat under a palm tree and limited her work to private and individual instruction; she did not go out and proclaim the word of God publicly like male prophets; she also sang the Song of Deborah with Barak and not by herself. Schreiner believes that when women have the gift of prophecy it is in a supportive and complementary role and never negates male headship and authority (Schreiner 1991a:215-216).

⁸ Grenz comments on Schreiner, "Schreiner's concern to harmonize the account with his male headship principle is foreign to the concern of the biblical author. Deborah commanded Barak to assemble the army. To suggest that this does not entail the exercise of authority over a man in an official capacity presses the text into a procrustean bed" (Grenz and Kjesbo 1995:238 n.10).

⁹ Letters from the ancient city of Mari show that prophets send word to King Zimri-Lim to give assurance and advice in battle, and Assyrian inscriptions record omens in which prophets urged the king to take action and promise the presence and protection of the gods (Frymer-Kensky 2002:48).

hesitation enables the reader to recognize an important characteristic about God. Even when God's vessels waver, God as a merciful provider, supplies what they need to boost their confidence. God provided speech for Moses through Aaron. He provided the fleece to convince Gideon of the plan. He provided strength for Samson even with cut hair. Hesitation by Moses, Barak, Gideon or Samson did not speak of their weakness as much as it spoke about God's willingness to provide, encourage, and support those who serve as vessels in his mission!

The prophetess Deborah announced God's presence, set the time the battle began by telling Barak when to go, and later announced the victory by leading out in worship to Yahweh (Jud. 4:14). Judges 4:9 states that Deborah "went up with him" joining Barak and the ten thousand men to battle. Whether she held a sword or not contains little importance. Deborah's job was to inspire, predict, and celebrate. Some critics of Deborah believe that because she did not go into battle she is unlike the other judges of the time.¹⁰ However, as the unequivocal prophet and leader of the Israelites, Moses sat on the mountaintop with his hands raised during the battle with the Amalekites (Ex. 17:8-16). Moses did not hold the sword, but other men held up Moses' arms! Moses simply gave directions, raised his hands to God on behalf of the people; and they won the battle.

Deborah's words came from God and thus they served as her weapon. "That was the task God gave Deborah – to speak to men and women in Israel for their

¹⁰ Schreiner believes Deborah was a special case in the book of Judges because she did not have military function. She handed the leadership off to a man to actually do the battle and did not assert her leadership. Schreiner also states that with other judges it states that God raised them up. However, it simply says that "Now Deborah." Schreiner states, "I am not suggesting that the Lord did not raise her up, for he did bring evident blessing to Israel through her, but it may indicate that the nature of her role as a prophet and a judge was different from that of the other judges in that she did not exercise leadership over men as the other judges did" (Schreiner 1991b:216). I think these claims by Schreiner take the focus away from God's intentions of the text and place the focus on whether Deborah exercised leadership the same as males. Also, in Judges 2:16, the text states that God raised up judges/leaders as a summary of the stories that were to follow. As I looked through the book of Judges, I noticed that at times the text stated again that God raised a certain judge up, and at other times, this designation was not given to some male judges such as Shamgar (Jud. 3:31), Tola (Jud. 10:1 says Tola "rose up" which parallels the text about Deborah), Jair (Jud. 10:3), Jephthah (Jud. 10:6-12:7), and Ibzan, Elon, and Abdon (Jud. 12:8-15).

strengthening, encouragement, and comfort. He gave her knowledge of the future and insight into the ways she could bring that home to the Israelites. She was a prophetess” (Matthews 1998:52). The anagram of *dibberah* means “she spoke” (Frymer-Kensky 2002:49). The name *Deborah* means *bee* and “Like the queen bee, she raises up the swarm for battle, sending out the drones to protect the hive and conquer new territory” (2002:51).¹¹ However, later rabbis cast Deborah in a negative light and made a play on her name and changed it to “hornet”. Rabbis “implied that [Deborah] was an arrogant woman who stung rather than provided good things for her people” (Richards and Richards 1999:94). However, the context simply reveals that the Israelite people prospered under her leadership. Barak listened and followed the order of Deborah because he understood the authority that came from God due to her prophetic calling. Barak’s “confidence in her tells us a lot about her. It also tells us about a man who was not ashamed to follow the leadership of a woman when he believed she spoke the very words of God” (Matthews 1998:57).

Through the story of Deborah, God continued to demonstrate himself as Yahweh the Savior, and he chose the vessels he wanted in order to accomplish his redemptive purposes.

One lesson from the lives of the judges is that those who are dedicated to Yahweh can be used by Yahweh ... Something to censure can be found in almost everyone mentioned in Heb. 11, or, for that matter, in the Old Testament – and certainly in Judges. Nonetheless, because of their dedication, Yahweh, the Savior, could use them to deliver Israel from its oppressors and to keep the tribal federation alive until Israel was ready for the next stage in his redemptive purpose (LaSor, Hubbard, and Bush 1996:164).

This understanding about Yahweh and his willingness to utilize and empower humans to carry forth the *missio Dei* sweeps through the biblical narrative of Deborah.

¹¹ Interestingly, the female Queen Bee leads the swarm.

God Spoke into Patriarchy

Gerda Lerner remarks about the remarkable discovery of Deborah in the biblical text in that a woman assumed leadership over men in a culture of patriarchy (Lerner 1986:165). The author of Judges did not try to hide or downplay Deborah's gender; instead her gender served as important element of the story (see Jud. 4:4 and 5:7).¹² The author of Judges classified Deborah as an ideal judge; God's hand of approval rested on Deborah.

As we extrapolate truths from Judges 4-5 and other texts, "Scripture offers no evidence that the Israelites ever rejected a woman's leadership simply on the basis of her gender. On the contrary, we get the impression that Israel acknowledged the authority of God-ordained women leaders to the same extent as their male counterparts" (Grenz and Kjesbo 1995:67). Others would disagree and try to dismiss Deborah as an exception.¹³ Hull asks an important question, "If women were not to be given certain gifts or were not

¹² Grudem states that the over emphasis on Deborah's gender cautions the reader that "something is abnormal, something is wrong – there are no men to function as judge!" (Grudem 2004:134). Grudem continues to state that the story of Deborah teaches women what to do when male leadership is lacking, "*The story of Deborah should motivate women in such situations to do what Deborah did: encourage and exhort a man to take the leadership role to which God has called him*, as Deborah encouraged and exhorted Barak (Judges 4:4-9, 14)" (italics from the author) (2004:135). Grudem claims Christians should thank God for Deborah and learn the following truths from this narrative: Deborah affirmed male leadership over God's people, the text does not say that Deborah ruled or taught publicly, the Bible views Deborah's service in leadership as a rebuke against the absence of male leadership, and we must use caution in drawing examples from the book of Judges to imitate. Grudem also points to Isaiah 3:1-4 to demonstrate that God views the "absence of male headship as a matter of shame and an indication of God's judgment on a society" (2004:139). Yet, I find it very difficult to extrapolate that God had negative intentions in the story of Deborah to show judgment or shame. Instead, the narrative reads like a victory and indicates that Deborah worshipped God as a result.

¹³ Paige Patterson seeks to explain exceptions such as Deborah in Scripture. According to Patterson, "exceptions pose no threat to the ordinary and constant system of government" (Patterson 1991:258). He quotes John Calvin, "If any one bring forward, by way of objection, Deborah (judges iv.4) and others of the same class, of whom we read that they were at one time appointed by the command of God to govern the people, the answer is easy. Extraordinary acts done by God do not overturn the ordinary rules of government, by which he intended that we should be bound" (Patterson 1991:258-259). Though I agree the church must use care in its hermeneutics, I believe the Church should seek to understand God's intentions in these extraordinary movements that appear to be exceptions. Is God trying to plant a seed for the kingdom? I see the God of the Bible as strategic in the ways God tries to communicate. Also, the kingdom of God that Jesus defined is a kingdom unlike the governments or kingdoms of the world. Thus, the kingdom of God may bring new boundaries or set new freedoms. I also find it very important to honestly come to the scripture recognizing that I read the text bound by my culture, unless I consciously seek to be moved by the Spirit as a citizen of the kingdom.

to exercise certain gifts, would it not have been important for Scripture to have made this plain?" (Hull 1998:211).¹⁴ Groothuis also adds support to this claim by stating, "Exceptions to rules occur in the national and social realms; they do not occur in the realm of Gods' moral law. If God called Deborah to her ministry, female leadership cannot be said to violate moral principles ordained by God" (Groothuis 1997:190).

The pericope of Judges 4-5 enables the reader to compare and contrast Deborah of the hill country and Sisera's urban-dwelling mother. Table 2 shows the comparison and contrast between a woman who adheres to patriarchal culture and one who rises above it.

The author's words in this text tend to give honor to the Israelite women, rather than the Canaanite women. I find it interesting that Deborah moves past "power by association" which, according to Hagburg, many women struggle to escape. Deborah does not receive power by associating with men. Her prestige comes from her reliance upon God (not men) on whom she depended for courage, strength, and security. The Canaanite women turned to men for their prestige and remained hidden behind the lattice. Deborah lived a life of purpose because she used her gifts to serve God in his purposes.

¹⁴ Several theologians including John Piper and Wayne Grudem believe that Deborah is an exception. Because men displayed weakness in the time of Deborah, God used her but God does not intend for women to lead or have authority under most circumstances. Yet, Hull contends, "How could rigid role playing be a timeless truth when Scripture itself not only gave "exceptions" to such a concept, but also commended the women for their actions?...Truth cannot have exceptions. Truth must be unchangeable" (Hull 1998:119)

TABLE 2
ISRAELITE WOMEN VERSUS CANAANITE WOMEN

| Deborah and Israelite Women | Mother of Sisera and Canaanite Women |
|--|--|
| Hill people | City dwellers |
| Plain, bold, and vigorous. | Weak, timid, retiring. |
| Hard physical labor outdoors. | Hidden behind lattice. |
| No time for luxuries. | Desires spoils from battles, lusts after dyed materials. |
| Deborah – Bold, active, holds authority. | Sisera’s mother - passive, timid, and subordinate. |
| Engaged in the battle – up close and personal. | Not engaged in battle - wait for the men to return. |
| Deborah – seeks honor and victory for her people. | Sisera’s mother – Seeks spoils from war. |
| Jael drives the tent peg into the head of the sleeping Sisera inside her tent. | Believe men are delayed because they are finding spoils of war and taking a “woman or two for each man.” |
| Man becomes the victim of woman (Jael). | Expect women to be victims of men. |
| Active – Deborah serves as a judge and prophetess. | Passive - Cowers at the window and waits. |
| Mother of children and a mother of Israel. ¹⁵ | Mother of Sisera – waits for their men to come home. |
| Prestige comes from their own obedience and actions. | Prestige comes from their men. |

A Riposte Sheds Light

Geoffrey Miller offers new scholarship on the narratives of Judges 4-5, suggesting that the author of Judges used a riposte form in Judges 5. A riposte is a type of literature

¹⁵ Deborah does not stay at home protecting her children and waiting for her husband to come home (Frymer-Kensky 2002:50). Deborah’s motherhood of Israel goes beyond biology. She responded to the plight of her people “acting without the prestige or affluence of her counterpart” (Peterson 2004:116-117). Another sense of “mother” is illustrated in an ancient oracle to Ashurbanipal. The goddess Ishtar of Arbela appears in full battle array in a nocturnal vision. “In this vision, Ishtar acts like a mother precisely when she protects the king while defeating his enemies...But the observation that mothers protect their young against enemies is a universal one. Deborah, the “mother of Israel,” protected the people in time of danger (Frymer-Kensky 2002:50).

influenced by norms of honor. Miller describes a riposte as “a form of retaliation against an insult circulated in the culture by a rival group” (Miller 1998:113). “Riposte forms can be found at several points in the early biblical texts, and thus may represent a rhetorical form that has not been fully recognized by critical analysis” (1998:113). Other places include Judges 3:12-30 and Judges 19-21. A riposte works in the following way: (1) A rival group gives an insult that has credibility in the wider culture because the insult carries enough substance. The offended party cannot deny or ignore the insult. (2) The offended party accepts the truth of the stereotype, but then (3) They reverse the honor-value and (4) Returns the insult to the group that began the insult (1998:113).

By looking at the Song in Deborah in Judges 5 with the literary style of riposte,¹⁶ I chart the narrative of Deborah using the riposte pattern. Seen in this understanding of the riposte genre, the story actually takes on a powerful spin of irony, drama, and action! Concepts of honor and shame permeate the biblical worldview, and according to Roland Muller, “It [the Bible] is not just the story of God redeeming His people (a legal thought), but it is also the story of God raising mankind from a position of shame, to the ultimate position of joint-heir with Christ” (Muller 2000:58).¹⁷ The riposte captures this cultural pattern as those shamed at the beginning gain honor, while those who expect honor become shamed. Who cares if the Israelite women are strong and independent? At the end of the story, the Israelites win because God blessed the qualities of the Israelite women!

¹⁶ I compiled this table but acquired much of the information from Geoffrey Miller. See (Miller 1998:113-114, 122).

¹⁷ For more on honor and shame in the biblical worldview, see Muller (2000). Muller contrasts shame-based worldview cultures with fear-based or guilt-based worldview cultures. Often, Western readers miss nuances in the biblical text because of the Westerner’s primary guilt-based worldview.

TABLE 3

PATTERN OF THE RIPOSTE

| Riposte Pattern | How the Biblical Passage Fulfills the Riposte Pattern |
|----------------------------------|--|
| Negative Stereotype | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hill people (Israelites) lacked the social graces and refinement that the city-dwelling Canaanites enjoyed. • The Israelite women were stereotyped as plain and vigorous who probably had to do hard physical labor. • Canaanites thought the Israelite women acted like men as the women did not have time for luxuries and were independent. |
| Israelites accept the Stereotype | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Deborah accepts that she rose on merit. • Deborah accepts that she was bold, courageous, and determined to save her people. • Deborah and Jael do not depend on males; they exercise personal authority. • Canaanite women are described as weak, retiring, behind walls. See Judges 5:28. • The hospitality is also noted negatively in the text in that Jael would invite Sisera into her home – a man known to be evil. |
| Reverses the honor-value | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The riposte shows that these negative stereotypes are actually admirable. These qualities are honorable and good, not shameful and bad. • Israelites may lack chariots, but they have God! • Cultural refinement is not as good as the resourcefulness that the Israelite women demonstrated. • Jael uses her code of hospitality to actually trick and overpower Sisera. |
| Reverses Insult to the Sender | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Canaanite forces destroyed by acts of nature • Their commander is killed by Jael, a woman allied with Israelite forces. She kills him with a tent peg which is symbolic of hospitality. • The “rough” Israelites win the victory because their women are strong, independent, and clever. |

God brought victory through Deborah, Jael, Barak, and others who fight with them. Because of Deborah, the Israelites enjoy peace for forty years.

Findings

Through the story of Deborah, God demonstrated himself as Yahweh the Savior, and Yahweh chose the vessels through whom he wanted to accomplish his redemptive purposes. A lesson derived from the judges portrays:

That those who are dedicated to Yahweh can be used by Yahweh....Something to censure can be found in almost everyone mentioned in Heb. 11, or, for that matter, in the Old Testament – and certainly in Judges. Nonetheless, because of their dedication, Yahweh, the Savior, could use them to deliver Israel from its oppressors and to keep the tribal federation alive until Israel was ready for the next stage in his redemptive purpose (LaSor, Hubbard, and Bush 1996:164).

2 Chronicles 16:9 claims, “For the eyes of the Lord range throughout the earth to strength those whose hearts are fully committed to him.” As God scanned the earth to intervene in the lives of the Israelites who cried for release from their oppressors, he found Deborah, one in whom he had invested his authority, his giftings, and his Spirit to carry forth his mission. As she obediently followed God, the Israelites experienced victory. In Table 4, I summarize the principles of leadership that emerge from the text.

TABLE 4

GOD’S ACTIONS AND DEBORAH’S RESPONSE

| God’s Actions | Deborah’s Response |
|--|--|
| God chose/called - the call gave authority. | Leader obeyed - rises to the task of the call. |
| God equips – gave Deborah gifts of leadership, discernment, decision making, boldness, confidence, faith, and an ability to hear His voice. | Leader responded to the gifting - Deborah used and developed her gifts by serving as a judge, military leader, and prophetess. |
| God empowered – God’s Spirit enabled the leader to accomplish the task. | Leader depended on God - Deborah recognized God as the Victor and worships God. Gave glory to God. |
| God and power – God gave power away by investing trust in his chosen leader. His presence provided confidence. | Leader and power – Deborah gave power and opportunity to both Barak and Jael and the other men who fight; recognized their accomplishments. Deborah accompanied Barak to encourage him. |
| God’s mission - God responded to the cries of his people, grieved by their oppression. God’s redemptive purpose – God saved. | Leader shared God’s heart - Deborah rose to meet the needs of her people and participated in God’s redemptive story. |

Summary of the Deborah Case Study

God needed a task done for his redemptive purposes, and he chose Deborah as the vessel. As I examined the narrative surrounding Deborah, I could not detect any portion of the text that revealed God simply “settled” for a woman. Gretchen Gaebelin Hull states, “The Scripture includes no disclaimer to the effect that the Lord could not find any man willing to lead Israel, so he was forced to settle for a woman” (Hull 1998:110). Instead, by examining and extrapolating truths from the text, a student of the Word can recognize that “God has a definite and purposeful hand in Deborah’s rising to power, which shows that there is nothing inherently unfitting or immoral about a woman occupying a position of civil or spiritual authority” (Groothuis 1997:190). God’s intent in the story of Deborah shines clearly—God as Yahweh saved his people and used people to join him in his redemptive purposes.

God’s Mission Through David

As I look at the narrative surrounding David’s anointing in 1 Samuel, I will again seek to understand what God intends to reveal about himself through his choice of David. Though the quantity of narrative on David is extensive, I limit my research to only the anointing of David in 1 Samuel 16.

David—the Anointed

The book of Samuel reveals David’s multifaceted characterization by displaying his courage, devotion to God, adultery, and his humble repentance (Pratt 1990:141). These stories show David “pleasing to God and under divine judgment” (1990:141). Before David’s anointing, the people of Israel begged for a king hoping, “Then we will be like all other nations, with a king to lead us and to go out before us and fight our battles” (1 Sam. 8:20). God listened to their complaints and gave them Saul as a king.

Later God rejected Saul as king saying, “I regret that I have made Saul king, because he has turned away from me and has not carried out my instructions” (1 Sam. 15:11).

While Samuel mourned for Saul, God sent him to anoint the one God had chosen as the next king of Israel. Samuel traveled to Jesse’s home and upon seeing Eliab he thought, “Surely the Lord’s anointed stands here before the Lord” (1 Sam. 16:6). Samuel, a man of God, saw the external features of Eliab and his oldest son status and believed Eliab would serve as the next king of the Israelites.

God’s response to Samuel revealed God’s primary criteria as he searched for leaders. “Do not consider his appearance or his height, for I have rejected him. The Lord does not look at the things human beings look at. People look at the outward appearance, but the Lord looks at the heart” (1 Sam. 16:7). One by one, Jesse brought his sons to stand before Samuel, but God did not choose any of them. Finally with no son chosen, Samuel asked Jesse if there were any others to which Jesse answered, “There is still the youngest. He is tending the sheep.” The Lord chose Jesse’s youngest son. The biblical author makes clear for the reader that David is the youngest of all the sons. The calling of David:

Reveals a familiar biblical pattern of younger brothers are chosen over the elder – Isaac over Ishmael, Jacob over Esau, Joseph over the other ten. This pattern highlights these events as turning points in God’s redemptive program. The choices are based not on the law of authority or inheritance but on God’s sovereign will and power. Consequently the mighty accomplishments of these persons are not their own. God is their source (LaSor, Hubbard, and Bush 1996:176).

The meaning drawn from the text demonstrates that God, not limited by the culture of primogeniture, through his choice of David actually broke the cultural norms that surrounded the Israelite people. God’s chosen instruments did not receive their commission based on laws of authority (patriarchy) or inheritance. Nor did God’s chosen instruments receive their commission based on external features. God’s words that he

does “not look at the things people look at” serve as a clear reminder that God utilizes a frame of reference different from humans. God looks at the deeper matters, and God’s choices often include the unlikely or the weaker things of the world so that his people can understand that God’s will, choice, and power provide the victory for his chosen vessels. God remains the focal point.

David – the Shepherd

God allowed the Israelite people to have a king. God wove his redemptive plan through establishing a king for the Israelites in preparation for the arrival of the King of Kings. God desired his kings to act like Him – to care for the orphan, the widow, the oppressed, and the poor. God expected leaders to use their power selflessly for people who had no power on their own (Prov. 16:10-13, 17:5, 20:26, 23:10-11). God chose David, a shepherd, to serve as king. Jeremiah 3:15 gives a clear biblical leadership model. “This biblical leadership model is found in calling (‘I will give you shepherds’), expressed in character (‘after my heart’), and confirmed in competency (‘who will lead you with knowledge and understanding’ (Cooley 2003). Jesus, a descendent of David, referred to himself as the Good Shepherd in John 15.¹⁹ Just as David served as both a shepherd and a king, so Jesus served as both the Good Shepherd and the King of Kings.

Findings

The narrative of David in 1 Samuel 16 revealed many aspects of leadership. These leadership characteristics demonstrated God’s intentions and purposes in how he desired to see the *missio Dei* fulfilled through David.

¹⁹ Shepherds in the biblical days and in modern times includes both males and females (Wood 2007:6). The imagery of shepherds and the use of Jeremiah 3:15 to define leadership make sense to many contexts in the world today.

God Chooses Leaders from the Heart

The 1 Samuel 16 text reveals clearly that God looks at people and situations differently than humans do. When Samuel looked at Eliab from a human perspective, he saw strength, height, power, and the authority that came from being the oldest-born male child. Yet, God looked at the heart, not the outward appearance. “As is often the case, the unlikely one (from a human point of view) turned out to be the one God has chosen... It is the simple but powerful fact that *God* has a point of view” (Woodhouse 2008:289-290).

God’s point of view, examined through the lens of the *missio Dei* – God’s meta-narrative – reveal the intentions of God’s heart.

If we take the text as it is translated here, it tells us that God is not *limited*, as humans are, in his point of view. He is not deceived by outward appearances. He sees a person’s heart...God sees according *to his heart*. That is, God’s point of view is determined by his own will and purpose. He sees according to his own intentions, his heart (Woodhouse 2008:286-287).

Humans have a tendency to establish rigid rules and traditions that ultimately limit and hinder the *missio Dei*.

Like Samuel, we are too impressed by the things that can be seen with the physical eyes. Consequently, we live in a world where physical beauty outranks spiritual depth, where success in business and in church tends to be defined in materialistic terms, and where charisma is prized above character...We need, with God’s help, to learn to look upon the inward qualities (Chafin 1989:134).

God Anoints the Leader with Power

When Samuel anointed David, “the Spirit of the Lord came on David in power” (1 Sam. 16:13). The giving of the Spirit demonstrated, “supernatural authentication of God’s will” (Merrill 1985:448). Not only did God choose David to be king, but he also empowered David with his Spirit. The name David means “beloved of Yahweh.” The

author mentions David's name for the first time in verse 13. David Tsumura finds this first mention of David's name as both significant and climatic. "From now on, David's entire life would have a special relationship with the Lord's spirit (2 Sam. 23:2), while by contrast the spirit of the Lord would depart from Saul (v. 14)" (Tsumura 2007:424).

God Provides Divine Connections and Training

1 Samuel 16 closes with the narrative shifting to Saul. Saul became tormented with an evil spirit and needed someone to play the lyre to comfort him. One of Saul's servants told Saul that he knew David could play the lyre, demonstrated bravery as a warrior, could speak well, and possessed good looks. From this passage, it became apparent that God provided divine connections to place David where he needed to be to gain the experience and the knowledge to fulfill his redemptive mission in the world. It took David fifteen years to become equipped before he could be coronated as king. While working with Saul, David became an armor bearer and remained in Saul's service until he became king.

Table 5 indicates leadership principles derived from David. From this table, I will later draw comparisons between both Deborah and David to understand God's intentions better in both of these stories.

Summary of the David Case Study

God's choice of the youngest son revealed that God did not abide by the rules of the primogeniture culture that demanded the choice of the oldest son. God's statement that God looks at the heart rather than external appearance clearly revealed God's ultimate purpose in the text. Though I looked through many books and commentaries, I could not find any author who denounced or detracted from David's leadership because of his youngest male status, when his culture typically practiced a primogeniture culture.

TABLE 5

GOD'S ACTIONS AND DAVID'S RESPONSE

| God's Actions | David's Response |
|---|--|
| God chose/called - the call gave authority to the leader. | Leader obeyed - rose to the task of the call. |
| God equipped –Gave David experience in the court of the King. God gave David the ability to play a musical instrument, ability to speak well, an ability to shepherd, and an ability to fight in the military. | Leader responded to the gifting – David developed his gifts by serving in Saul's court for fifteen years before his own coronation. |
| God empowered – God anointed David indicating his spirit filled him. | Leader depended on God – David worshipped God - a man after God's own heart. |
| God and power – God gave power away by investing trust in his chosen leader. His presence provided confidence. | Leader and power – David waited on God's timing for when he'll serve as king. |
| God's mission - God responded to the cries of his people, grieved by their oppression. God's redemptive story – God saves. | Leader shared God's heart – David served in the line of Jesus. David's psalms indicated he grasped God's redemptive story for the weak, the oppressed, the orphan, the widow, and the victim. |

Integration of Biblical Case Studies

I derived factors of leadership in both biblical case studies and discovered almost matching factors. In Table 6, I combine my findings found from Deborah and David.

In both Deborah and David, God revealed that he is the one who called, equipped, and empowered the leader. God looked at the heart of the person and chose leaders based on his standards, not the cultures of the day. God chose the leader; therefore, authority originated from God. God worked with those dedicated to the *missio Dei*, directed and guided them by providing opportunities that place the leader where God wants them in God's redemptive plans for the world. God used circumstances to grow a leader's wisdom and understanding. God worked on a divine time table, which the leader respected waiting actively for God. The leader, with a heart turned towards God, depended on and worshipped God. Just as God lowered the power distance between God and the leader; so the leaders identified with those they led, gave opportunities away to

others, and empowered others to act. They then acknowledged the contributions of others.

TABLE 6
PATTERN MATCHING – DEBORAH AND DAVID

| Leadership Characteristic | Deborah | David | God's intent? |
|---|--|---|--|
| God chose/called | Woman chosen to lead God did not look at external features. | Youngest chosen to lead. God did not look at external features. | God chooses whom he desires. God looks at the heart. |
| God equipped | Good judgments, prophetic understanding, military strategy, influence among her people. | Gave David experience in the court of the King. God gave David abilities – musical, communication, shepherding, and military. | God equips the leader with gifts. |
| God empowered | God's Spirit enabled Deborah and Barak to do their tasks. | Spirit of the Lord came upon David. | Authority comes from God. |
| God and Power | God gave power away by investing trust in his chosen leader. His presence provided confidence. | God gave power away by investing trust in his chosen leader. His presence provided confidence. | God exemplifies giving power away by choosing to work with and through humans. |
| God's Mission | To demonstrate He is Yahweh the God who saves. | To instate a King for the line of the Messiah. | God uses vessels for his redemptive plan. |
| Leader's Response to God's choice /calling | Rose to risk of God's call. Displayed obedience in following God. | Rose to the risk of God's call. Displayed obedience in following God. | Leader can choose to either obey or disobey. |
| Leader's Response to God's equipping | Deborah used and developed her gifts by serving as a judge, military leader, and prophetess. | David developed his gifts by serving in Saul's court for fifteen years before his own coronation. | Leader develops and uses gifts and talents given by God. |
| Leader's Response to God's empowerment | Deborah recognized the timing of God and gave the battle cry. | David recognized God's hand and served Saul; depended on God's timing. | Leader learns to depend on and worships God for fruit of their labor. |
| The Leader and Power | Deborah empowered Barak. Deborah praised Barak and others who fought in the battle; shared credit. | David does not take power away from Saul; waited on God's timing. | Leaders follow God's example by empowering others and wait for God's timing. |
| Leader's response to God's Mission | Deborah rose to meet the needs of her people and participated in God's redemptive story. | David served in the line of Jesus. David's psalms indicated he grasped God's redemptive story. | Leaders share the heart of God for his mission. |

As I surveyed the biblical texts, I looked for God's intent in the story in his choice of both Deborah and David. I found God called, equipped, empowered, and released leaders according to God's redemptive purpose. God revealed in both stories that he looked at the heart—gender, occupation, class, and status did not surface in either story of why he chose or did not choose Deborah and David. In both stories, the focus remained on God. God had a mission. God chose leaders he wanted to fulfill his mission. God gave the abilities and the power to the leader. God won the victory. God demonstrated that he alone is Yahweh. The stories focused on God and God's revelation of his own nature and purposes in human history. In both stories, God revealed his character, his purposes, and his standards.

PART II

FIELD RESEARCH IN CONTEMPORARY MISSION CONTEXTS

In Part II, I indicate my methodology and share the findings of my field research in contemporary mission. In Chapter 4, I define the methodology I used in my field research. I also indicate again my bias and how I countered for that bias in my methodology. In Chapter 5, I report findings from both Indian ethnographic interviews and three Indian case studies. In Chapter 6, I share findings from a Chinese case study, compare those findings to my Indians findings, and then compare and contrast my findings from contemporary mission to the biblical case studies of Deborah and David.

CHAPTER 4

METHODOLOGY

The central research issue of this dissertation was to derive biblical principles of male and female leadership from a kingdom perspective and to recognize their impact in contemporary mission. To accomplish my research in contemporary mission, I employed qualitative research methods.

Qualitative Research Methods

I employed ethnographic interviews and case studies as my approach to qualitative research. Qualitative ethnographic interviewing enabled me to gain an emic¹ view from Christian leaders about their social world and approach to Christian leadership enabling me to draw analysis for cultural patterns and themes (Gubrium and Holstein 2002:85). Case studies allowed me to examine real-life contexts in order to further understand how male and female leadership from a kingdom perspective impacted contemporary mission. I gathered data for my case studies from ethnographic interviews, additional questions to case study participants, and other sources of documentation—including letters, monthly administrative accountability progress reports (archival evidence), annual reports, and websites.

¹ Emic view is the cultural viewpoint of an insider in a particular culture.

Gaining Entrance

In 2000, Chad and I founded an organization called 10/40 Connections (10/40). 10/40 cultivates connections in a fragmented world, increasing the Church's momentum to extend the hope of Christ among the least reached. God has enabled 10/40 to meet, collaborate, and work with several strategic global leaders in the 10/40 Window.

I conducted three Indian case studies. I chose two case studies from among our official Indian partners. Because 10/40 works to ensure high levels of accountability in reporting data, and India has the reputation of number inflation; I intentionally chose these case studies from among partners providing validity and reliability of the gathered data by 10/40's established accountability structures in international work. In both Case Study 1 and Case Study 2, indigenous believers practice the release of both males and females into leadership based on spiritual gifts, rather than gender.² I purposely chose these cases to discover the theology and missiology behind their leadership structures.

I took a different approach on my third Indian case study. I chose this case study as a rival case study. This case study reveals a young woman who came to Christ and who originally believed God did not give gifts based on gender, but then she changed her belief patterns and her ministry after western influence.

I gained entrance into the fourth case study by Chad attending a leadership conference in Hong Kong. Chad agreed to follow my case study protocol and upon arrival asked a Chinese woman (a speaker at the conference) if he could interview her. I wanted to gather a Chinese case study in order to see if any parallels existed in India and in China on how the leaders understood both the theology and the missiology around male and female relationships and their impact on the Great Commission.

² 10/40 did not influence these indigenous ministry structures. When we discovered their models, 10/40 developed partnerships with these ministries based on shared core values. The partnership then increased both synergy and momentum in the Great Commission. These descriptive case studies serve to enable the reader to recognize the impact these ministries have on their unreached populations with their understanding of how God gifts and releases laborers into his harvest field.

Collecting the Data – Ethnographic Interviews

I interviewed seven Christian leaders, six of whose interviews also enhanced the case studies. The interviews were structured once I turned on the digital recorder. The recorded time of the interviews ranged from sixty to ninety minutes. I conducted one interview in a home, one in an office, and five in general meeting areas conducive for travel of the interviewees. In order to get a variety of responses, I chose three men and four women. Five of my interviewees served as leaders in house church or cell church movements in either or both urban and rural settings. One interviewee served as a priest in the Church of North India. I chose him because he represents a more institutional church pattern. I chose one interviewee who shifted from a gift-based non-hierarchical understanding of males and females to a gender-based hierarchical understanding. Table 7 displays my interviewees.

TABLE 7

INTERVIEWS FROM CONTEMPORARY MISSION

| Interviewee | Gender | Location | Position |
|-------------|--------|---------------|---|
| P1 | Male | Uttar Pradesh | Equips church planters |
| P2 | Female | Uttar Pradesh | Equips church planters |
| P3 | Male | Mumbai | Member of XYZ pastoral team |
| P4 | Female | Mumbai | Member of XYZ pastoral team |
| P5 | Male | Delhi | Priest in the Church of North India |
| P6 | Female | Delhi | Works for a business |
| P7 | Female | China | Evangelist, pastor, network leader 35,000 |

I conducted these ethnographic interviews as semi-structured interviews and used the four rules for standardized interviewing presented by F. Fowler (Fowler 1991:254).³ This method ensured that I had minimal control over interviewees and their answers. The interview guide ensured that all interviewees answered the same questions thus allowing me to attain reliable, comparable qualitative data. Yet I also asked additional questions if it enabled me to understand the interviewees' answers better.

Collecting the Data—Case Studies

I developed a multiple case design by conducting four case studies. I chose a multiple case design in order to move toward replication, enabling the theory to be considered “robust and worthy of continued investigation or interpretation” (Yin 2003:47). I gathered evidence for my case studies from six of the ethnographic interviews listed above and four other sources of documentation—more interview questions based on their data and personal situation, letters, monthly administrative accountability progress reports/administrative internal documents (archival analysis), PowerPoints that explain leadership structures, and numerous subsequent email correspondence. Table 8 outlines my case studies.

Documentation enabled me to recognize the impact of empowering and releasing both males and females in leadership giftings. For Indian Case Study One, I used data gathered over two years of equipping women as church planters and tracking their progress in the planting of churches. P2 facilitates this church planting strategy called *Ummeed*.

³ The four rules include: Read the questions exactly as written. Use nondirective follow-up probes to elicit a better answer. Record answers to questions without interpretation or editing; record answers verbatim. Maintain a professional, neutral relationship with the respondent by refusing to express one's personal opinions or by giving feedback that implies a judgment about the content of an answer.

TABLE 8

CONTEMPORARY INDIAN CASE STUDIES

| | Case Study One | Case Study Two | Case Study Three | Case Study Four |
|--|---|--|--------------------------|------------------|
| Location | Uttar Pradesh, India | Mumbai, India | Delhi | China |
| Context | Village | Urban and Rural | Urban | Rural and urban |
| Type of Church | House Church | Cell Church | Congregational | House Church |
| People Interviewed | P1 P2 | P3 P4 | P6 | P7 |
| Other Data used to gather information for the case study. | Archival Evidence, more interview questions | Power-point of Leadership Structure - Internal Charts of growth | More interview questions | Conference Notes |

For Indian Case Study Two⁴, I studied the structure of XYZ (XYZ) and their “Ladder to Success” so that I could understand their leadership worldview. XYZ functions with a G-12 model. XYZ is co-pastored by a husband-wife team. The male co-pastor has twelve pastors under him, and the woman has twelve pastors under her. P3 is one of the senior pastor’s twelve, and P4 serves as one of the female senior pastor’s twelve. P3 and P4 are also married to one another. P3 and P4 are committed to empowering both males and females to start and lead cell groups.

Indian Case Study Three allowed me to offer a story of a young woman who changed her belief pattern and Christian ministry based on western books and influence. Because of our friendship from 2000, I witnessed her change from a gift-based ministry to a gender-based ministry and recognized how her ministry changed as a result. I gathered information from the Chinese Case Study but did not follow growth patterns of church growth over a longitudinal study.

⁴ The archival data from Case Study Two occurs in Maharashtra, India. The archival data from Case Study One occurs in Uttar Pradesh predominantly. These two states are situated in different regions of the country. Therefore, none of the populations or results crosses.

Analyzing the Data

The most preferred strategy for analyzing case studies relies on theoretical propositions. The kingdom of God guided my interview questions and my study of archival records.⁵

To analyze the data from these interviews, I used the grounded theory method. The grounded theory method incorporates a set of techniques for “(1) identifying categories and concepts that emerge from the text, and (2) linking the concepts into substantive and formal theories” (Bernard 2006:462-463).

Consistent data demonstrates reliability (Holstein and Gubrium 1995:9). I developed an interview guide which asked multiple interviewees the same questions in order to achieve consistency. These written guides allowed me to attain reliable, comparable qualitative data. Because I followed the interview guides, any other researcher could ask the same people the same questions and arrive at the same answers.⁶

I demonstrated validity by offering correct data (1995:9). I recorded all interviews and typed out the manuscripts to enable me to correctly remember their responses. One of the means to ensure the reliability and validity of one’s data is to gather and triangulate the data from different sources (Patton 1990:467). To triangulate my data, I chose to vary my sources. I interviewed both male and female Christian leaders. In my first two Indian case studies, I interviewed both a male and female leader within that particular ministry. I also used two researchers – I did the Indian ethnographic interviews and case studies, while Chad did the ethnographic interview in China with P7. I also used two methods of

⁵ To accomplish the research, a researcher must choose a place to begin. In a land as complex as India, I developed my research as descriptive research – I described what currently takes place through various models. I simply wanted to describe what took place when indigenous believers, on their own accord, lived out the kingdom of God (in a way that fit my theoretical construct of the kingdom) and the effect on the Great Commission in their particular context. This strategy fit with Yin’s statement that the preferred strategy for analyzing case studies depended on theoretical propositions.

⁶ Any researcher has a bias as they begin and engage in research. My theoretical proposition demonstrates my bias. Later in this chapter I will demonstrate how I sought to minimize the bias and thus increase both the validity and the reliability of the research.

qualitative research—the ethnographic interview and the case study which comprised four types of data gathering (additional interview questions, letters, archival analysis, and PowerPoints).

In order to conduct case study analysis, I established and used an analytic strategy. This analytic strategy enabled me to develop internal and external validity. The various analytic strategies I used included pattern matching and cross-case synthesis. Pattern matching strengthened the validity of the case by comparing the data and recognizing patterns from both biblical case studies as well as contemporary case studies. I handled multiple-case studies, I also applied cross-case synthesis in which I evaluated each case alone, and then compared the findings from the cases to arrive at similarities and differences.

I sought to provide replication by acquiring similar data when leaders applied the same understanding of Christian leadership in different Asian contexts. Acquired replication enables the researcher to generalize the theoretical proposition through analytic generalization. However, I recognize that I simply demonstrate my data from four contexts – three in India and one in China. More research in multiple contexts will provide more substance to generalize the theoretical proposition.

The Scope of My Bias

As stated in the introduction, I assume that the release of women into full participation in the Church, regardless of gender, will multiply the labor force and thus positively affect the completion of the Great Commission. This assumption arises from my theology about God’s creation of human community in the *imago Dei*, the power of Jesus on the cross to establish a “new creation,” and the empowerment of both males and females by the Spirit to complete God’s mission.

I recognize that passion towards a topic and one's theological understanding can impact one's research. Because of the impossibility to enter research without a prior bias, I sought to minimize my bias through my methodological approach.

By using Fowler's four rules for standardized interviewing, I sought to not influence the answers of the interviewees by offering no judgment on the content of their answers. The interview guide minimized influence by enabling me and later Chad as a second interviewer to simply gather data but not share personal opinions or thoughts (see the interview guides in Appendices P and Q).

The interview guides also lead to reliability and validity. These guides enable anyone to interview and/or evaluate the archival data of any of the interviewees and arrive at the same findings (see Appendices P and Q).

I also minimized the bias by choosing case studies without prior knowledge of their theological foundation for their leadership models. Though I knew they released women into leadership, I did not know how they interpreted Scripture on this topic. For example, I did not know if they would state that women should only lead until the numbers of male leaders increased. On my fourth case study, Chad chose a Chinese person who spoke at a conference, but he did not know her viewpoints before he made his choice.

Limitations of Research

Due to time constraints, I could only evaluate four case studies. Obviously, these case studies do not represent all of India or China.

I chose each of these case studies based on my theoretical proposition. Though three of the case studies revealed phenomenal growth in church planting through the release of women into leadership, I recognize other factors also influence this growth. All

three practice house church or cell church models which typically experience faster multiplication than congregational models.

The fact that I conducted only one rival case study is another limitation. I chose to concentrate on descriptive case studies, describing what took place when leaders used a theoretical proposition of kingdom theology that released both males and females. The scope of the paper did not allow me the time and resources to also conduct multiple rival case studies. Rather, I chose one that demonstrated one believer who shifted to a gender-based theology after western influence and noted changes in her ministry as a result. The substance of my research simply implies that future research in multiple contexts could further increase the validity and reliability of the theoretical construct by replication.

Summary

For the purposes of this paper, I researched indigenous believers in India and China who continue to experience explosive growth in difficult contexts by their use of models that equip, empower, and release both males and females into leadership. I draw them out as examples for those in other contexts to observe.

Any researcher enters into research with a bias. I recognize my bias lies in my theoretical proposition that includes my biblical hermeneutics about the kingdom of God, the *missio Dei*, community of the redeemed, and power and authority based on kingdom principles. I sought to minimize this bias by my use of Fowler's rules of effective interviews, an interview guide, and triangulation. I sought to arrive at triangulation with various methods within the case studies, my use of two researchers, and by gathering research from both the biblical and contemporary contexts for pattern matching and cross-case synthesis.

Clarence W. Jones, missionary to Ecuador in the mid-1900's stated, "Good spiritual logistics demand that we use every means available to us today to reach a lost

world that desperately needs Christ” (Hampton and Plueddemann 1991:58). It is with this intent that I now proceed to indicate the findings from field research. Do good spiritual logistics demand we recognize women as a resource in the hands of God to reach the helpless masses who do not yet know Jesus Christ for the sake of completing the Great Commission?

CHAPTER 5

FINDINGS—INDIAN CONTEMPORARY MISSION

Following James Spradley, I will give the Grand Tour and the Mini-Tour as I report my findings from my contemporary contexts (Spradley 1979). In the “Grand Tour Description,” I will express briefly the context of India including issues of caste and patriarchy which I believe impact the field research. In the “Mini-Tour Description,” I report my findings from my ethnographic interviews and case studies.

Grand Tour Description

With over 2300 people groups, and over 2000 people groups considered unreached,¹ India has more and larger people groups with no Christians, churches, or workers than any other nation of the world (Johnstone, Mandryk, and Johnstone 2001:312). India remains a missiological challenge for the Church worldwide. 80% of the Christians reside in the Northeast and the Southeast of the nation, leaving millions throughout the landscape without a viable Christian presence. In addition, the social needs and injustices perpetuated in India stagger other nations by comparison (2001:316):

- 63% of the world’s leprosy sufferers reside in India.
- 25% of the world’s blind
- AIDS is spreading rapidly
- 70 million plus children are child laborers

¹ Joshua Project defines unreached people groups as less than 2% evangelical Christians or 5% adherents to the Christian faith.

- 10 million children are bonded laborers
- 13 million children are homeless
- 2 million are street children without families
- 40 million girls are missing due to feticide
- 575,000 child prostitutes
- Over 50% of Delhi lives in slums (Johnstone, Mandryk, and Johnstone 2001:316).

The social game of India (influenced heavily by the caste system), patriarchy, and gender violence all contribute to devalue, harm, and limit females in India. Due to the animosity between the serpent and the woman alluded to in Genesis 3, the world's systems continue to hurt, devour and destroy females.² A brief overview of these topics will enable the reader to comprehend more fully the radical prophetic nature of the field research gathered.

The Social Game in North India

Though numerous cultures abound in India, I will offer a brief overview of some general principles and contextual truths that span the nation. According to the “way of life” games developed by TEW or the “social games” of Lingenfelter, I believe the Hindus of India fall into the hierarchist social game because of its strong group boundaries and its binding prescriptions.

The issues of caste, karma and dharma unite and form both a tight theology and a social structure that defines roles, rules, duties and functions for every member of the Indian society. Lingenfelter states, “More social distinctions usually imply more sharply

² In Genesis 3:15 points to the enmity that will exist between the serpent and the woman. I believe the atrocities facing females through abuse and the discrimination they receive can be traced back to the hatred Satan has on females. Satan has launched an all-out attack on females. God, as the God who saves, states in Genesis 3:15 that eventually the offspring of the woman would strike the head of the serpent. This statement could be a prophecy indicating that through Mary, the Messiah would come who would strike the Serpent.

defined expectations and social rules” (Lingenfelter 1998:27) Caste, dharma and karma give the Hindu in India defined expectations and social rules while giving theological systems of thought that explain why certain people deserve lower positions in the hierarchy.

The Impact of Caste on India’s Way of Life

The caste system serves as the social unifier of India. The caste system gives Indians a sense of belongingness to a shared “way of life.” Birth places every individual and every family into a permanent station or caste for life. The caste system, though an outlawed system by the Indian government, continues to influence the Indian worldview.

The Code of Manu, written around the fifth century BC, classifies society into four main social strata. These divisions, originated from the body of a god named Vishnu. From the head comes the *Brahman* or the priestly class. The *Kshatriya* caste comes from the chest and forms the military class. From the thighs come the *Vaishya*, or the agricultural and business class. The *Shudra*, or the servant class, come from the feet. A fifth class of people developed over the centuries were later called the *Dalits*, or the Untouchables. The Untouchables form the lowest position of the caste system. Due to their “unworthiness,” they claim no part of Vishnu’s body. These castes define the five main social strata in each society, but each strata holds many subdivisions. No one knows the exact figure for the number of castes, but some believe more than 26,000 castes may exist.

Those considered at the top of the hierarchy have “uniquely defined value and power” (Lingenfelter 1998:27). The Brahmans have every right to exalt their position and rights because in a previous existence, they earned this high position with good deeds or by fulfilling one’s dharma and karma well (Thirumalai 2002:48). God’s will includes the suffering endured by the lower castes because God created them to serve the upper

castes. Currently, lower castes reap the just consequences of their “bad karma” (Mangalwadi 2001:133). While recognizing the caste as the cultural system of India, from my experience and communication and friendships with individuals in a variety of castes, the system tends to bind countless millions into a hopeless existence.³

The Impact of Karma and Dharma on Caste

Caste ties itself strongly to the other foundational point of *karma*. John Noss states:

When the caste system was linked up with the Law of Karma, the inequalities of life had at once a simple and comprehensive explanation. The existence of caste in the social structure immediately acquired a kind of moral justification. If a man was born a Shudra, it was because he had sinned in previous existences and deserved no better lot. A Brahman, on the other hand, had every right to exalt his position and prerogatives; by good deeds in previous existence he had merited his present high station. (Noss 1969:108).

Karma has social consequences for the individual and the society. The way one thinks, speaks and acts produces consequences for the person’s placement in the next life (Thirumalai 2002:22). The caste of a person today depends primarily on what he or she existed as before and how he or she fulfilled one’s karma.⁴ “The Hindu social hierarchy and divisions receive their sustenance mainly from this set of beliefs” (2002:22).

³ One Sunday I sat in a Delhi worship service and heard a Dalit man share his testimony. He explained that his grandparents were not allowed to wear clothes other than underpants and were required to stuff a long feather in their underpants that would sweep their footprints away as they walked as they were not a people. They would yell, “Unclean, unclean!” so that others of higher caste could take cover so that the Untouchable’s shadow would not contaminate them. When this man’s grandparents heard 1 Peter 2:10 their lives were completely changed. Not only were they now a people, but as 1 Peter 2:9 says they were also a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, and God’s special possession! This powerful new life demonstrates why more in the lower castes than in the higher castes have responded to Jesus.

⁴ Outside a Durga temple in Varanasi, I met a young woman crippled in one leg. I asked her if she ever prayed and asked Durga to heal her. She gasped, “No, I would never do that! I deserve this! I obviously did something bad in my past life. If I deal with my crippled state well now, I might have a better life later.” I used the opportunity to share Jesus, but her worldview blocked her desire at that point from hearing of any other God or possible healing. She wanted to fulfill her karma well in hopes of a better reincarnated life.

Karma forms the foundation to protect the interests of the upper castes, and justify the poverty and low social status of millions of others. Karma brings the religious promise to the low-caste peoples that if they will accept what has been ordained for them in this life, then maybe in their next lives, their situations will improve. Consequently, karma extends the discrimination” (2002:42).

Caste and karma are fulfilled by faithfully living one’s *dharma*. Dharma comes from the root *dhr* which means “to found, maintain, uphold” (Renard 1999:55). Dharma consists of the written and unwritten laws that govern a person’s life. These rules include rules about food, behavior and relationships. By individuals doing their dharma in unity with the Dharma (big D), they assure “one’s place in the overall scheme of things” (1999:56). Each person’s code of religious, social and moral duty takes over the general practice in the wider Hindu community. This belief demonstrates that each person has a specific role and must not depart from it.

This brief explanation of caste, karma, and dharma expresses how the hierarchical social game describes India – high group, high grid.

Patriarchy in India

Del Birkey describes patriarchy as “government, rule, or domination by men” (Birkey 2005:xi). Patriarchy, a social arrangement in which “men as a group receive more power and privileges than women, in which male activities are more highly valued than female ones, and in which economic, legal and cultural norms combine to keep this system going” (Couture 1993:249).

India classifies as a patriarchal culture. Various religious teachings or laws from the Code of Manu demonstrate some of the deeply entrenched patriarchal worldview patterns of the Indian population. The Code of Manu and the Hindu Vedic scriptures describe the worldview behind the value and purpose of women in Indian society.

This code and these scriptures significantly impact the worldview that still surrounds the male and female in India. Table 9 reveals some of these teachings.⁵

TABLE 9
HINDU RELIGIOUS TEACHINGS AND WOMEN
(*Women in Indo-Aryan Societies* 2008)⁶

| Topic | Religious Teaching |
|--------------------------|---|
| Procreation | <p>“Almighty God, you have created this womb. Women may be born somewhere else but sons should be born from this womb.” Atharva Ved 6/11/3</p> <p>“O Husband protect the son to be born. Do not make him a woman.” Atharva Ved 2/3/23</p> |
| Family Life | The rule that a female must be subject to the control of her father, husband or son and should never be independent (Manu:V:148) |
| Education / Intelligence | “Lord Indra himself has said that women has very little intelligence. She cannot be taught.” Rig Veda 8/33/17 |
| Character of Women | <p>“It is the nature of women to seduce men in the world; for that reason, the wise are never unguarded in the company of females.” Manu: II:213</p> <p>“There cannot be any friendship with a woman. Her heart is more cruel than heyna.” Rig Ved 10/95/15</p> <p>Women love their beds, seats, ornaments; impure desires, wrath, dishonesty, malice, and bad conduct form parts of their nature. Manu IX:17</p> |
| Birth of Daughters | “The daughter causes pain.” Narad |
| Role of Wives | <p>Prohibited from divorce and remarriage under any circumstances.</p> <p>Must treat husband like a lord and god, regardless of his character.</p> <p>“Though destitute of virtue, or seeking pleasure elsewhere, or devoid of good qualities, yet a husband must be constantly worshipped as God by the faithful wife.” Manu V:154</p> |

⁵ In Appendix H, I compare these same topics to teachings from the Roman and Greek and Jewish world. This comparison shows that the world of India in regard to female issues is very similar to the world Jesus and Paul knew.

⁶ The Hindu scriptures quoted here came from the website listed. For more social teachings from the Hindu scriptures, see (*Women in Indo-Aryan Societies* 2008).

Because of India's patriarchy, the people of India practice high power distance. The Independent Commission on Development and Health in India believe, "the form of control and coercion exercised in the case of women are gender specific and arise out of a hierarchical gender relationship, where men are dominant and women are subordinate"⁷ (Karbak 2004:1). Some, like the Independent Commission on Development and Health in India, believe gender violence stems from patriarchy.

Gender Violence in India

The violence against women occurs in both the non-Christian and the Christian arenas of India. In 2001, Chad and I taught a kingdom relationship seminar to a small group of male church planters. We completed our teaching on the Ideal Family, the Fallen Family, and the Redeemed Family. My husband asked the church planters, "When is it okay to beat your wives?" Without laughing and with no apologies or embarrassment, the men began to list when they could and should beat their wives. I then asked, "When is it okay for your wives to beat you?" They began to laugh with embarrassment, and then they gave two or three reasons. Chad said, "You are exactly right! Those are perfectly good reasons for spousal abuse if you are living in the Fallen Family! But now as the Redeemed Family, we seek to live again the Ideal Family of Genesis 1-2." We then asked, "When does Jesus beat his Bride, the Church?" The men grew very silent, and then whispered, "Never." Spousal abuse had infiltrated their worldview and was deemed as appropriate even among Christians.

Girls and women continue to suffer from female feticide, female infanticide, fewer opportunities for education and health care, dowry deaths, domestic violence, incest, temple prostitution, child marriages, and malnutrition, just to name a few. By

⁷ Interestingly, this commission (not Christian based) realizes the danger of hierarchical gender relationships.

living and working in India, I have seen the effects of gender violence. I served a woman burned by her husband in a Death and Destitute Home. I comforted a Kashmiri woman whose sister was killed in a “kitchen fire” because of continual demands of dowry payments that the family could no longer meet. I have met and spoken with numerous prostitutes in Red Light Districts whose eyes appear lifeless and empty. I experienced loss as a young Indian woman I disciplined was stabbed to death by a brother because she did not want to marry a Hindu man. I have listened to the cries of women whose daughters had been raped and yet had no justice as the rapists were the policemen.

Any casual observer can recognize the horrendous effects of the Fall on the girls and women of India. The female in India experiences tremendous discrimination and gender violence throughout her life. Appendix I demonstrates the lifecycle of gender violence towards females in India. The social game of India, influenced by both caste and patriarchy, extends the opportunities for female abuse and discrimination. Aanchal, Sanjay, and Suman, recognize the debilitating results of gender violence and the denial of female equality. They state:

Violence against women is a reality that denies women and girls’ equality, security, dignity, self-worth, and their right to enjoy fundamental freedoms... It limits women’s choices directly by instilling fear in them, destroying their health, limiting mobility, controlling their sexuality, limiting access to resources and services. Indirectly, it impacts on a woman’s self-confidence, self-esteem and self-identity (Aanchal, Sanjay, and Suman 2004:1).

Due to the patriarchy and gender violence woven throughout India’s culture, the contemporary field research that I later portray demonstrates Indian Christian leaders committed to live a prophetic Gospel in their contexts.

Mini-Tour Description

My mini-tour reveals the research I conducted on the field in contemporary contexts. The remainder of this chapter will reveal my findings from both the ethnographic interviews and my case studies from India.

Mini-Tour—Ethnographic Interview Findings

In this section, I demonstrate my findings from the six ethnographic interviews conducted in India (five of six whom also comprise my three Indian case studies), and then I demonstrate findings from my case studies.

I divided my ethnographic interviews into questions related to context, the kingdom of God, theology and female leadership, biblical interpretation, and the Great Commission.

Contextual Questions—Male/Female Relationships in India

In this section of my interviews, I tried to understand how Hindus viewed males and females, how Christians viewed males and females, and if the Hindu community noticed any differences of value Christians placed on women.

Hindu Views of Males and Females

This question invoked a lot of passion from all the interviewees. I heard phrases like, “I have seen a lot of abuse, wife-beatings...women don’t have identity...their husband identifies them...I thought women’s role was to be beaten up by men...men do not give good respect to women...women is just a showpiece....No one has concerns about her sorrows or disappointments, nobody bothers about that...even in the four strata of castes, women are the secondary status in each caste....Brahmans say there is no salvation for women...a wife is like a maid...girls are a burden in the house....”

All interviewees claimed that India was a patriarchal, male-dominated society. They claimed that the oppression of females occurred, not only because of Hinduism but because of a deeply entrenched worldview that females by nature are less than males. The interviewees' answers matched all of my literature research. Gender discrimination runs deep in the Hindu tradition (Renard 1999:149). "The male of India was crushing the female through polygamy, female infanticide, child marriage, widow-burning, euthanasia, and forced female illiteracy—all sanctioned by religion" (Mangalwadi and Mangalwadi 1999:22).

Table 10 summarizes a sampling of statements my interviewees gave revealing the oppression and discrimination against women and girls in the Indian context.

TABLE 10
INTERVIEWEES REVEAL FEMALE DISCRIMINATION

| | |
|----|--|
| P1 | "Women are like a shoe. You can put off and put on at any time." |
| P2 | "Women are a doormat. They are a vessel for them that they use when they need and then they put it off when they don't want." |
| P3 | "Many social crimes we see happening come from the male domination. P3 links female feticide and dowry deaths to "social evils all associated with not giving women their God-given rights." |
| P4 | P4 stated that men simply look for a wife to do his work – not for a person to share one's life. |
| P5 | So there is a very strong preference of the male in the Hindu perspective. |
| P6 | "They think men are superior to women. A woman is a person who should be in the kitchen... look at a woman for reproductions thing." |

Christian Views of Males and Females

I asked this question to determine if Christianity had changed the interviewees' views about gender. Some interviewees struggled answering the question. In several

interviews it was obvious they wanted to say things were very different from the Hindu culture, but most could not. P1 answered most clearly, “It’s, uh, I think it is a century old practice in India, and we being an Indian, most of the Christians they see women in this way only as Hindus do. It’s not only Hindu perspective but Indian perspective as well.” P6 whom I interviewed because she has been influenced by the West stated, “I have experienced with some of the main Christian men that at the moment, at this time in my life, is that they think that women and men have different roles to play, that’s what I experienced.” She also went on to say, “When I first came to know the Lord, and saw how the men treat their wives, it was very healing. I saw some of the pastors treating their wives with respect.”⁸

Hindus Notice a Difference of How Christians Value Women

P1 and P2 believe when Christians live differently from the surrounding context in regards to males and females a difference is perceived by the surrounding culture. P2 stated:

Most of the Hindu people they don’t know anything about how we are doing in the Christian faith and how the Christian society is...But when we go together for the church planting, in some instances, at a point they come to understand that we are liberated from all the bondages and now we are equal and we can also praise God and we can worship, we can pray, we can dance, we can sing together, and we enjoy the equal rights as the women in the society.”⁹

I asked P2 a follow up question to discover if the Hindu society liked to see this “new woman” idea? She responded emphatically, “They like to see that. They too want to come up from the captive...Always in the bondage but when they want to break up the

⁸ I find it interesting that when she first came to the Lord she was around many Christians who believed in the mutuality between males and females. Her answer seems to come from when she first came to Christ. Now, she has surrounded herself with people influenced by hierarchical views from the West. She answered first that women and men have very different roles to play.

⁹ Here, P2 spoke of her own context and their empowerment and release of females. P2 does not describe the whole Indian church.

bondages and they want to come up to the equal status – that is really giving them wings to fly.”

P3 and P4 believe if a church truly follows the Word of God, that church will respect females and value them correctly. Some churches of India are “not releasing women into their full and rightful place though Christianity is supposed to release them in the God-given calls they have.” However, those churches that demonstrate mutual value to females, are attracting more and more women into the church because there they find liberty. “They sense that these kind of churches are giving them importance the way God looks at them. Helped them to see liberation from so many bondages and come out of oppression We’re attracting more women because it spreads through word of mouth.”

P4 pointed out that she believes men must learn to respect and value females. “But when they see a male coming out and giving honor to wives (females), that makes them change. It is like an explosion.”

Theological Questions—The Kingdom of God and Creation

I tried to discover how my interviewees understood the original creation of males and females, how males and females would relate in heaven, and how males and females are to relate today as the reconciled community of God.

2 Corinthians 5:16 Impact on Local Context

I asked the interviewees to explain to me what they believed 2 Corinthians 5:16 meant and how that impacted their ministries.¹⁰ P6 stated we must see people from God’s point of view, “We have to see through his eyes.” P3 and P4 grasped the passage immediately and both commented with passion the following thoughts. The passage

¹⁰ “So from now on we regard no one from a worldly point of view” (2 Cor. 5:16).

caused them to move quickly to how they apply this passage practically in their own context of ministry and leadership development. Some of their comments include:

We see every soul irrespective of gender... If God has placed such value on every soul, then...how can we afford to differentiate between males and females as far as giving them equal opportunity to be productive and find their calling and fulfillment in the kingdom of God. We look to them as God looks to them...So the ministry of reconciliation, we would see that both have equal potential...We see her as a minister, just like we look at a man. This is a new believer who we'll take and train them as a leader of a cell, then as a celebration cell leader, and then ultimately as a leader of leaders. So we don't conform our thinking to the world, what especially India says that a woman is second-rate.

Male and Female Relationships—Past, Present, and Future

I wanted to discover how my interviewees understood God's creation of males and females to see if their beliefs impacted their ministries. Table 11 demonstrates the interviewees' understandings of questions 5-7 and how God originally created male and female, how males and females would relate in heaven, and how males and females should relate today.

100% of my interviewees believed Scriptures taught equal value and honor for both the male and female. Five of six interviewees believed God gave the same blessings and responsibilities to the man and woman. Those who discussed and told answers for the relationship between males and females in heaven claimed no differentiation of males or females in value or responsibility.

I found it interesting that though five of the interviewees believed in equality of males and females and believed males and females should be offered full participation and opportunity for service in the Church, confusion existed as to the home, especially in P3 and P4. P4 seemed to have more difficulties accepting full equality in the home. I pressed for greater clarity of their viewpoints.

TABLE 11

GENDER RELATIONSHIPS—PAST, PRESENT, AND FUTURE

| | Original Creation of Male and Female - Genesis 1-2 | Male and Female Relations in Heaven | Male and Female Relations on Earth |
|----|---|---|--|
| P1 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Created both to glorify God. Gave equal status to both. Created woman as helper which means equal partner in the Indian context. | No response. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Males and females should complement one another. God's purpose is to make them One so God can be seen through them. |
| P2 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Equal to men Supporting men Both were told to be fruitful, multiply and subdue the earth. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> She expressed her understanding with an analogy of the eyes; both eyes must see the same thing together. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Like the eye. They both go together. |
| P3 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> God said it was very good when he created both the male and the female. Both created to be fruitful and have dominion on the earth together. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> We'll be like the angels. No marriage. Differentiation based on gender will not be present in heaven. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Both given command to be fruitful and have dominion, but this was lost due to sin. Jesus restored that position for them both. God sees man and woman partnering together for the expansion of his kingdom. Mutual submission based on experience. |
| P4 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Created males and females equal; told them both to multiply and have dominion. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> No differentiation in heaven, not a lesser position in heaven. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> No problem with a woman leading a mixed team under her. P4 believed God created male and female equal; struggled with what that meant in the home. |
| P5 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> God gave the man and woman the command to be fruitful and have dominion on the earth. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Perfect relationship between God and people. Both males and females will be together, but not sure their form. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Should live as community together as equals. Equal tasks given to both males and females. |
| P6 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Equal in value and worth. Males and females have different roles to play; man has authority over the earth. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Only God knows what he will do in Heaven! We will not be important in heaven. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Respect, honor and love one another. Treat one another with love. |

P4 stated two contradictory beliefs. She said, (1) God created man to be the leader and (2) God created the man and woman to lead the family side-by-side. Upon further questioning, I learned that P3 and P4 believed God provided the husband as a covering for the wife. I also learned they believed this understanding based on the Trinity. “Equal but the Father takes the lead... for the purpose of order. In the same way, man is the head but the woman is beside him.”¹¹

Theological Questions—Leadership in the Church

I asked interviewees about their theological understanding of the Holy Spirit and spiritual gifts in the church. I wanted to discover if correlations existed between the two.

The Holy Spirit Shows No Favorites

Five of my six interviewees were adamant that the Holy Spirit does not give gifts based on gender. P1 said, “No way! Who said so? The Holy Spirit is not gender-biased!” P5 went on to say that the Holy Spirit cannot be biased, “dividing people.”

Again, P6 demonstrated great difficulty with this question. I asked several questions about the Holy Spirit to her and she evaded all of them. When asked if the Holy Spirit gives gifts based on gender she answers, “The Holy Spirit never glorified Himself.” I asked her what her spiritual gifts were and she would never name her gifts as spiritual gifts. Instead she shared what she loved to do. I also asked her if God gives spiritual gifts. To this she answered, “Um, uh, what I see, uh, I think so, according to the Bible there are gifts...What I see in the Bible is that all good things come from the Lord. All good and perfect gifts come from the Lord. I believe in that.” I believe these questions were

¹¹ Because the purpose of the interview was not to move into a theological discussion on interpretation and exegesis and eisogesis, I simply stated, “From my study of the word *kephale* and the Trinity I would not exegete Genesis 1-2 the same way.” Since that time, P3 and P4 asked Chad and me to write a discipleship curriculum for 2400 new believers about the relationship between the man and woman in the church and home.

difficult for P6 since she is currently influenced by an American pastor who teaches the cessation of all spiritual gifts.

Gender Considerations for Service

I followed the question about the Holy Spirit and whether he gave gifts based on gender with whether Christians should consider gender when determining how a person could be used. My logic was that I wanted to see if the interviewee believed God and believers should have similar or different considerations. I also wanted the question to invoke thought. P1 answered, “Not at all. How can a believer do this when God doesn’t want to do that? If he doesn’t differentiate, why believers should do that?” He also expressed that if a believer limits a person based on gender when the Spirit does not do that then “he has some problem in his biblical theology.” P3 and P4 also agreed. “The Holy Spirit does not discriminate, so we should not.” P4 stated, “Day of Pentecost both were filled with the Holy Spirit. So he doesn’t differentiate. He didn’t say that only men should come and I will fill them and they can pass it down to the women.”

Even P6 stated believers should not consider gender, stating, “God can use even donkey also. Not only donkeys but also the rock. God can use anything, whatever He wants to use. We have a phrase in Hindi that means ‘Lion is the king of the jungle – whatever he wants to do, he has all the power and authority, and he has the rights, because he is the king.’”

In my logical progression, I then asked if there was any Christian job that a woman should not do. I wanted to determine if the interviewees believed that both males and females could have any and all spiritual gifts, but to determine if they believed any restrictions should be placed on women. Again, P1 shot back a quick answer by saying the question should be changed, “I would say is there any Christian job a man cannot do? So if the answer is no for the man the answer should be no for the woman also. If man

can do everything, why not women do everything?” P2 answered, “I have just one sentence answer. If God has chosen you for anything, go ahead with that.”

P3 and P4 also stated that because both males and females have the same Holy Spirit, there are no limitations on what they can or should be able to do. “If men have the Holy Spirit in them, then women too have the same Holy Spirit. If Holy Spirit can help men to do work, then same Holy Spirit is in women and can help them to do work. God can use any vessel.”

P5, who serves as a priest in the Church of North India, stated changes continue to occur in regards to women and leadership. One issue helping people reconsider their positions about women in the church revolve around women rising in the secular field. An Indian woman serves as the CEO of Coca-Cola and another woman serves as CEO of Airtel. “When they see the corporate sectors, women are handling top positions; they compare so why not in Christian ministry?”

P6 said a woman should not teach or preach in the church, according to the Bible. She stated that women could teach Sunday School for children. When I asked P6 about Priscilla and her teaching of Apollos, she stated, “They were not inside a church. They were only in a home.”

Hermeneutical Questions—Biblical Interpretation

I asked each interviewee how he or she handled the difficult passages about women in leadership in their contexts and how others in their contexts handled those passages. I reasoned that an inside glance into their journeys of theological reflection could possibly help others who also believed in biblical authority.

Understanding the “Difficult” Passages

Five of my six interviewees believed it was crucial that Christians study context when doing biblical interpretation. P1 and P5 immediately began to name other places in Scriptures where women served as leaders or evangelists or prophetesses; and both demonstrated a need for balance when doing biblical interpretation. P1 stated, “Jesus said, ‘Go and tell my brothers.’ Why would Jesus tell this to women if he expected them to stay silent? He went on to speak of Paul’s thirty-three female leaders and why the Bible gave the story of Priscilla as a teacher of Apollos if Scripture wanted to condemn women from leadership and teaching.¹²

When asked about the difficult passages, P1 immediately stated context was important and quickly moved to Jesus and the standards Jesus exemplified. Both P1 and P3 do not believe these passages are difficult. P3 stated, “Difficult passages actually made difficult by people. When talking about actual context, quite simple. Written for a particular people, particular time.”

Not surprisingly, P6 became rigid at the thought of studying the culture behind the text. She stated, “I don’t want to determine and base my foundation on culture, particular point of time. But at the moment, I don’t think it is the most important thing I need to study...Some says written for that culture, for that time...if I have to take it that way, I would try to give excuses; it’s for that culture and time.” P6 felt shaky looking at culture because she felt that one could disobey many Scriptures and then justify personal sins stating that the command was for a particular culture.

P1, P2, P3, P4, and P5 revealed the majority of believers in India believe women should have no authority, and women should not teach or lead.

¹² I asked P1 how he would respond to P6 who stated that Priscilla could teach Apollos because they were not in a church. He responded, “First of all, the lady who said that does not understand what the church is. Church is the Body of Christ...A building is never the church.”

Missiological Questions—Women and Religion

In the missiological interview questions, I wanted to discover who Indians believed served as spiritual change agents in India.

Women – Custodians of Faith

The four church planters I interviewed (P1, P2, P3, and P4) were very united that women were the key to reaching the entire society of India, as Indian women passed down their faith regardless of the religion. However, P1 stated that because the church in India did not encourage women in leadership, “the church has not made any impact on society, because the church preaches something else and practices something else. People do not find difference between Hindus and Christians and Muslims. So the church is not really impacting society.”

P1 believes that by equipping women, society will change. He also believes women more effectively share the Gospel story. P2 said, “Yeah, see my slogan is if you teach a man it is just a man. But if you teach a woman, you are teaching a whole family.” She expressed that since a woman is talkative, she will immediately tell others. P2 explains, “If we just make women equipped with the Bible, and with the verses, and with stories and everything she is going to be a big influence in North India or even to the world.” P1 and P2 consider women as catalysts for the Gospel.

P3 and P4 have found that their female leaders demonstrate more effectiveness in winning people to Christ than their male leaders, but the males teach from the written word better because of their educational background. P3 and P4 have also found that because women demonstrate more spirituality in their local contexts, they pass on what they know to others in their families and communities. In P3 and P4’s situation, they find that when women demonstrate their new identity and value in Christ and become

empowered to lead and share the Gospel, their family is impacted by the change in the woman. Others in the community take note and respond to the Gospel as well.

Summary of Leadership Principles Derived from the Ethnographic Interviews

Below I indicate the principles of leadership I derived from the six ethnographic interviews.

- Gender does not determine leadership abilities. The Holy Spirit distributes spiritual gifts without a gender bias. Therefore churches follow God when they give both males and females full participation in the kingdom of God.
- God gives the ministry of reconciliation to both males and females; therefore kingdom leadership provides equal opportunity to males and females.
- Effective leadership recognizes people, irrespective of gender, when equipping them for service.
- Effective kingdom leadership occurs when leaders 1. Release both men and women to fulfill their call from God, and 2. Release women from oppression and encourage them to recognize their purpose and potential.
- Godly leadership focuses on Jesus—his standards, character, actions, and purpose. Leadership that empowers focuses on Jesus more than the vessels.
- Good leadership values the Word of God and recognizes the value of context. Christians must carefully discern God's word, recognizing biblical authors often wrote for a particular issue in a particular church. Christians must acknowledge the difficult passages about women in leadership restrictions in light of passages that speak of releasing women in leadership.
- Effective leadership equips all believers, regardless of gender, to extend the kingdom of God.

Mini-Tour—Case Studies

I chose to conduct three Indian case studies. My two primary Indian case studies enabled me to study their models and trace their effectiveness in the Great Commission. To gather my data from the case studies I used the ethnographic interviews from above, more interview questions, and archival data. I conducted the third Indian case study as a rival case study.

Case Study One Description

In 2001, P1 and P2 asked Chad and me to teach a seminar to over 100 pastors about the relationship between males and females in the home and church. “We have watched you. You are different than most couples who love and serve Jesus. We want to know what you think on these matters.” A month after the conference, we received an email from P1 and P2. They reported, “Praise the Lord! (P1) went to one unreached village, preached the Gospel and 35 people accepted Christ! Praise the Lord! (P2) went to another unreached village, preached the Gospel and 315 people accepted Christ!” In both villages, house churches were planted.

P1 chose to give up congregational pastoring after learning about the house church model from an Indian mentor. He recognized that a house church model lined up more clearly with the early church in the New Testament, and he believed this model would multiply more quickly among the masses of the unreached in North India. After successfully planting several house churches himself, P1 eventually began to equip others to plant churches. In 2001, P2 resigned her teaching position after recognizing her gifting both to plant churches and to equip others to plant churches.

Before my research phase began, P1 and P2 invited 10/40 in 2007 to partner with their organization in a strategy called *Ummeed* which means “Deep Hope.” *Ummeed* equips women as church planters in villages of North India, with the majority of the

women from Uttar Pradesh. The religions of Hinduism, Buddhism, and Jainism all began in Uttar Pradesh. Over 167 million people live in the state with only .14% Christians. The needs in Uttar Pradesh overwhelm. Because of the partnership in *Ummeed*, I have two years of documentation of each month's equipping seminars and the churches that women planted as a result of the equipping seminars. Indian partners developed their own curriculum to equip these women in their particular church planting model. 10/40 partners in finding finances, mobilizing prayer, and serving as a sounding board to extend the vision and strategy. Together we establish models of accountability.

Case Study Two Description

10/40 partners with one wing of XYZ (XYZ). Pastor Joseph began the XYZ in 1968. From 1970-1980, XYZ experienced little growth because they functioned in a “one church, one pastor, one congregation” mindset. In 1980, Pastor Joseph learned about the New Testament pattern of meeting in the homes of the people. Influenced by the G-12 Model of Bogota, Columbia,¹³ Pastor Joseph decided to transition his church structure. After the transition to the cell church model, the XYZ experienced tremendous growth multiplying churches. The G-12 vision has a focus on five main ideas—the Great Commission (Mt. 28:18-20), the government of twelve (Gen. 12:1-3), cell churches (Acts 2:46-47, Acts 20:20), revival (Hab. 2:4), and the glory of God (Hab. 2:14).

XYZ has two senior pastors, Joseph and Florence. Joseph has twelve pastors and Florence has twelve pastors. P3 and P4 are each primary pastors of Joseph's and Florence's twenty-four. P3 then has twelve primary pastors and P4 has twelve primary pastors. The multiplication flows. 10/40 partners with P3 and P4 as we share many core

¹³ Pastor Cesar Castellanos of the ICM church in Bogota, Columbia developed the G-12 strategy. From 1986-1991, ICM had seventy cell groups using principles of cell church as taught by South Korea's Dr Yonggi Cho. However, Castellanos was not satisfied with the slow growth. God gave him the G-12 strategy. Today, ICM no longer tries to count people, but rather seeks to keep track of the number of cells (each cell contains between six to twenty-five people).

values. P3 and P4 release both males and females to start and lead cell groups. Chad and I preached at one of their Sunday celebrations. Afterwards P3 told us, “You are unlike most American couples who come here to serve. Usually only the man speaks and the woman sits on the front row. We like this because your model reinforces our model.”¹⁴

XYZ headquarters in Mumbai, India. Mumbai is the capital of Maharashtra and contains 17.5 million people. Mumbai serves as the commercial, economic and industrial heart of the country. The Christian population of Maharashtra is 1.2%. Mumbai “has great influence through its economic clout. It generates one-third of India’s GDP; it is home of India’s stock exchange and the film making industry (‘Bollywood’) (Johnstone 2001:328). Mumbai contains Asia’s largest slum. Mumbai also has 100,000 street children, child prostitutes, and huge numbers of AIDS sufferers. 50% of XYZ’s cells are in slums, 20% in urban settings, and 30% in rural settings.

After the transition and the growth, P3 stated, “The next revelation that God gave us is to release every church member into their God given calling of priesthood of all believers. This also gave freedom for women to be released into ministry.” All twenty-four of P3 and P4’s pastors that they have cultivated over the past eighteen years “have arrived at fully accepting the fact that if they want to reach out and preserve the vast harvest that we see before us then, releasing women in ministry is very important. So now I would say 100% are following it at different levels of results. Faith level too plays a very vital role in this, their prayer life, reading of the word.” P3 stated, “[P4] and I are fully convinced that the role of women is alongside men, serving the Lord shoulder to shoulder with men based on Galatians 3:28 and Romans 8:11.”

¹⁴ Please note that 10/40 began to partner with P3 and P4 as a result of their prior model of ministry. We did not influence their model. However, they were encouraged when they saw that we also practiced mutuality in ministry when we both preached together.

Findings—Interview Data from the Case Studies

I asked additional questions to four of my ethnographic interviewees. Those four interviewees became my primary two case studies. These additional questions enabled me to understand their leadership structures better and discover how their models affect the Great Commission. Below, I detail some of the key principles that arose from their answers.

Re-evaluated Scripture because of the Urgency of the Task

All four interviewees came from a traditional male-female worldview and then moved to a belief that the Church should equip, empower, and release women as full participants in the Body of Christ.

P3, moved particularly by the need they found around them shared:

It was the desperate need. Many of the sisters wanted to come out and serve the Lord, do something for the Lord. But whereas many men were caught up in their jobs. Response to come out in the ministry we see more among the women than the men. So along the way as we were ministering out of the need and out of the availability of such a vast harvest force that the women are in the church, we realized releasing them would be a great blessing and when we did that we found good results and that has made us willing to release both men and women, everyone who is willing to serve the Lord irrespective of their gender.

P4 stated, “But we from a need base saw so many women, and if we wanted to expand we had to realize they are also a part of the army of God. If we keep them just sitting there, we would be sitting half of the army of God in a useless position, not functioning in the kingdom of God.” From the need, they went to Scripture to reexamine the texts. They studied the Scriptures in the Greek and learned the contexts surrounding Paul’s words.

Scriptures challenged P1 and P2 to break their own traditions to accept what they considered a better biblical model. Due to their new understanding, they now hold

specific trainings to empower women as church planters believing they are a key to the nation's salvation. P1, P2, P3, and P4 each practice and teach church planting.

The urgency and the need opened their hearts and minds to re-examine the difficult passages in regards to women in ministry. P1, P2, P3, and P4 each did an earnest search of Scripture realizing Scripture had to guide them. All felt their current methods and leadership models flowed from their commitment to Scripture. A commitment to the priesthood of believers as well as the "new creation of Christ" helped move them to new understanding about males and females.

Mentoring Matters

P4 believes that since it requires both a man and a woman to produce physical fruit, so producing spiritual fruit requires both males and females. P3 states that in the life of Jesus and Paul, women ministered side-by-side with men. He says, "God sees them as complimenting one another for the expansion and furtherance of the Kingdom of God." He also said, "Men and women partnering together definitely going to be a key to success because so many women are there in the church. Even if we say 50%, that many people if we don't mobilize, growth will be slower. So releasing women in the ministry is going to play a very vital role."

I found that P1, P2, P3, and P4 recognize the importance of mentoring on this issue and see it as a way to set an example of males and females partnering together. P3 shared how the Lord rebuked him at one point for not sharing in the housework so that his wife could engage in ministry. He said, "Verbally I affirm her as a leader – side by side with me. So other men could see what I am doing and women see how my wife is coming up in the ministry and they then have high expectations for themselves to come up as well. Someone had to demonstrate so we did that." To demonstrate the practical ways women could join in kingdom work, P3 realized P4 did not have time to come up

into the ministry because of her already overloaded schedule. So he started sharing in the house work so she would have time to pray, read, study, and do ministry. P3 and P4 also modeled P4's ability to teach while P3 served as her translator (P4's first language is English). P3 and P4 became the model for both engaging in ministry as a husband and wife and as a sister and brother in the church. They also shared how even the Americans that often come to minister in India simply only demonstrate the man engaged in ministry. The woman sits on the front row and prays for him and may share with the women for an hour or two. Very few models exist within or outside of India of couples partnering in ministry.

P1 and P2 are also an example of a married couple, both in ministry, and who demonstrate this partnership in their network. P1 shared, "But what we are doing in North India, it has created a new model in our organization." He shared that through their model, the men and the women want to be like them. "And that has really given a big growth to the church planting movement." They shared that if they were not available as a model, it would not be easy to raise up women to participate or lead.

Because few people have seen role models of women in church leadership or men and women partnering together in the Gospel, many do not even consider the possibility. But when couples and individuals model a new paradigm, the door opened for more people to follow.

Obstacles to Partnership Stem from the Fall

I tried to discover some of the obstacles to women and men choosing to partner together in leadership. P1 claimed tradition keeps men from releasing women to engage fully in the church with leadership giftings. Leaders continue to pass down the wrong tradition to new believers. Since India classifies as a male-dominated society, men also fear losing their authority, and their dominant role.

P1 stated the primary reason for men hindering women from areas of leadership in the Body of Christ is simply “Ego.” Men have a difficulty thinking of women as equal to them. “If women are released, maybe they will do better than me?”

P3 stated that some men prevented women from doing ministry because they were not open “to receive what God has written in His word.” P3 said men fear losing their authority, their dominant role, and their position. He said, “They themselves are not liberated I would say. If I find security in God, then I will not become shaky when women join me in ministry.”

I found from interviews that some women do not want to take the responsibility of leadership and decision making. They also are afraid to grow in leadership because they fear their marriages might dissolve. The wife also does not want to be beaten which she might fear will occur if she practices leadership. P4 stated that she has found that some women hide behind their children. They make excuses for not engaging in ministry on their responsibilities to their children.¹⁵

Trust and Submission to the Holy Spirit

The believers in both case studies trusted and submitted to the Holy Spirit as the giver of gifts, the supplier of power for miracles, and the motivator for passion. Their high degree of love and respect for the Spirit impacted their ministries and their ability to release all believers – male and female. This trust enabled them to live with joy in the fact that Joel 2 seemed to continue in their day as the Spirit continued to pour out on both sons and daughters.

¹⁵ These findings relate to the consequences of the Fall and Hagburg’s studies that show males typically desire power by position whereas women typically find power through association with another person. Males typically struggle with pride and desire for power, while women typically struggle with an unbalanced adherence to relationships and security that they believe can come through males.

Releasing Women for the Task

P1 stated that the women church planters they have “are very good.” He said that the women of India trust God, whether it is the right one or not. They say, “Okay, my God will do.” He said that the women become very focused immediately on God.

Noting the success of the few women trained in their networks and the massive potential of released women, P1 and P2 decided to start training women specifically for church planting. It is called *Ummeed* – or Deep Longing. P1 said, “We are preparing an army of women, so the balance will be there. Personally, I have high anticipation, high hope by these trainings.”

P3 and P4 state their release of women into ministry has resulted in more people accepting Christ! P3 explains:

So if God has placed such value on every soul, then we too don't see how we can afford to differentiate between males and females as far as giving them equal opportunity to be productive and find their calling and fulfillment in the kingdom of God. We would look to them as God looks to them. God literally opened our eyes to this. If we want to impact the world around us, we need to use every possible resource that is available. And the cashless resource that is available in the kingdom of God is the laborers. That's what Jesus expressed that the laborers are few. So we can't make more than 50% of the Army of God that is in the church that is our sisters redundant by not giving them opportunity, like we give the men, opportunity to serve the Lord.

Findings—Archival Data from the Case Studies

I researched data from both case studies to discover what, if any, had resulted to propel the Great Commission forward based on the case studies' actions to equip, empower, and release women in leadership.

Case Study One—Archival Data

I gathered archival data from two years of the *Ummeed* strategy. I examined the data from each equipping seminar and traced the results of the women who attended. Appendices J, K, and L reveal the dates of the seminars, numbers of women equipped/refreshed¹⁶ at each seminar, and locations of where the training took place. Appendix M reveals the topics taught at each seminar.

In 2007, Case Study One launched the first *Ummeed* group (Group A). Group A consisted of six different groups of women who each came two times in the year – once to an equipping seminar and later for a refresher course. In 2008, *Ummeed* B and C began. Both B and C consisted of six groups of women (twelve trainings total) who each came two times in the year – once to an equipping seminar and later to a refresher course. *Ummeed* A also came back in 2008 for another refresher course.

The churches planted by the women contain both males and females. After the church planters plant a church, they immediately look for someone within the new church to facilitate the new house church. Table 12 demonstrates the results of 2007 and 2008.

TABLE 12

SPIRITUAL FRUIT OF *UMMEED* 2007-2008

| | Ummeed A – '07 | Ummeed A – '08 | Ummeed B – '08 | Ummeed C– '08 | Total |
|---------------------------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------|
| Number Equipped | 305 | | 288 | 403 | 996 |
| Number Refreshed | 320 | 130 | 145 | 149 | 744 |
| House Churches Planted | 1,065 | 1280 | 920 | 920 | 4,185 |
| Number of New Believers ¹⁷ | 10,650 | 12,800 | 9,200 | 9,200 | At least 41,850 |

¹⁶ The Refresher Courses serve to continue the mentoring and discipleship relationship with each of the equipped church planters. These courses also enable church planters to ask questions based off of their experiences in planting churches.

¹⁷ A house church qualifies as having at least ten saved adults. These numbers are low estimates as most of the churches have more than ten saved adults in them.

According to two years of gathered data on a strategy that specifically equips women as church planters and leaders, Indian partners equipped 996 women as church planters. These 996 churches planters began over 4,185 groups with at least 41,000 new believers! The churches planted by *Ummeed A* in 2007 multiplied and began another 1,280 churches in 2008, so multiplication occurs. So far, *Ummeed* women have impacted eleven unreached people groups.¹⁸

Table 13 gives a deeper analysis of the demographics of the churches planted by these women as compared to churches planted by men from P1 and P2's other church planting initiatives.¹⁹

TABLE 13

DEMOGRAPHICS OF HOUSE CHURCHES

| | Number of Men | Number of Women | Number of Children | Average Size of Church |
|---------------------------|----------------------|------------------------|---------------------------|-------------------------------|
| Churches planted by women | 4-6 | 8-10 | 7+ | 19 |
| Churches planted by men | 4-6 | 8-10 | 7+ | 19 |

P1 and P2 consistently told me that whether the church begins by a male or female, they consistently find similar demographics.

¹⁸ People groups engaged - Brahmins, Rajputs, Kumars, Harijans, Sweepers, Punjabi Jaats, Tyagis, Barber, Santhals Tribe, Urauv Tribe, and the Mundav Tribe. Church planters engaged a total of eleven people groups during 2007-2008.

¹⁹ These numbers compare very closely to the demographics of the church worldwide – 60% women and 40% men. Surprisingly to some, despite the oppression of women in India, women start churches with the same demographics as male church planters. The women's churches are not filled only with women and children.

Validity of the Numbers

Those with experience in India immediately question the value of these numbers as numbers easily escalate in India. However, because of 10/40's partnership with P1 and P2, we establish mutual means of accountability to verify accurate numbers.²⁰

Unexpected and unplanned visits are done throughout the year to determine if the house church truly exists. Also, our partners require a minimum of ten adult believers to constitute a church. Though they cannot keep a complete count of new believers, estimations are done at ten saved adults per church, though a church could have many more.²¹ P1 and P2 also researched in 2008 how many house churches planted in 2007 multiplied in 2008. Research revealed that out of the 1,065 churches begun by *Ummeed* A in 2007, 2,345 active house churches exist today.

Also, in the “end of the year” reporting, Indian partners researched to discover the number of dead churches (meaning house churches planted but no longer surviving). Out of the 1,065 churches begun in 2007, sixty-five house churches died. The willingness to report these types of numbers raises the validity and the reliability of the data.

Life and Society Change

Because *Ummeed* began only two years old, societal impact with longitudinal studies are yet to exist. However, some immediate changes immediately surfaced according to P2:

- Hope – In a land where many women feel they have little value and worth, *Ummeed* has brought hope as women realize they have purpose. Recently one woman

²⁰ 10/40's Indian partners left another ministry several years ago because the leadership above them falsified numbers, so they have a strong commitment to reliable reporting.

²¹ This standard is much more strict than many other house church planting ministries in North India.

depressed by the hopelessness of her life, committed to not kill herself but to plant twenty-five churches for the One who has shown such love to her.

- Moral Changes – Indian girls suffer from crimes against them in the womb. India’s government teaches women about “family planning” but do not describe the moral or scientific implications, but merely describe the procedure done to women as “family planning.”²² At one seminar, the equipper taught about curses and went over the Ten Commandments. On the command, “Do not kill” the equipper stated that this verse meant to not take innocent life—including babies in the womb. Immediately, a woman screamed and said, “I thought it was family planning! I did not know it was murder! I have murdered four babies.” At her outburst, other women began to scream. Women tore their clothes and pulled their hair, begging for forgiveness. The women stated, “We just did not know! We must tell others.” Women now express the moral implications and decisions regarding pregnancy and new life.
- Spiritual Release - Multiple stories of healings and release from demons continue to occur. P1 stated that God actively uses the women and substantiates their words with signs and wonders. “It is like the book of Acts being re-written in our midst.”
- Economic Changes – Women have learned the value of hard work and do not feel hopeless in their finances. As they learn to give in stewardship, they find more joy in their work.²³
- Willingness to suffer – Many stories each month reveal the trials these women overcome to serve God. One woman’s father-in-law raped her before every

²² The government exploits uneducated women by not defining what family planning actually does to the babies inside the womb.

²³ The women also recognized, through miracles, that God concerns himself with their finances. At one seminar, a woman stated that her buffalo had just given birth to a calf but did not produce milk; she asked for prayer. The women got oil and prayed over it, the woman applied the oil to the buffalo and the buffalo began to give milk. The women said, “Praise the Lord, he blesses our livestock too. Amen.”

seminar. Finally, through her perseverance, he stopped. Other women “have been beaten black and blue” for their faith. Several village boys beat one female church planter; through her suffering, many came to Christ in this unreached village.

- Families to Christ – Many women go home and report what they learn to their husbands. One woman taught her husband the Great Commission. She said, “My job is to help people become disciples of Jesus. Maybe you can be my first.” He received Christ, eager to learn everything she learned in future seminars. Countless testimonies exist of husbands who come to faith due to the changed lives of their wives.

Case Study Two—Archival Data

XYZ uses a structure called “Ladder to Success.” This strategy, built upon their belief in the priesthood of believers, enables them to equip every believer as a cell group leader. XYZ uses the Ladder to Success with both the educated and the uneducated as they find its foundation in the Bible. The Ladder to Success includes the following four processes: Win, Consolidate, Disciple and Send.²⁴

XYZ has divided the city of Mumbai into 100 postal codes and identified the unreached people groups in a majority of the areas. This ethnographic study enables XYZ to reach out in a “systematic and strategically pragmatic mission thrust” (P3). P3 and P4 have worked hard to implement the G-12 model with their twenty-four leaders. With their

²⁴ “Win” involves winning a person to Christ. “Consolidate” includes a Pre-Encounter weekend, an Encounter weekend and a Post-Encounter weekend which enables a new believer to encounter Christ in a real way by dealing with spiritual footholds and strongholds and generational sins. “Disciple” involves participating in the school of leaders and learning how to form one’s own cell and actually forming that cell. The School of Leaders involves training once a week for two hours that lasts for nine months. This school involves Christian doctrine, life seminars, cell leadership training, and teaching to enable the leader to catch the G-12 vision. Students can only graduate from the School of Leaders when they begin their own cell group. “Send” involves ministering the ladder of success in one’s own cell group.

commitment to equip both males and females, God continues to bless their efforts as seen in Table 14.

TABLE 14
SPIRITUAL FRUIT OF P3 AND P4'S NETWORK

| | Men | Women | Total |
|-----------------------------------|------------|--------------|--------------|
| Number of Cell Groups | 619 | 765 | 1,384 |
| Number of Leaders | 286 | 318 | 604 |
| Number of Believers ²⁵ | 4,383 | 3,783 | 8,166 |

Thus, P3 and P4 have seen a combined number of 1,384 cell groups begun, 604 leaders equipped, and 8,166 people come to faith and become consolidated into a cell church. Appendix N breaks down the data of P3 and P4 with their specific leaders. The male and the female cell group leaders plant cell groups with both males and females. This fruit comes as a result of both P3 and P4 leading their own groups of G-12 who lead cells and empower and disciples others in those cells to lead cells. The overall figures for XYZ consist of about 24,000 people. These numbers demonstrate that God powerfully blesses not only XYZ but his hands remain on P3 and P4 and their determination to empower others to live out the priesthood of believers.²⁶

Table 15 reveals the demographics gathered from P3 and P4 about the cell groups started in their networks, by both males and females.²⁷

²⁵ Counted in these figures are only the numbers of believers. Each cell also contains seekers.

²⁶ I gathered these states in December 2007 and confirmed them in summer 2008. Since then, I realize XYZ has experienced a revival through their efforts to go door-to-door. Now, XYZ claims to have 55,000 believers. Thus, P3 and P4's numbers also increased dramatically. I did not update my data because I could not go back to India to verify the numbers.

²⁷ The numbers from Table 14 reveal that the numbers of males and females that represent these cell groups is closely in line with the global figures of 60% females and 40% males in the church.

TABLE 15

DEMOGRAPHICS FOR CELL GROUPS

| | Number of Men | Number of Women | Number of Children |
|----------------------------|---------------|-----------------|--------------------|
| Cell Groups Begun by Women | 25% | 50% | 25% |
| Cell Groups Begun by Men | 25% | 50% | 25% |

P3 and P4 stated, “Irrespective of who starts the cell, men or women, as we move into the homes of the people we see the proportion is more or less the same. Except that women have been more spontaneous in reaching out to their acquaintances.”²⁸

As mentioned previously, XYZ has two senior pastors – a husband and wife team. They each have twelve pastors under them – representing senior leadership. P3 and P4 are inside this senior leadership. P3 and P4 then each have twelve leaders under them. P3 and P4 find their foundation for the release of females in the priesthood of believers. They state, “The results are quite lop-sided as the senior G-12 leaders as they do not follow wholeheartedly the priesthood of all believers especially releasing women in ministry.” P3 and P4 and others in their networks constitute 34% of all of XYZ’s members. The other twenty-two senior leaders constitute the other 66%, as seen in Figure 2. P3 and P4 believe the difference hinges on their incorporation of women into the harvest force.

²⁸ During research sessions over two years, I consistently questioned P1, P2, P3, and P4 about differences between males and females starting and leading groups. Did Indian men actually attend house or cell churches begun and led by women? Were women starting groups primarily attended by only females and children? In both case studies, they repetitively revealed that both males and females started and led *mixed* groups with almost the same percentages of male/female attendees. I actually began to almost get the “feel” that all four (P1, P2, P3, and P4) wanted to shout, “Why do you keep asking us this? We’re finding the same results!” Later, when I asked the same question in my Chinese case study, she also showed by her nonverbal communication that she thought the question silly and the answer obvious.

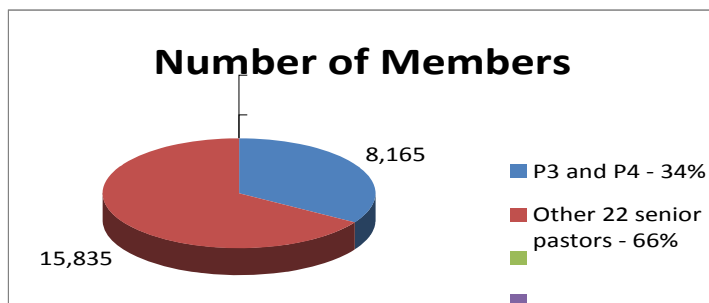


FIGURE 2

COMBINED NUMBERS OF P3 AND P4 COMPARED TO THE OTHER 22 SENIOR PASTORS

The G-12 strategy carries a natural progression of community and mentoring and continual discipleship in that one always participates in a group of leaders for mentoring and one always leads a group. XYZ also continues to demonstrate both spiritual and social change in the community as more believers empowered with the Gospel lead out in their communities through deeds that demonstrate the kingdom—ministries to eunuchs, HIV victims, orphans, slum dwellers, those with leprosy, relief work, vocational training, and literacy find numerous volunteers. 10/40 partners with P3 and P4 on strategies of slum transformation. By providing preschool education to children in slums, we also provide nutrition, health, literacy to parents, and vocational training to older siblings. In the process, teachers equipped as church planters begin cell groups in the slums.

Integrating the Leadership Characteristics of Case Study One and Case Study Two

I asked P1, P2, P3, and P4 to share values they consider important in Christian leadership. Though the leaders practiced different models, similar values continued to surface. Table 16 displays their similar principles:

TABLE 16

PATTERN MATCHING FROM CASE STUDIES ONE AND TWO

| | <i>Case Study One</i> | <i>Case Study Two</i> |
|---|---|---|
| <i>Foundation</i> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Derived model from Scripture. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Derived model from Scripture. |
| <i>Valued</i> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • God values a person's submission • God recognizes how much a person trusts and obeys him • God chooses the person; • God sees the heart of a person. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Viewed every member as a minister and believed every member needed to be ministered to – including leaders • Discipleship • Mentoring relationships • Exemplifying partnership |
| <i>Goal</i> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Commitment and passion to the Great Commission. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Multiplication • Every member can be a leader |
| <i>Character Traits Highlighted</i> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Honesty in reporting numbers • Passionate about Christ • Focus on God and powerful trust in God • No fear | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teachability • Faithfulness and availability • Accountability • Submission • Time commitment |
| <i>Spiritual Disciplines Highlighted</i> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Guts to stand against persecution • Willingness to suffer | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prayer and fasting • Evangelism • Endurance in persecution |
| <i>Holy Spirit</i> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gifts of the Holy Spirit | Emphasis on the Holy Spirit |

Case Study Three Description

I conducted a small rival case study through Case Study Three. I met and discipled P6 in 2000. Though a new believer, she already demonstrated gifts of leadership and evangelism and apologetics.²⁹ She started house groups, led people to Christ, and consistently told me ideas she had to reach larger Hindu populations. P6 came to Christ through people who believed God gifted women as he chose.

²⁹ P6 came to my home in India after Chad and I spoke at a college ministry. I answered the door and she said, “My name is _____. If you will disciple me, I will be a history maker in my country.”

However, P6 became involved with Westerners who opposed women in leadership. She received books from them, spent relational time with them, and her worldview began to change.³⁰ She also began to attend a church in Delhi pastored by an American.³¹ Only P6 (out of all the people I interviewed) began with a belief in gift-based ministry (no limitations on women based on her gender) and changed to a system that restricted women from certain tasks in the Church. P6 shared her journey:

What changed me that I realized the Bible...I used to struggle before when I was a new believer. God is talking here. I really feel that He is unjust. Women should be silent, women cannot teach or preach. Men can do that. I was just thinking this is very chauvinistic view. Then, I was like why is God, the Bible teaching like that? I don't like this passage so I just skipped the passage...But later on I realized when it is so clear to me that when God says do not commit adultery, do not tell lie. I don't need any explanation – what is the meaning of don't tell lie, do not commit adultery? I knew it. That is a commandment; I don't need any explanation. Even with this passage, I realize a woman should not preach and teach. It's very clear to me that a woman should not preach and teach. That is the commandment of God. It is written in the Bible. Why do I need more, why do I need more interpretation of that? I know it. I realize that if I don't like it, I hated it at the beginning that I should accept. God is never unjust. God is holy and just. He knows what he is saying. Even if I don't really understand it. It was very difficult for me to accept that but I realized that this is God's word and I want to submit to this and do what he wants me to do. So that's how I decided to take that Word.

³⁰ P6 told me that the couple she had been influenced by both graduated from McArthur's school called Masters College. P6 also showed me the book that had influenced her the most in her changed worldview – Grudem and Piper's book *Recovering Biblical Manhood and Womanhood*.

³¹ This American pastor believed in the cessation of spiritual gifts. He believed the Gospel only included the word and not the deed. He taught that he led the only church in Delhi that taught Truth. He did not believe in demonic deliverances. P6 explained many of the church's beliefs to us. Chad visited the church and spoke with the leadership, to better help us understand her theological position. Here they clearly explained the cessation of the Holy Spirit, the absence of miracles and deliverances today, and strict authority structures. We learned that the pastor would not allow P6 to take the Lord's Supper because P6 did not feel she should be baptized again, but he still accepted her offering.

A German organization, a group of YWAM, and 10/40 all sought to enable P6 to understand the almost "cultish" practices of this American pastor. Because P6 did not move from her belief in the cessation of the Holy Spirit, all three organizations remained friends with P6 but all three chose independently of the others to cease any ministry partnerships with her out of fear of the doctrine and influence she naturally passed to new believers. When 10/40 communicated to P6 that we desired friendship but not partnership with her, she told me the other groups that stopped partnership with her as a result of her new beliefs.

When P6 became a believer from Hindu background, P6 said the love and value Jesus placed on women attracted her. Now she believes God places restrictions on women out of love for women; they are not to have authority, teach, preach, or lead. I pressed P6 further to determine if these restrictions only existed in the church or also in the world. She stated that she thought God had no problem if women work, teach in the university, or work for the government in leadership positions. It is how “He wants it to be in the church.”

When I first met P6, she started and led a very engaging house group that attracted many Hindus and Muslim seekers. I asked P6 how she continued to lead this group. She told me that she simply offers her apartment, informs people of the meetings, and then she has her brother teach the Bible. Her brother, a new believer struggling in his faith, taught the seekers though by this time P6 had studied the Scriptures intensely for six years and God gifted her in teaching. I asked how he taught, and she laughed and said, “He tries. He’s getting better.” Though she continues to evangelize both males and females because she does not see that gender matters in evangelism, in leadership with mixed company she remains silent. She has also ceased experiencing the power of the Holy Spirit in miraculous ways and told me she no longer believes in this ministry.³²

Yet, even P6 stated believers should not consider gender when determining how God can use a person. She stated, “God can use even donkey also. Not only donkeys but also the rock. God can use anything, whatever He wants to use. We have a phrase in Hindi that means ‘Lion is the king of the jungle, whatever he wants to do, he has all the power and authority, and he has the rights, because he is the king.’”

³² In 2001, I went through Neil Anderson’s “Steps to Freedom in Christ” with P6. During the intense eight hours, I watched as God visibly released her from demonic strongholds. I referred to this night during the interview and other Hindus who needed deliverance as well. She shrugged her shoulders and she said, “I know it happened to me, but I just don’t know. I need to study more.”

P6 currently works for a Christian business and pursues a master's degree. I recently (as of February 2009) learned P6 no longer attends this church and found a new church that sounds more biblically sound. She now attends a new church start that has about ten to fifteen people.³³ P6 continues to engage in college ministry, and shares her faith with university students. Her pastor now leads the group she gathers in her home. Due to the belief system of P6 that women cannot lead, I have no data of Christian fruit based on her leadership.³⁴

Summary

Despite female oppression, patriarchy, and the caste system which seek to limit women, the findings from Case Study One and Two reveal God's willingness to advance his kingdom through female leadership. The research from these Indian contemporary case studies reveals that when God chooses a leader, equips a leader, and sends a leader, missional advance occurs for the Great Commission, regardless of gender.

Despite the cultural overtones of patriarchy and caste that limit and restrict women, God has chosen to anoint and pour out his Spirit on both males and females. Not many of the women equipped claim wisdom by human standards or confess noble birth. Yet God chose to use the "foolish things of the world to shame the wise; God chose the weak things of the world to shame the strong" (1 Cor. 1:26-29). Despite all odds, God releases power to those fully dedicated to work with him in the *missio Dei*.

³³ Interestingly enough, her boss is a young woman in her 20's who went through a course taught by DAI (Development Associates International) called "Women in Leadership." Her boss, a savvy business woman, also strongly believes in female leadership if God calls and equips. It will be interesting to note any changes in P6 over future years as a result of a strong respect she has for her boss. One change already recognized is that she has changed churches.

³⁴ Obviously, P6 continues to love God, and God continues to use her to make a difference. However, if P6 received empowerment and release, I cannot imagine her impact in her nation since I realize she has both teaching and leadership gifts. At this time however, I cannot track fruit from her leadership because she does not currently lead.

Case Study Three reveals a woman who believes in a hierarchical relationship between males and females, with God placing restrictions on females within the church and home, though not in the world.

In Chapter 6, I offer a fourth case study from China and compare those findings to the findings discovered in my Indian case studies. Though the results of Case Study One and Case Study Two reveal exciting data, I like many other Christians committed to God's word, realize that Christian practice must find its foundation in Scripture. In Chapter 6, I compare and contrast all three Indian case studies as well as the Chinese case study to the biblical case studies to discover which models line up best to God's intentions.

CHAPTER 6

INTEGRATION OF FINDINGS

I purposed in this study to extrapolate kingdom principles of leadership from both the Bible and from contemporary mission and to discover how these principles applied affected the Great Commission. I chose to do a fourth case study in China to discover if I found any replication to the Indian case studies in a different Asian context. I applied cross-case synthesis with this multiple case study design which allowed me to evaluate each case study alone and then to compare their findings. Below I will briefly describe my findings from my Chinese case study and extrapolate derived kingdom principles. Then, I will compare these findings to the findings of both India and the Bible. This integration will enable me to form conclusions and recommendations.

China – Case Study Four Description

I did not compile extensive research surrounding the Chinese worldview of male and female relationships. I simply wanted to research one Chinese leader’s model of leadership and compare it to the Indian case studies and later the biblical case studies.

Operation World reports about the powerful ministry in China accompanied by healings, miracles, and exorcisms stating, “The majority of these evangelists and church planters have been women – many still in their teens” (Johnstone, Mandryk and Johnstone 2001:161). P7 served as one of these young evangelists and church planters. For over a decade in the “Great Revival” as she called it, she worked and planted 1,000 churches in Sichuan. She led thousands of people to Christ. She said that during this time,

she witnessed hundreds of powerful miracles. Through the interview, I discovered P7 currently leads a movement of 35,000 people.¹

P7 revealed that in the midst of the Revival, questions about what women could do in the church did not arise. She stated, “In the Great Revival both were needed and were fervent in serving the Lord.” Later “this problem” was introduced. Before we just “gave ourselves to the Lord and there was no distinction or problem.” But in 1994 and 1995, some Americans went to China and “preached that women should not preach. This caused a lot of problems.”

During the interview, P7 shared key leadership principles that guided her and many other leaders in China.

Leadership Principles Derived from China Case Study

- P7 succinctly expressed her description of a leader – a leader is called by God, has a character after God, and has the wisdom and skills to do the task God gives.²
- P7 demonstrated that in her network, she and others believed that godly leadership involved understanding both males and females could do any job in and for the Church.
- P7 expressed that Christian leaders should love the Bible and learn to understand its context and how to apply its message to their own contexts. She stated that she and many believers in China understood the Pauline passages about women as words to a specific problem in a specific context.

¹ Though I did not verify her reports and numbers, P7 served as the main speaker at a large leadership conference in Hong Kong. Her translator looked at Chad and stated, “This is a very special woman.”

² Her answer almost compared verbatim to Jeremiah 3:15 which I discussed in Chapter 3. “Then I will give you shepherds after my own heart, who will lead you with knowledge and understanding” (Jer. 3:15).

- P7 revealed the power of the Holy Spirit in the movements taking place in China. She rattled off three stories about the Holy Spirit within a few minutes to reveal their dependence, trust, and respect of the Holy Spirit's actions.³
- P7 revealed that leaders needed to have great love for the flock and a great burden for the lost.

Cross-Case Synthesis

In order to quickly demonstrate similarities between the Chinese case study and the two primary Indian case studies, I selected pertinent points from P7's interview about Christian leadership in her Chinese context and placed her responses next to the responses from my Indian context. I reveal this data in Table 17.

Both the Indian and the Chinese case studies revealed similar belief patterns about biblical interpretation, about the Holy Spirit's work in gifting believers, and about the service for God began with God in his choice, call and anointing of the person. All three case studies revealed godly Christian leadership required spiritual disciplines and high integrity. All three case studies revealed that the leader needed to love God and people and needed to possess a great passion for the mission of God. When asking questions in all three case studies, I tried to discover what the leaders believed God's intent involved in his gifting of people. All case studies revealed an immediate response that God chose, God equipped, and God empowered his people for the sake of his desire to reconcile the world to himself.

³ One night while baptizing at night in secret because of persecution, a teenager lost his breath for ten or more minutes after baptism. He had no pulse or breath and looked dead. P7 prayed for him and his pulse and breath came back. Another woman after baptism became paralyzed. They asked her what sin still resided in her heart. After confession, God healed her. Another time, P7 and others were about to bury a person already placed in the coffin. They prayed, and the person came back to life and later led 3,000 people to the Lord.

TABLE 17

PATTERN MATCHING – INDIA AND CHINA

| Leadership Values | India – Case Studies 1 and 2 | China – Case Study 4 |
|--|---|--|
| Holy Spirit and gifts | Does not give gifts based on gender | Does not give gifts based on gender |
| Issues that determine how a person can serve in church | God's choice of leader, heart for Jesus | Maturity, character, spiritual calling |
| Restrictions or release for women? | Release for Women. "God does not differentiate, why should we?" | Release for women. "Since God can use them to plant a church, God can also enable the woman to lead and pastor the church." |
| What does God look for when He looks for leaders? | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • God values a person's submission • God recognizes how much a person trusts and obeys him • God sees the heart of a person; this determines Whether God chooses them for his service. • Focus on God, powerful trust in God | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Intimate friendship with God Willingness to surrender and submit • God sees someone's character and life. • God certainly searches every person's heart. |
| What makes a good Christian leader? | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Should have a heart for the Lord. • Honesty in reporting numbers • Hard working • Passionate about Christ • No fear • Willing to suffer and face persecution • Teachability • Faithfulness • Submission • Availability • Loves and cares for others | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Seeks God's heart and continues to seek • Great love for the flock • Strong character • Endurance during persecution • Clear sense of purpose, calling from God and vision • Necessary gifts to lead people |
| The Great Commission | Heart to tell others about the Lord. | Great burden for the lost. |

Pattern Matching—Biblical and Contemporary Case Studies

At the beginning of this dissertation I set out to extrapolate leadership principles from the narratives of both Deborah and David in order to later compare to the leadership practices that emerged from my case studies in contemporary contexts in Asia. In Table 18 below, I match the biblical case studies with the contemporary data in both India and China. Under the biblical kingdom perspective, I place the principles I derived from Deborah and David. In column two, I indicate what I believe God revealed about his intent from the biblical perspective derived from Deborah and David. In the far three columns, I place my findings from the contemporary contexts. Column three combines my primary Indian Case Studies One and Two since I found similar leadership perspectives. In column five, I place China – Case Study Four. In column four, I place India – Case Study Three, which mostly contrasts with the biblical data and the other contemporary data.⁴

I discovered the models in Indian Case Studies One and Two and China Case Study Four do in fact engage in ministry models that I believe look similar to the principles derived from Deborah and David. God's intentions through both Deborah and David revealed God choosing leaders that contradicted their culture's requirements and his willingness to work with humans in his redemptive movements. By Deborah's response to God's call, empowerment, and equipping; God used her to release the Israelites from Canaanite oppression. God accomplished his mission. By David's response to God's call, empowerment and equipping; God placed David in the place to serve as king of Israel and to prepare the way for the King of Kings. Through David, God accomplished his purposes.

⁴ Table 18 includes findings I discovered from my biblical case studies as well as some of the findings from my ethnographic interviews and case studies. I did not include all my findings here that include the case studies' analysis of their models – such as the value of mentoring, the urgency of the Great Commission that encouraged them to re-evaluate their theology, and their understanding that the Fall works against their models of mutual partnership between males and females.

TABLE 18

INTEGRATED COMPARISON OF LEADERSHIP

| Biblical Perspective | God's Intent Revealed | Contemporary Mission Perspective in India (Case Studies 1 & 2) | Contemporary Mission Perspective in India (Case Study 3) | Contemporary Mission Perspective in China (Case Study 4) |
|---|---|---|---|--|
| God chooses/calls - the call gives authority. | For his mission | Believes God chooses/calls - the call gives authority. God does not give gifts based on gender. | God does not give gifts based on gender, but God calls men to lead, teach, and have authority . | Believes God chooses/calls - the call gives authority. Believes God does not give gifts based on gender. |
| God equips – gives spiritual gifts and talents. | For his mission | Believes God equips – gives spiritual gifts and talents | God gives spiritual gifts as he desires but limits women's use of them. | Believes God equips – gives spiritual gifts and talents |
| God empowers – God's Spirit enables the leader to accomplish the task. | For his mission | Believes God empowers – God's Spirit enables the leader to accomplish the task. | Believes God empowers – God's Spirit enables the leader to accomplish the task. | Believes God empowers – God's Spirit enables the leader to accomplish the task. |
| Leaders Respond to God's call | Co-laborers with God | Obedience, surrender | Obedience, surrender | Obedience, surrender |
| Leaders develop and use the gifts and talents given by God | Appreciation for the talents/gifts | Develops and uses gifts and talents. | Develops and uses them according to the appropriate roles for men and women. | Develops and uses gifts and talents. |
| Leaders Depend on God and recognize God is the source of all spiritual fruit | Recognition of work of Holy Spirit as the Gift | Worship, submission to God, Dependence on God, gives credit to God. | All good gifts come from God. Worship him and depend on Him. | Worship, submission to God, dependence on God. |
| Community of Believers – Reflects the unity of God (Jn. 17). | Reflects the <i>imago Dei</i> ; Body of Christ mobilized to | Full participation and equality, "One Another" principles in operation. Offers participation | Though God does not give gifts based on gender, the Church should place | Ministry of Reconciliation – equal opportunity to participate and serve because the |

| | | | | |
|---|---|--|---|--|
| | point to the kingdom | to all believers to serve based on gifts because the Holy Spirit gifts regardless of gender. | restrictions on how a woman can serve. | Holy Spirit gifts regardless of gender. |
| God and power – God gives power away by investing trust in his chosen leader. | Intentionally lowers power distance; so humans can live lives of purpose. | Releases control by empowering others to lead; shares power by giving it away. | N/A – not covered in interviews. | Releases control by seeing everyone as a potential leader; shares power by giving it away. |
| Leaders Focus on God’s Mission - God’s redemptive story – God saves. | To reconcile all things to himself | Urgency of the Great Commission compelled them to develop their leadership model and release both males and females. | All believers can evangelize. But women cannot teach or lead in the church. | Urgency of the Great Commission compelled them to develop their leadership model and release both males and females. |

By the Indians’ response to God’s call, empowerment and equipping; God used Case Study 1 to equip 996 women as church planters. These women planted 4,185 house churches, with at least 41,000 new people claiming allegiance to the kingdom of God. God used Case Study 2 to equip 286 men as leaders who started 619 cell groups for a total of 4,383 people claiming allegiance to the kingdom of God. Case Study 2 also equipped 318 women as leaders who started 318 cell groups for a total of 3,783 claiming allegiance to the kingdom of God. Through P7’s response to God’s call, empowerment, and equipping, God used her to start 1,000 house churches in a ten year period in China, and she now leads a movement of over 35,000 people claiming allegiance to the kingdom of God. God continues to accomplish his redemptive purposes through these leaders.

I found it difficult to parallels to the biblical principles derived about leadership from Deborah and David to Indian Case Study Three because P6’s answers continually found their basis in one’s involvement in God’s mission based on one’s gender, rather than God’s intent I discovered in the stories of Deborah and David.

If David or Deborah refused to use their gifts because of their ages or their gender, or God demonstrated through the stories that he could not use them because of their gender and age, different stories would exist and I could derive different principles. However, God desires subsequent generations to recognize his intent in choosing people based on different categories than typically expected from one's culture. In the same way, when Case Studies One, Two, and Four paralleled their leadership models to leadership characteristics found in the narratives of Deborah and David, I found their models produced abundant fruit for the Great Commission. Since P6 developed her leadership understandings based on the external feature of gender, I found it difficult to compare her fruit to the biblical case studies or the other case studies. Rather, a contrast arose with external features becoming the requirement rather than God's authority, God's gifting, or God's empowerment to the leader. These gender requirements did not allow P6 to have fruit for analysis.

In the biblical case studies, the redemptive purposes of God led God's choices in the vessels to extend his mission – not external features. In the same way, my contemporary research data revealed leaders who looked beyond external features when they equipped people for leadership to extend the Great Commission. P1 stated, “We look for people passionate about Christ... We don't look for men or women. We look for the person, whether male or female, who has the qualities.”

My findings reveal that God's redemptive purposes spread throughout the specific contexts of India and China when the Church increased the harvest force by releasing both males and females into God's mission.

Summary

The purpose of this study was to extrapolate kingdom principles of leadership from both the Bible and from contemporary mission and to discover how these principles

applied in contemporary contexts affect the Great Commission. In my theoretical proposition, I alluded to Jesus planting “seeds of the kingdom” for future transformation in his actions and teachings towards females. My biblical case studies pointed to “seeds of the kingdom” demonstrating a God who looked at a person’s heart – not external features. My contemporary case studies may offer a demonstration of what happens when Christians apply these “seeds of the kingdom” in contemporary contexts. Through my biblical case studies and my contemporary research, I answered research questions two, three and four. These findings enable me to offer both conclusions and recommendations.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

In this final chapter, I present the key principles of leadership I derived from my research which arose from my findings. I derived my findings from answering four research questions that originated from my central research issue. My findings lead me to offer conclusions and recommendations, enabling me to achieve both my purpose and my goals for this dissertation. Below, I demonstrate how I answered my four questions, and then present conclusions and recommendations based on my findings.

Central Research Issue and Research Questions

My central research issue was to derive biblical principles of male and female leadership from a kingdom perspective and to recognize their impact in contemporary mission. This research issue led me to ask four questions.

My theoretical construct presented in chapters one and two enabled me to answer research question one: “What does biblical literature say about the community between males and females in the context of leadership in the kingdom of God?” I revealed that biblical scholars arrive at different conclusions to this question.

As noted in Chapter 2, some scholars believe God created male and female to share ontological equality, but functional inequality which leads to male headship and female submission. These scholars believe Jesus’ crucifixion redeems the fallen nature of male headship or female submission. “The redemptive thrust of the Bible does not aim at abolishing headship and submission but at transforming them for their original purposes in the created order” (Piper and Grudem 1991b:65). These created distinctives necessitate

the Church to restrict females from doing any Christian service that includes teaching, governing, or public ministry that gives females authority over males.

Other scholars, and I concur as noted in Chapters 1 and 2, believe God created male and female with both ontological and functional equality, but differentiated them only in their maleness and femaleness. These scholars believe that due to the Fall, males lost their partner in dominion (interdependent relationship) and females lost their mutual dominion. The crucifixion redeems this broken relationship and provides the opportunity for full reconciliation as males and females can again enjoy interdependence and shared dominion. Scholars in this camp believe that because of redemption, the Church should not restrict women from any task in the church, simply because of gender. Scholer states, “The foundational pattern of authority in the early church is that which enables and empowers every believer to do the work of the Gospel for the church and the world” (Scholer 2005c:29-30).

My findings from my biblical research and contemporary research in my two primary Indian case studies and my Chinese case study allowed me to answer research questions two, three and four: 2. What does God intend to teach us about principles of leadership through the biblical personalities of Deborah and David?, 3. What principles of leadership do contemporary leaders employ in specific contexts of India and China?, and 4. As these leaders practice these biblical leadership principles, what is the missional impact on the Great Commission in their contexts?

My findings from these three questions enabled me to achieve my purpose of extrapolating kingdom principles of leadership from both the Bible and from contemporary mission contexts and to discover how these principles can affect the Great Commission when applied to mission. Based on my findings, I now offer conclusions and recommendations which enable me to accomplish my goal of offering practical kingdom

principles of leadership and enabling the Church to reflect strategically on how to advance the *missio Dei* more effectively by multiplying the laborers.

Principles of Kingdom Leadership

Below I present the ten principles of kingdom leadership that arose from integrating both my biblical and contemporary research. I state each principle, followed by a brief summary of data from both the biblical and contemporary research that demonstrates the principle. After each summary, I offer recommendations based on that particular leadership principle. In the odd numbered principles (1, 3, 5, and 7), I offer recommendations to the Church at large. In the even numbered principles (2, 4, 6, 8), I offer recommendations to males and females in particular. This structure developed because I realized early in the research that God's actions always elicited a response from the leader. In the ninth and tenth principles, I offer recommendations to both the Church at-large and individual believers.

Principle 1: God Calls/Chooses Leaders as He Desires.

God calls/chooses leaders as he desires based on the heart, not external features. God chose Deborah to serve as a judge and prophetess though she lived as a woman in a land of patriarchy. He chose to anoint David, Jesse's youngest son, as king though David lived in a culture of primogeniture.

In the same way, in case studies one, two, and four; the leadership models reflected the belief that God continues to choose leaders, not based on gender, but on the heart. Case study three, my rival case study, revealed that the Church should restrict females from certain leadership positions based on gender.

Contrasting with God's actions of choosing leaders on internal, rather than external features, I discovered that the belief system of restricting women's participation

in the church correlates to the Indian caste system. Caste (with karma and dharma forming a theological basis for the caste system), places every individual and family into a permanent station for life while serving as a social unifier. Birth determines one's gender, class, value, and status. Some Christians similarly believe that gender determines one's role for life. Ray Ortlund states:

So, was Eve Adam's equal? Yes and no. She was his spiritual equal and unlike the animals, 'suitable for him.' But she was not his equal in that she was his 'helper.' God did not create man and woman in an undifferentiated way, and their mere maleness and femaleness identify their respective roles. A man, just by virtue of his manhood, is called to lead for God. As woman, just by virtue of her womanhood, is called to help for God (Ortlund 1991:102).

Following the logic of this principle, which in turn is based on my findings from Scripture and my Asian case studies, I offer the following recommendations.

- I encourage churches to reflect upon their understanding of God's qualifications for calling people into his service based upon biblical narratives such as Deborah and David.
- I recommend churches evaluate their beliefs and practices about how God calls men and women and then release laborers based on God's choosing.
- I recommend churches examine their theological practice and reform any actions that mimic any worldview of a caste system.

Principle 2: Effective Leaders Obey God's Call.

Both Deborah and David chose to obey God, although they lived in cultures impacted by both patriarchy and primogeniture. They heard and recognized God's call and responded.

In the contemporary research of case studies one, two, and four; the leadership models demonstrated the belief and practice that if God called a person for leadership, God's call gave authority to the person – not based on any external features. P3 stated:

When people get saved and come into the kingdom of God, we see every soul irrespective of gender. We also look to them as so precious that the Lord would die for them. So if God has placed such value on every soul, then we too don't see how we can afford to differentiate between males and females as far as giving them equal opportunity to be productive and find their calling and fulfillment in the kingdom of God. We try to look to them as God looks to them.

Following the logic of this principle, which in turn is based on my findings from Scripture and my Asian case studies, I offer the following recommendations.

- In following the examples of the biblical and contemporary context findings, I recommend that both females and males respond in obedience to God's call, regardless of one's culture, recognizing obedience at times requires risk.
- As a source of encouragement, I recommend believers study the radical seeds of the kingdom that Jesus planted in regard to women, contrary to his culture, and commit to follow God prophetically in a fallen world.¹

Principle 3: God Equips Leaders to Accomplish His Tasks.

God gave Deborah the ability to offer good judgments, prophetic understanding, military strategy, and influence among her people. God gave David experience in the court of the King Saul as well as abilities to play a musical instrument, speak well, strength and compassion to shepherd (thereby learning how to shepherd God's people), and military prowess.

¹ To note the culture that surrounded females during the day of Jesus, see Appendix H. This appendix also compares the teachings common in Jesus' day to the Hindu teachings about females. See Appendix O for a brief explanation of some select passages in the Gospels surrounding Jesus and women.

In the contemporary research, I discovered that God continues to give his chosen leaders the abilities to share the Gospel, strategize, teach, memorize stories, cast out demons, perform miracles, lay hands on people for healings, and start and lead churches that multiply. The leadership models in the contemporary research realize that both males and females, called by God, need equipping to follow God's call well. P1 and P2 stated:

Yeah, see my slogan is if you teach a woman, you are teaching a whole family. She will tell it to others. If we just make women equipped with the Bible, and with the verses, and with stories and everything; she is going to be a big influence in North India or even to the world.

Following the logic of this principle, which in turn is based on my findings from Scripture and my Asian case studies, I offer the following recommendations.

- I encourage churches to provide opportunities for both males and females to develop the skills, talents, and gifts God has given – irrespective of gender.
- I exhort churches to recognize their responsibility to embrace and equip all believers (Eph. 4:12) and to develop strategies to equip, empower, and release a larger labor force.

Principle 4: Effective Leaders Develop Skills Given by God.

Effective leaders take the skills, talents and gifts and through experience strengthen their abilities. Deborah served for years as a prophetess, judge, and military leader. David served in Saul's court for fifteen years before his own coronation as King.

In the same way, P1, P2, P3, P4, and P7 in the contemporary case studies provided equipping seminars, weekend retreats, and cell or house groups to equip church planters and cell group leaders. Those who attended put the teaching into practice by starting house or cell groups. P4 stated:

We would see that both have equal potential. We see her as a minister, just like we look at a man. This is a new believer who we'll take and train

them as a leader of a cell, then as a celebration cell leader, and then ultimately as a leader of leaders.

Following the logic of this principle, which in turn is based on my findings from Scripture and my Asian case studies, I offer the following recommendations.

- I recommend that individual Christians recognize that God gives gifts, skills, and talents; God expects these to be developed and used regardless of the obstacles.
- When the local church does not endorse the gift or the vessel, individual Christians must responsibly look for ways and places to develop and use the gifts given by God.

Principle 5: God Empowers Leaders Through the Holy Spirit.

Though God gives the spiritual gifts, God graciously gives the Holy Spirit as the supreme power and life source for the use of the gifts. God empowered Deborah to obey his plans enabling her to serve with him in his mission. God empowered David by anointing him with his Spirit.

In the same way, in the contemporary case studies, God gave his Holy Spirit to his chosen vessels, enabling them to live out his mission through their spiritual gifts. P3 and P4 also stated that because both males and females have the same Holy Spirit, no limitations exist on what women can do:

If men have the Holy Spirit in them, then women too have the same Holy Spirit. If Holy Spirit can help men to do work, then same Holy Spirit is in women and can help them to do work. God can use any vessel.

Following the logic of this principle, which in turn is based on my findings from Scripture and my Asian case studies, I offer the following recommendations.

- Because the Holy Spirit serves as both the provider and the enabler of the spiritual gifts given to both males and females, I encourage the Church to use great care

when they release or restrict women in service. If God has called and equipped a woman for a particular service, a Church could grieve the Holy Spirit if they try to restrict a woman the Spirit has empowered.

- I recommend the Church to learn from these contemporary case studies and other models that release women into full participation in the Church. Even if the Church disagrees over the method of model, give praise to God for the spiritual fruit.

Principle 6: Effective Leaders Attribute Victory to God.

In Deborah's song, she worshipped God as the One who gave victory over the Canaanites. David recognized God's hands on his life and patiently waited for God's timing to become king of the Israelites. In multiple scriptures, David worshipped God.

In the contemporary mission contexts, the interviewees all said that effective leaders depended on God and his power, and worshipped him. P1 and P7 stated the dependence of leaders on God in both India and China:

The women of India trust in their God, whether it's the right one or not. The women are taught about Jesus and then say, 'Okay, my God will do.' The Indian women become very focused immediately on God. The Holy Spirit is the One responsible for the movements taking place in China.

Following the logic of this principle, which in turn is based on my findings from Scripture and my Asian case studies, I offer the following recommendations.

- I encourage females who experience discrimination to keep their focus on Jesus, knowing that the Holy Spirit will empower and provide the avenues for them to use their spiritual gifts.
- I recommend female leaders to place their dependence on God and to worship God for his sustaining grace and their spiritual fruit and victories.
- I recommend female leaders to actively wait for God, as David did.

Principle 7: God Displays Kingdom Power and Authority.

God exemplifies low power distance through his invitation for humanity to join him in his mission. God displayed a conscious effort to lower power distance in the Garden of Eden when he gave dominion to the man and the woman. He gave them the task to serve as co-regents on the earth. God lowered the power distance by working with both Deborah and David. He gave power away to Deborah by inviting her to serve as a judge and prophetess and allowing her to instruct Barak when to go up against the Canaanites. God gave power away to David as he allowed the Israelites to have a king and chose David to serve in this capacity.

In the contemporary contexts, the leadership models established and practiced by P1, P2, P3, P4, and P7 demonstrate that God continues to give power to his workers so that his mission can be accomplished:

P7 stated in the midst of the Revival, God gave the Church power to extend his mission. “In the Great Revival both [males and females] were needed and were fervent in serving the Lord...We just gave ourselves to the Lord.” P4 revealed that since the Holy Spirit fills both males and females, God reveals his desire to share dominion with both males and females. He states, “Day of Pentecost both were filled with the Holy Spirit. So he doesn’t differentiate. He didn’t say that only men should come and I will fill them and they can pass it down to the women.”

Following the logic of this principle, which in turn is based on my findings from Scripture and my Asian case studies, I offer the following recommendations.

- I recommend that churches re-examine its understanding of authority and power by examining Jesus’ treatment of these topics in the Gospels.
- I recommend that churches evaluate their power distance structures and re-model them to model God’s intentional moves to lower power distance.

Principle 8: Effective Leaders Empower Others to Participate.

Effective leaders empower and mobilize others to engage in God's mission. Deborah encouraged Barak to follow God. When he demonstrated concern and fear, she encouraged him by going with him. She later praised him, Jael, and others who participated in the defeat of the Canaanites. In the narrative examined on David, David did not give power away but he demonstrated patience in not taking power away from Saul and eliminating Saul from God's mission prematurely.

In the contemporary case studies, the models of leadership of case studies one, two, and four demonstrate a commitment to multiply effective laborers to participate in God's mission. They demonstrate a willingness to let go of control and allow others to fully participate. These models demonstrate a desire for everyone to become equipped as a solid minister for Jesus. P4 stated:

God literally opened our eyes to this. If we want to impact the world around us, we need to use every possible resource that is available. And the cashless resource that is available in the kingdom of God is the laborers. That's what Jesus expressed that the laborers are few. So we can't make more than 50% of the Army of God that is in the church that is our sisters redundant by not giving them opportunity, like we give the men, opportunity to serve the Lord.

Following the logic of this principle, which in turn is based on my findings from Scripture and my Asian case studies, I offer the following recommendations.

- I recommend Christians exemplify biblical authority by empowering and embracing all believers in the Church to do their part of the Great Commission, based on the gifts given by the Holy Spirit.
- I recommend that Christians determine by their actions if they seek to defend or maintain their position, or if they look for ways to promote and enhance others' ministries; if needed I encourage Christians to focus on how to enhance others more than themselves.

Principle 9: Effective Leaders Exemplify Urgency for God’s Mission.

Deborah immediately responded to the cries of her people due to their Canaanite oppression. She developed a plan and enacted her strategy bent on God saving his people. David trusted that God had a plan by anointing him with his spirit and he actively waited for God to fulfill his mission through David.

In the contemporary case studies, the leaders of the leadership models demonstrated intensity and urgency for the Great Commission. P3 and P4 stated:

But we from a need base saw so many women and if we wanted to expand we had to realize they are also a part of the army of God. If we keep them just sitting there, we would be sitting half of the army of God in a useless position, not functioning in the kingdom of God...God sees them as complimenting one another for the expansion and furtherance of the Kingdom of God ... Men and women partnering together definitely going to be a key to success because so many women are there in the church. Even if we say 50%, that many people if we don’t mobilize, growth will be slower. So releasing women in the ministry is going to play a very vital role.

Following the logic of this principle, which in turn is based on my findings from Scripture and my Asian case studies, I offer the following recommendations.

- I recommend churches and Christians re-examine the central message of the *missio Dei* as traced in Scripture and the Church’s primary role to extend his mission to all ethnic groups.
- I recommend churches and Christians re-evaluate their commitment and urgency to the Great Commission in light of their practices of women in ministry.
- Because the research indicated that a sense of urgency in the Great Commission minimized the debate about what women could or could not do, I encourage churches and Christians to recommit their lives to the urgency of the task given to those who know Christ.

Principle 10: Effective Leaders Look for God's Intent.

Effective leaders desire to know God's intentions, thereby enabling them to better understand God's mission. In the biblical narratives of both Deborah and David, the narratives ultimately revealed God's character and mission. God called, equipped, and empowered whom he desired based on his character, his purposes, and his mission – rather than an adherence to cultural expectations of the day.

In the contemporary case studies, love of God and the masses without Christ compelled P1, P2, P3, P4, and P7 to re-examine Scripture and discover how God purposed for women to participate in the Great Commission. The masses in need of the Gospel led them to examine the difficult biblical passages about women in light of the *mission Dei*. This discovery enabled them to live out the redemptive elements of the scriptures in their context, while maintaining integrity to the biblical text.

P1, P2, P3, P4, P5, and P7 all believed a believer should study the context when doing biblical interpretation. P1 and P3 stated in regard to the biblical text and women in leadership:

Jesus said, "Go and tell my brothers." Why would Jesus tell this to women if he expected them to stay silent? They had authority on the male disciples when they told the Gospel! ... What about Paul's thirty-three female leaders and why does the Bible say Priscilla was the teacher of Apollos if Scripture wanted to condemn women from leadership and teaching? Difficult passages are made difficult by people. Actually quite simple. Written for a particular people, particular time.

Following the logic of this principle, which in turn is based on my findings from Scripture and my Asian case studies, I offer the following recommendations.

- I encourage the Church and Christians to carefully and prayerfully read the Bible seeking to understand God's intentions in the text, asking God to not allow one's cultural preferences and biases to taint one's interpretation of the Scriptures.
- Because the focus of the *missio Dei* rests on God, I recommend the Church study the character, principles, and standards of the kingdom of God – God's reign that

will last forever and allow this focus to mold one's understandings about males and females and how God can use them in his mission.

- I recommend a call to action rather than a call to debate. I recommend that those on both sides of the debate (those who release women and those who restrict women) actively engage in ministry on behalf of the lost and cease all slander.
- I recommend the Church and all believers practice the priesthood of believers by listening and learning from the global Body of Christ to determine how to best follow God's intent in the equipping, empowering and releasing of leaders into God's harvest; thereby allowing the global Church to continually transform local churches in context.

Summary

All ten kingdom leadership principles extrapolated from both the biblical and the contemporary research findings focus on God. *God* called, *God* equipped, and *God* empowered. *God* gave power away. The leader responded to *God's* call, developed the gifts given by *God*, and depended on *God* for victory or spiritual fruit. The leader empowered others as a response to *God's* gracious sharing of power with humanity. Effective leaders focused on *God's* mission. Effective leaders discovered *God's* intent in his word and his intent in the continuing story of God's mission in contemporary contexts. A focus on God – his purposes, character, and mission becomes the starting and ending point for understanding both the reign of God and how God's followers can live out the kingdom of God on earth.

In regards to the Great Commission given by Jesus in Matthew 28:19-20, Alvira Mickelson asks: "Who is to do this work? Apparently all believers – men and women – are to share this responsibility. A quick look at history indicates that God uses whoever is willing to be used, without regard to gender" (Mickelson 2005:642). In Matthew 28,

Jesus reveals that all authority has been given to him. He then tells his disciples, “Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them...and teaching them.”

Jesus refers to the authority he has to commission his disciples to go, make disciples, baptize, and teach. Yet, Jesus does not offer the disciples any restrictions for how males and females can participate in this task.² Mickelson asks, “Is evangelism advanced when we place limitations on women carrying the message of Christ? Are the churches advancing the great commission when they limit women’s service?” (2005:645). My findings reveal that churches advance the Great Commission when they release women in God’s mission.

When I compared my findings to the research presented by Bolman and Deal, I discovered they found a willingness in secular fields to advance women into leadership because of what women can offer. They state:

Perhaps the single strongest force for continued advancement of women into leadership roles is the growing recognition by progressive organizations that they cannot afford to sacrifice access to the tremendous talent pool that women, as slightly over half the population, represent (Bolman and Deal 2003:348).

I recognize that the Church cannot release women into leadership simply because of the mere advantage of more workers. However, I do believe that the Church must willingly examine its theology in light of God’s redemptive intent for the world. I believe my findings from both my biblical case studies and my three contemporary case studies enable the church to at least consider the possibility that God’s intent may include that God calls, equips, and empowers men or women as he desires. If so, the full release of women will multiply the laborers and impact the mission of God.

With a determination to see the Great Commission completed, I offer my findings as a catalytic tool in the hands of churches and mission agencies. I recognize my research

² I firmly believe that Jesus issued the Great Commission command to all believers throughout the ages.

only demonstrates four contexts. Yet, the substance of the data suggests the need to test these ten principles of leadership in multiple settings. The multiple cases may further enable the Church to understand if releasing or restricting women in God's harvest enhances or harms the Great Commission.

Future research needs to include studies on congregational churches that also release women with leadership gifts and its impact on the Great Commission. Future research also needs to include church models that begin with leadership models that only release males and then moves to a model that releases both males and females, with research focused on the change in effectiveness for the Great Commission.

To those who believe these findings reveal that the release of women can and does impact the Great Commission:

Let a healthy discontent take over our souls so that we decide, by God's grace and power, that things do not have to be the way they are. God wills something more, something better, something good. Even something great. Because God is still working, we will pray and we will plan; we will work and we will not quit because what we do matters (Hestenes 2006:35).

God intends to extend his rule and reign among all ethnic groups. God purposes to reconcile the world to Christ. God lowers the power distance in order to empower believers to serve with him in his redemptive purposes. Those who accept not only God's salvation but also his commissioning into the world live with purpose and destiny. God wills that all believers, empowered by the Spirit, find full embrace in the Body of Christ to extend his mission in the world..

A Final Word

As we seek a biblical worldview, Paul Hiebert states, "We must approach our study with humility and with a willingness to learn from Scripture, experience, and one

another” (Hiebert 2008:308).³ Throughout this study, I have sought to merge the Bible, others’ stories, and various Christians’ experiences to discover a kingdom worldview of leadership. Jesus told the parable of the sower and stated the seed thrown by the farmer represented the message of the kingdom of God. Jesus told his disciples, “Whoever has ears, let them hear” (Matt. 13:9). Throughout the Scriptures, God sought to reveal his intentions for those who have ears to hear. God planted “seeds of the kingdom” throughout various narratives in order to transform the Church with God’s kingdom culture, “Your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven” (Matt. 6:10). With the harvest plentiful and the workers few, I propose the time has come for the Church to allow the “seeds of the kingdom” pertaining to biblical leadership to fully transform its traditions and models.

In Part One, I explained my theoretical construct of the kingdom of God and derived kingdom principles of leadership from biblical case studies. In Part Two, I indicated my methodology and shared the findings of my field research in contemporary mission. I also integrated my findings from both the biblical and contemporary research. I then offered conclusions and recommendations based on my findings.

As I draw the work to an end, I feel my work actually now only begins. As Chad and I continue to work in partnership in marriage, ministry, and now parenting; I believe the full reconciliation of males and females in the Church for the sake of the Great Commission may become an important dimension of our ministry in years to come. God continues to raise up men and women willing to embrace his kingdom principles of interdependent partnerships.

In the interim, more and more women are finding the courage to embrace the call...often overcoming obstacles within themselves to recognize their place in God’s kingdom. More men are finding ways to offer tangible

³ Learning from others includes learning from among those we minister as well.

support. And little by little, partnerships will continue to develop where men and women join as peers (Lemen 2004:6).

We (my husband Chad and I) stood onstage at the Lausanne 2004 Forum for World Evangelization held in Pattaya, Thailand. We gave a five minute summary of Issue Group 24's work during the Forum.⁴ On the stage stood six women and four men (representing the sixty percent females and forty percent males in the world-wide Church). Each held onto our large fishing net from Kashmir, India. We said, "Some believers seek to restrict women in their use of their God-given gifts. The results? Women, drop your net!" The women onstage dropped the net and weights hanging from the net hit the floor with a thud. The audience gasped, and we said, "Fish get out!"

With a commitment to God and his mission, may the Church boldly live out the prophetic nature of kingdom leadership principles. Banks and Ledbetter encourage women leaders to operate from a worldview of transformation. So that the Church can with increased momentum release and multiply the harvest force, I encourage both women and men to live with a worldview of transformation. Banks and Ledbetter state:

As God's intent is to bring about genuine change in the world through people of faith, it follows that the faith-driven woman [man] leader will seek ways to transform systems so that the diversity is recognized, honored, and celebrated. We might call this an aspect of the redemptive work of faith-based leadership (Banks and Ledbetter 2004:31).

As interdependent redeemed males and females work together with faith-based kingdom leadership principles, may the Church multiply God's laborers, may all ethnic groups have an opportunity to accept or reject God's redemption, and may the Church complete God's mission!

⁴ Issue Group 24 – "Empowering Men and Women to Use Their Gifts Together in Advancing the Gospel."

APPENDIX A

THE USE OF *EZER* IN THE BIBLE

There are three forms of the word *ezer* (two are in noun forms and one is in a verb form). The noun form of *ezer* in Genesis 2:18 is found twenty-one times in the Old Testament, with reference to God who gives the help sixteen of those times. I list these occurrences below so that the reader can examine the use of the word in context.

| Reference | Verse |
|-------------------|--|
| Exodus 18:14 | “And the other was named Eliezer, for he said, ‘My father’s God was my helper ; he saved me from the sword of Pharaoh.” |
| Deuteronomy 33:7 | “And this he said about Judah: ‘Hear, Lord, the cry of Judah; bring him to his people. With his own hands he defends his cause. Oh, be his help against his foes!’” |
| Deuteronomy 33:26 | “There is no one like the God of Jeshurun, who rides on the heavens to help you and on the clouds of his majesty.” |
| Deuteronomy 33:29 | “Blessed are you, Israel! Who is like you, a people saved by the Lord? He is your shield and helper and your glorious sword. Your enemies will cower before you and you will tread on their heights.” |
| Psalms 20:2 | “May he send you help from the sanctuary and grant you support from Zion.” |
| Psalms 33:20 | “We wait in hope for the Lord; he is our help and our shield.” |
| Psalms 70:5 | “But as for me, I am poor and needy; come quickly to me, O God. You are my help and my deliverer; Lord, do not delay.” |
| Psalms 89:19 | “Once you spoke in a vision, to your faithful people you said, ‘I have bestowed strength on a warrior; I have raised up a young man from among the people.’” |
| Psalms 115:9 | “House of Israel, trust in the Lord – he is their help and shield.” |
| Psalms 115:10 | “House of Aaron, trust in the Lord – He is their help and shield.” |
| Psalms 115:11 | “You who fear him, trust in the Lord – he is their help and shield.” |
| Psalms 121:1 | “I lift up my eyes to the mountains – where does my help come from?” |
| Psalms 121:2 | “My help comes from the Lord, the Maker of heaven and earth.” |
| Psalms 124:8 | “Our help is in the name of the Lord, the Maker of heaven and earth.” |
| Psalms 146:5 | “Blessed are those whose help is the God of Jacob, whose hope is in the Lord their God.” |
| Hosea 13:9 | “You are destroyed, Israel, because you are against me, against your helper .” |

APPENDIX B

CHARACTERISTICS OF HIGH AND LOW POWER DISTANCE IN SOCIETY

(Hofstede 2001:98)

| Low Power Distance | High Power Distance |
|---|--|
| All should be interdependent. | A few should be independent; most should be dependent. |
| Inequality in society should be minimized. | There should be an order of inequality in this world in which everyone has his/her rightful place; high and low are protected by this order. |
| Hierarchy means inequality of roles, established for convenience. | Hierarchy means existential inequality. |
| Subordinates are people like me. | Superiors consider subordinates as being of a different kind. |
| The use of power should be legitimate and is subject to the judgment between good and evil. | Power is a basic fact of society that antedates good or evil; its legitimacy is irrelevant. |
| All should have equal rights. | Power holders are entitled to privileges. |
| Stress on reward, legitimate and expert power. | Stress on coercive and referent power. |
| The system is to blame. | The underdog is to blame. |
| The way to change a social system is by redistributing power. | The way to change a social system is by destroying those in power. |
| Latent harmony between the powerful and the powerless. | Latent conflict between the powerful and the powerless. |
| Older people neither respected nor feared. | Older people respected and feared. |

APPENDIX C

SPIRITUAL GIFTS

Paul gives three lists of spiritual gifts in his letters. Each list specifies a different type of gift. When Paul issues these lists, he makes no distinctions between gifts given to females or males. God uses the gifts to empower the Church to live out God's mission on the earth.

| Biblical Text | Type of Gift | Gifts Displayed | Purpose stated of the gifts |
|----------------------|------------------------------|---|--|
| 1 Corinthians 12-14 | Supernatural Gifts | Message of Wisdom Message of Knowledge Faith Gifts of Healing Miraculous Powers Prophecy Distinguishing between spirits Speaking in different tongues Interpretation of tongues | For the common good |
| Romans 12:3-8 | Motivational / Natural Gifts | Prophesying Serving Teaching Encouraging Giving Leading Showing mercy | Each person's gifts belong to others so that combined form One Body. |
| Ephesians 4:4-16 | Equipping Gifts | Apostles Prophets Evangelists Pastors Teachers | To equip his people for works of service |

APPENDIX D

WOMEN USE PUBLIC GIFTS IN THE BIBLE

In this appendix, I list each ministry/office I could find in Scripture that involved some sort of leadership, and then examined the biblical text to discover if I could find women serving in any of these official contexts.

| Ministry / Office | Passage |
|---------------------------------------|--|
| Pray in Public | Female worshipers (1 Cor. 11:5) |
| Prophetesses | Philip's daughters (Acts 21:9), Anna (Lk. 2:36), Miriam (Ex .15:12), Joel 2:28-29, Deborah (Jud. 4-5), Huldah (2 Kgs. 22:14), wife of Isaiah (Is. 8:3) |
| Apostles | Junia (Rom. 16:7) |
| Teachers | Priscilla (Acts 18:24) |
| Leaders in the Church | Phoebe (Rom. 16:1), Chloe (1 Cor. 1:11), Nympha (Col. 4:15), Stephanas (1 Cor. 16:15) |
| Deacons | Phoebe (Rom. 16:1) |
| Start Churches / House Church Leaders | Lydia (Acts 16:40), Chloe, Priscilla |
| Evangelists | Mary Magdalene (Lk. 24:10), Samaritan Woman (Jn. 4:39). |

APPENDIX E

JOHN PIPER'S LIST OF MINISTRIES OPEN TO WOMEN (Piper and Grudem 1991c:58)

| | | |
|--|---|---|
| Ministries to the handicapped Hearing impaired Blind Lame Retarded Ministries to the sick Nursing Physician Hospice care – cancer, AIDS, etc. Community health Ministries to the socially estranged Emotionally impaired Recovering alcoholics Recovering drug-users Escaping prostitutes Abused children, women Runaways, problem children Orphans Prison Ministries Women's prisons Families of prisoners Rehabilitation to society Ministries to youth Teaching Sponsoring Open houses and recreation Outings and trips Counseling Academic assistance Sports Ministries Neighborhood teams Church teams Therapeutic counseling Independent Church-based Institutional | Audiovisual Ministries Composition Design Production Distribution Writing Ministries Free-lance Curriculum development Fiction Non-fiction Editing Institutional communications Journalistic skills for publications Teaching Ministries Sunday school; children, youth, students, women Grade school High school College Music Ministries Composition Training Performance Voice Choir Instrumentalist Evangelistic ministries Personal witnessing Parachurch Groups Home Bible studies Outreach to children Visitation teams Counseling at meetings Telephone counseling Radio and television ministries Technical assistance Writing Announcing Producing | Theater and drama ministries Acting Directing Writing Scheduling Social Ministries Literacy Pro-life Pro-dependency Housing Safety Beautification Drug rehabilitation Pastoral care assistance Visitation Newcomer welcoming and assistance Hospitality Food and clothing and transportation Prayer ministries Praying Mobilizing for prayer events Helping with small groups of prayer Coordinating prayer chains Promoting prayer days and weeks and vigils Missions All of the above across cultures Support ministries Countless "secular" jobs that undergird other ministries The awesome significance of motherhood Making a home as a full-time wife |
|--|---|---|

APPENDIX F

WAYNE GRUDEM: GOVERNING, TEACHING, AND PUBLIC MINISTRY IN DESCENDING ORDER OF AUTHORITY

In the following charts, I give a list compiled by Wayne Grudem that ranks (not the value of each ministry) but rather the degree of authority each ministry has over men in the areas of governance, teaching, or public visibility (Grudem 2004:93-101).

- In areas of governance, he states that activities 1-9 should be restricted to men.

| 1 | Areas of Governing Authority: Which Offices or Activities Should Be Restricted to Men? <i>(listed in order of greatest to least amount of authority over men)</i> |
|----|--|
| 1 | President of a denomination |
| 2 | Member of a governing board of a denomination |
| 3 | Regional governing authority (such as, district superintendent, bishop, or similar office) |
| 4 | Member of regional governing board |
| 5 | Senior pastor in a local church (or associate pastor with many similar responsibilities to the senior pastor) |
| 6 | Member of governing board with authority over whole church (this would be the office of elder in many churches, while it would be the office of deacon or board member or church council member in others) |
| 7 | Presiding over a baptism or communion service (but see List 3 for serving communion or performing a baptism) |
| 8 | Giving spoken judgment on a prophecy given to the congregation (1 Corinthians 14:33-36) |
| 9 | Permanent leader of a fellowship group meeting in a home (both men and women members) |
| 10 | Committee Chairman (or chairperson) |
| 11 | Director of Christian education |
| 12 | Sunday School superintendent |
| 13 | Missionary responsibilities (many administrative responsibilities in missionary work overseas) |
| 14 | Moderating a Bible discussion in a home Bible study group |
| 15 | Choir director |
| 16 | Leading singing on Sunday morning |
| 17 | Deacon (in churches where this does not involve governing authority over the entire congregation) |
| 18 | Administrative assistant to senior pastor |
| 19 | Church treasurer |
| 20 | Church secretary |
| 21 | Member of advisory council to regional governing authority |
| 22 | Meeting periodically with church governing board to give counsel and advice |
| 23 | Regular conversations between elders and their wives over matters coming before the elder board (with understanding that confidentiality is preserved) |
| 24 | Formally counseling one man |
| 25 | Formally counseling a couple together |
| 26 | Formally counseling one woman |
| 27 | Speaking in congregational business meetings |
| 28 | Voting in congregational business meetings |

- In areas of teaching, Grudem believes activities 1-10 should be restricted to men.

| | Areas of Bible Teaching: Which Activities Should Be Restricted to Men? <i>(listed in order of greatest to least amount of authority over men)</i> |
|----|---|
| 1 | Teaching Bible or theology in a theological seminary |
| 2 | Teaching Bible or theology in a Christian college |
| 3 | Preaching (teaching the Bible) at a nationwide denominational meeting, or at a nationwide Christian conference |
| 4 | Preaching (teaching the Bible) at a regional meeting of churches, or at a regional Christian conference |
| 5 | Preaching (teaching the Bible) regularly to the whole church on Sunday mornings |
| 6 | Occasional preaching (teaching the Bible) to the whole church on Sunday mornings |
| 7 | Occasional Bible teaching at less formal meetings of the whole church (such as Sunday evening or at a midweek service) |
| 8 | Bible teaching to an adult Sunday School class (both men and women members) |
| 9 | Bible teaching at a home Bible study (both men and women members) |
| 10 | Bible teaching to a college-age Sunday school class |
| 11 | Bible teaching to a high school Sunday School class |
| 12 | Writing a book on Bible doctrines |
| 13 | Writing or editing a study Bible |
| 14 | Writing a commentary on a book of the Bible |
| 15 | Writing notes in a study Bible |
| 16 | Writing or editing other kinds of Christian books |
| 17 | Bible teaching to a women's Sunday school class |
| 18 | Bible teaching to a women's Bible study group during the week |
| 19 | Bible teaching to a junior high Sunday School class |
| 20 | Teaching as a Bible professor on a secular university campus |
| 21 | Evangelistic speaking to large groups of non-Christians (for example, an evangelistic rally on a college campus) |
| 22 | Working as an evangelistic missionary in other cultures |
| 23 | Moderating a discussion in a small group Bible study (men and women members) |
| 24 | Reading Scripture aloud on Sunday morning |
| 25 | Reading Scripture to other, less formal meetings of the church |
| 26 | Giving a personal testimony before the congregation (a story of how God has worked in one's own or others' lives) |
| 27 | Participating in a discussion in a home Bible study (men and women members) |
| 28 | Formally counseling one man |
| 29 | Formally counseling a married couple |
| 30 | Formally counseling a woman |
| 31 | Teaching children's Sunday school class |
| 32 | Teaching Vacation Bible School |
| 33 | Singing a solo on Sunday morning (a form of teaching since the lyrics often have biblical content and exhortation) |
| 34 | Singing to the congregation as a member of the choir |
| 35 | Singing hymns with the congregation (in this activity, sometimes we teach and exhort one another in some sense, see Colossians 3:16) |

- In areas of public visibility, Grudem, believes that only activity 1 should be restricted to only males..

| | Areas of Public Visibility or Recognition: Which Activities Should Be Restricted to Men? <i>(listed in order of greatest to least amount of authority over men)</i> |
|----|---|
| 1 | Ordination as pastor (member of the clergy) in a denomination |
| 2 | Being licensed to perform some ministerial functions within a denomination |
| 3 | Paid member of pastoral staff (such as youth worker, music director, counselor, Christian education director) |
| 4 | Paid member of administrative church staff (such as church secretary or treasurer) |
| 5 | Performing a baptism (in churches where this is not exclusively the role of clergy or elders) |
| 6 | Helping to serve the Lord's Supper (in churches where this is not exclusively the role of clergy or elders) |
| 7 | Giving announcements at the Sunday morning service |
| 8 | Taking the offering |
| 9 | Public reading of Scripture |
| 10 | Public prayer |
| 11 | Prophesying in public (according to 1 Corinthians 11:5 and 14:29, where this is not understood as having authority equal to Scripture or Bible teaching) |
| 12 | Singing a solo on Sunday mornings |
| 13 | Giving a personal testimony in church |
| 14 | Giving a prayer request in church |
| 15 | Being a member of a prayer team that prays for people individually after the service. |
| 16 | Welcoming people at the door (a greeter) |
| 17 | Editing the church newsletter |
| 18 | Singing in the choir |
| 19 | Singing in hymns with congregation on Sunday morning |
| 20 | Participating in the responsive reading of Scripture on Sunday morning |

APPENDIX G
GOD PROVIDED JUDGES

| Judge/Leaders | Enemies | Years of Oppression | Years of Peace |
|----------------------|--|----------------------------|-----------------------|
| Othniel | Cushan-Rishathaim king of Aram | 8 years | 40 years |
| Ehud | Eglon, king of Moab, Ammonites, and Amalekites | 18 years | 80 years |
| Shamgar | Philistines | Not Listed (NL) | NL |
| Deborah | Jabin, king of Canaan | 20 years | 40 years |
| Gideon | Midianites | 7 years | 40 years |
| Tola | NL | NL | 23 years |
| Jair | NL | NL | 22 years |
| Jephthah | Philistines and Ammonites | 18 years | NL |
| Ibzan | NL | NL | 7 years |
| Elon | NL | NL | 10 years |
| Abdon | NL | NL | 8 years |
| Samson | Philistines | 40 years | NL |

APPENDIX H

CULTURAL VIEWS ABOUT WOMEN FROM A GREEK, ROMAN, JEWISH, AND HINDU WORLDVIEW

(*Women in Indo-Aryan Societies* 2008) and (Cunningham and Hamilton 2000)

I include the Greek and Roman worldviews below because of their heavy influence on both the Jewish culture and the early church.

| | Greek World | Roman World | Jewish World | Hindu World |
|--------------------------------|--|--|---|---|
| Procreation | <p>Aristotle taught women were a “defective human specimen”, a “deformed male” and a “monstrosity.”</p> <p>“Men ought to beget children somewhere else, and there should be no female race.” Euripedes’ hero Jason</p> | | | <p>“Almighty God, you have created this womb. Women may be born somewhere else but sons should be born from this womb.” Atharva Ved 6/11/3</p> <p>“O Husband protect the son to be born. Do not make him a woman.” Atharva Ved 2/3/23</p> |
| Family Life | <p>“But now outside my father’s house, I am nothing. Yes, often I have looked on women’s nature in this regard, we are nothing.” Sophocles’ heroine Tereus</p> | <p>Women had no individual name; took feminine form of the dad’s name.</p> | <p>Eve was cursed with 10 curses. Women must have their heads covered as if in mourning, she had to live a life restricted to private, domestic roles.</p> | <p>The rule that a female must be subject to the control of her father, husband or son and should never be independent (Manu:V:148)</p> |
| Education/ Intelligence | <p>Education was only for boys.</p> <p>Women’s education was only about housework.</p> | <p>Considered mentally inferior.</p> | <p>“Let the words of Torah be burned up, but let them not be delivered to women.” Talmud</p> <p>“If any man teaches his daughter knowledge of the Law it is as though he taught her lechery (sexual indulgence).” Rabbi Eliezer</p> | <p>“Lord Indra himself has said that women has very little intelligence. She cannot be taught.” Rig Veda 8/33/1</p> |

| | | | | |
|---------------------------|---|---|--|---|
| More evil than men | <p>Women were the greatest of evils and the source of all evil.</p> <p>“Women are a shameless set, the vilest creatures going.” Aristophanes</p> <p>“Women are an abominable caste, hated of all the gods.” Meander</p> | <p>Cheating on wives is okay because women are evil.</p> | <p>“The angel of the Lord told me, ‘Women are overcome by the spirit of fornication more than men, and in their hearts they plot against men... they are reserved for eternal punishment.’”</p> <p>The Talmud said, “Women are gluttonous.”</p> <p>Better is the wickedness of man than a woman who does good.” Sirach</p> | <p>“It is the nature of women to seduce men in the world; for that reason, the wise are never unguarded in the company of females” (Manu: II:213)</p> <p>There cannot be any friendship with a woman. Her heart is more cruel than heyna.” Rig Ved 10/95/15</p> <p>Women love their beds, seats, ornaments; impure desires, wrath, dishonesty, malice, and bad conduct from parts of their nature. Manu IX:17</p> |
| Birth of Daughters | <p>“Women were born to mars the lives of men.” Chorus of Orestes</p> | <p>Any female after the first could be left outside to die by exposure.</p> | <p>“Woe to him who has female children!” Talmud “The birth of a daughter is a loss.”</p> | <p>“The daughter causes pain.” Narad</p> |
| Value of Wives | <p>Plato’s mother said a woman’s husband was “her whole universe” and told younger women to make their minds completely subservient to their husbands and to think no thoughts of their own.</p> <p>Wife beating and adultery common.</p> | <p>Could be killed for adultery or drunkenness, though these were normal practices for men.</p> <p>Wives considered manipulative and undesirable.</p> <p>Wives could be physically abused and cheated on.</p> <p>Prostitution was encouraged for the husbands. Marriage was an obligation for producing children.</p> | <p>Divorce occurs only at the husband’s option.</p> <p>Women reached their spiritual destiny through sending her husband and son to the synagogue.</p> <p>Only had virtue if she produced a son.</p> | <p>Prohibited from divorce and remarriage under any circumstances.</p> <p>Must treat husband like a lord and god, regardless of his character.</p> <p>“Though destitute of virtue, or seeking pleasure elsewhere, or devoid of good qualities, yet a husband must be constantly worshipped as God by the faithful wife.” Manu V:154</p> |
| Ideal Woman | <p>“Unknown woman” who was kept indoors.</p> | <p>Beautiful and sexually available.</p> | <p>Proverbs 31 Woman</p> | |

APPENDIX I

GENDER VIOLENCE THROUGH THE LIFECYCLE OF WOMEN IN INDIA

(National Profile on Women, Health and Development 1999)

| Phase | Type of Violence Present |
|----------------------------|--|
| Pre-birth | Female Feticide Battering during pregnancy (emotional and physical effects on the woman, effects on birth outcomes) Coerced pregnancy (e.g. rape) |
| Infancy | Female infanticide Malnutrition |
| Young girls | Differential access to food and medical care Neglect of education Sexual abuse Physical Violence Emotional violence – through sense of rejection |
| Adolescent and adult women | Early marriage Early pregnancy Sexual violence Forced marriage Domestic violence Dowry harassment Infertility/failure to produce sons Witch hunting High maternal mortality Honor killing Desertion Sexual harassment at workplace Sexual harassment (eve teasing) Acid burns Denial of entitlements Mental Torture, living with fear, suspicion, false accusations of infidelity etc. Character assassination |
| Elderly women and Widows | Desertion Neglect – emotional, financial, social Medical Neglect |

APPENDIX J

UMMEED A – 2007 MONTHLY DATA

This chart plots each equipping seminar; date, location, and women equipped or refreshed through *Ummeed A*.

| Group | Location | Date | Women Equipped | Women Refreshed |
|---------------------------|-----------------|----------------|-----------------------|------------------------|
| Ummeed A - 1 | Bhowapur | Jan 15-19 | 47 | |
| Ummeed A – 2 | Bhowapur | Feb 19-23 | 41 | |
| Ummeed A – 3 | Bhowapur | Mar 15-19 | 41 | |
| Ummeed A – 1 Refresher | Bhowapur | Apr 15-19 | | 47 |
| Ummeed A – 2 Refresher | Bhowapur | May 15-19 | | 57 |
| Ummeed A – 3 Refresher | Bhowapur | June 16- 19 | | 42 |
| Ummeed A – 4 | Bhowapur | July 15-19 | 41 | |
| Ummeed A – 5 | Bhowapur | Aug 15-19 | 89 | |
| Ummeed A - 6 | Bhowapur | Sept 12- 16 | 46 | |
| Ummeed A – 4 Refresher | Bhowapur | Oct 15-19 | | 47 |
| Ummeed A – 5 Refresher | Bhowapur | Nov 15-19 | | 79 |
| Ummeed A – 6 Refresher | Bhowapur | Dec 15-19 | | 48 |
| TOTAL | | | 305 | 320 |

APPENDIX K

UMMEED B – 2008 MONTHLY DATA

This chart plots each equipping seminar – date, location, and women equipped or refreshed through *Ummeed B*.

| Group | Location | Date | Women Equipped | Women Refreshed |
|---------------------------|-----------------|-------------|-----------------------|------------------------|
| Ummeed B - 1 | Bhowapur | Jan 11-17 | 49 | |
| Ummeed B – 2 | Bhowapur | Feb 15-19 | 42 | |
| Ummeed B – 3 | Bhowapur | Mar 15-19 | 47 | |
| Ummeed B – 4 | Bhowapur | Apr 25-29 | 49 | |
| Ummeed B – 5 | Bhowapur | May 22-25 | 49 | |
| Ummeed B – 6 | Bhowapur | June 25-29 | 42 | |
| Ummeed B – 1 Refresher | Bhowapur | July 15-19 | | 49 |
| Ummeed B – 2 Refresher | Bhowapur | Aug 15-19 | | 49 |
| Ummeed B – 3 Refresher | Bhowapur | Sept 15-19 | | 47 |
| Ummeed B – 4 Refresher | Bhowapur | Oct 15-19 | | 42 |
| Ummeed B – 5 Refresher | Bhowapur | Nov 15-19 | | 51 |
| Ummeed B – 6 Refresher | Bhowapur | Dec 3-7 | | 42 |
| TOTAL | | | 288 | 280 |

APPENDIX L

UMMEED C – 2008 MONTHLY DATA

This chart plots each equipping seminar – date, location, and women equipped or refreshed through *Ummeed C*.

| Group | Location | Date | Women Equipped | Women Refreshed |
|---------------------------|----------------------|--------------------|-----------------------|------------------------|
| Ummeed C - 1 | Bhowapur | Jan 15-19 | 49 | |
| Ummeed C – 2 | Bhowapur | Feb 25-29 | 53 | |
| Ummeed C – 3 | Bhowapur | Mar 25-29 | 52 | |
| Ummeed C – 4 | Bhowapur | Apr 15-19 | 53 | |
| Ummeed C – 5 | Jharkhand | May 28 - June 1 | 158 | |
| Ummeed C – 6 | Delhi | June 15-19 | 38 | |
| Ummeed C – 1 Refresher | Bhowapur | July 23-27 | | 51 |
| Ummeed C – 2 Refresher | Bhowapur | Aug 25-29 | | 47 |
| Ummeed C – 3 Refresher | Bhowapur | Sept 25-29 | | 51 |
| Ummeed C – 4 Refresher | Bhowapur | Oct 25-29 | | 51 |
| Ummeed C – 5 Refresher | New Delhi | Nov 15-19 | | 42 |
| Ummeed C – 6 Refresher | Sunderpur Banaras | Dec 15-19 | | 42 |
| TOTAL | | | 403 | 284 |

APPENDIX M

LIST OF TOPICS TAUGHT AT SEMINARS¹

An established curriculum enables the Indian teachers to monitor the learning and the application of each woman equipped. This chart demonstrates the topics taught at the first equipping seminar to women as well as the topics taught at refresher courses.

| Seminar | Topics Taught |
|----------------------------------|--|
| First Equipping Seminar | Creation Strategy of Paul for Worldview Prayer How to reach Illiterates How to Plant a House Church Stewardship Salvation Blessings and Breaking of Curse How to Make Disciple – Great Commission Emphasized |
| First Refresher Course Subjects | Identity in Christ The Church in the New Testament / The Lord’s Prayer Importance of Women in Ministry Baptism |
| Second Refresher Course Subjects | Women in Ministry God’s Will and Purposes The Purpose of Prayer <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Getting God’s hand stretched out - For the healing of the community - To bring miracles into the community - To discover the power of Jesus’ name Developing a heart for your city/country Identifying with the Felt Needs of your community Resurrection of the Dead Laying on of Hands |

¹ These topics have each been developed by the Indians who equip the church planters.

APPENDIX N

P3 AND P4 CELL CHURCH LEADERS AND CELLS

These tables represent the data from the leaders P3 and P4 disciple, mentor, and equip. Each of these leaders facilitates cell groups and develops leaders for those cell groups. The population indicates the numbers of people who belong to each cell group.

Data from P3

| Leader | Cell Groups | Number of Leaders | Population |
|--------------|-------------|-------------------|-------------|
| Leader A | 98 | 48 | 735 |
| Leader B | 38 | 22 | 235 |
| Leader C | 20 | 7 | 67 |
| Leader D | 16 | 5 | 82 |
| Leader E | 76 | 31 | 454 |
| Leader F | 19 | 11 | 83 |
| Leader G | 106 | 40 | 610 |
| Leader H | 43 | 26 | 320 |
| Leader I | 58 | 17 | 286 |
| Leader J | 26 | 12 | 200 |
| Leader K | 13 | 5 | 103 |
| Leader L | 106 | 62 | 1208 |
| Total | 619 | 286 | 4383 |

Data from P4

| Leader | Cell Groups | Number of Leaders | Population |
|--------------|-------------|-------------------|-------------|
| Leader A | 182 | 63 | 773 |
| Leader B | 72 | 31 | 250 |
| Leader C | 44 | 17 | 195 |
| Leader D | 29 | 8 | 147 |
| Leader E | 77 | 28 | 287 |
| Leader F | 83 | 20 | 133 |
| Leader G | 32 | 18 | 425 |
| Leader H | 59 | 38 | 420 |
| Leader I | 98 | 45 | 535 |
| Leader J | 71 | 32 | 350 |
| Leader K | 30 | 11 | 158 |
| Leader L | 18 | 7 | 110 |
| Total | 765 | 318 | 3783 |

APPENDIX O

JESUS PORTRAYS THE KINGDOM BY CONFRONTING HIS JEWISH CULTURE WITH ACTIONS AND WORDS TO WOMEN

I offer the following examples from the Gospels to demonstrate Jesus' radical encounter to his own culture in regard to the values placed on females. Though a first glance at Jesus' words may not appear radical, when one understands the world of Jesus, the radical nature comes into focus. These examples serve to demonstrate that Jesus planted seeds for fuller transformation to God's standards for future generations through these stories.

John 4:1-42

Jesus spoke with Samaritan woman at the well, discussed theology with her, and revealed Himself as the Messiah. He gave his first "I Am" statement to this woman. His "I Am" statements frame the theological backbone of the Gospel of John. She became an evangelist to her village. His Jewish culture prohibited Jesus from speaking to women in public, but He did it anyway!

Luke 10:38-42

Mary sat at Jesus feet. His Jewish culture prohibited women from learning the Torah. Mary took the position of a disciple in that day as she sat at the Teacher's feet. Not just her leaving Martha to do housework, but her sitting and learning at Jesus' feet was scandalous in the culture. Additionally, disciples were expected to teach what they learn, so in effect, Mary was learning to become a teacher.

Luke 13:10-17

In synagogues women were designated to sit in the back of the synagogue, but Jesus called a woman to the front. He healed her and called her "Daughter of Abraham." Son of Abraham was a common term, but daughter of Abraham was never used. Jewish women were not considered as equal heirs, but Jesus demonstrated that women have worth and dignity.

John 11:17-27

Martha and Jesus talked at Lazarus' death. They had a deep theological talk on the central beliefs of the Christian faith—the Resurrection! He did not tell His disciples that He was the Resurrection and the Life, but he told this incredible truth to Martha! She answered with the same words that Peter used when Jesus said that "upon this rock I will build my church!

Luke 11:27-28

A woman stated that the one who gave birth to Jesus was “blessed.” In the Jewish culture a woman’s value came primarily through giving birth to a male child. The woman was stating the traditional rabbinic tradition that women receive blessing indirectly through men. Jesus corrected this belief by saying that a person’s value comes through obedience to God, not giving birth and caring for a baby. Jesus redefined the woman’s value to society as more than her biological and nurturing functions.

Mark 10:2-12; Matthew 19:3-12

In the day of Jesus, only men could divorce their wives. Wives could not divorce their husbands, no matter the circumstances. Jesus shed light on this double standard. He first emphasized that a husband and wife should not divorce because they are to be one. However, if there is a divorce He indicated when the man could divorce AND when the woman could divorce. This standard stunned the people. Notice the reaction in Matt. 19:10 after Jesus said that a man was guilty of adultery if he was unfaithful to his wife! The disciples stated, “Then it is better not to marry.”

APPENDIX P

ETHNOGRAPHIC INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

North India Context in Relationships between Males and Females?

1. How would you describe the North Indian Hindu context of how people view males and females?
2. Do Christians view males and females the same as Hindus? How?
3. If there is a difference, do you believe the difference is noticed by the Hindu community? What is the effect?

Kingdom of God

1. Paul says in 2 Cor. 5:16 “We regard no one from a worldly point of view.” How would you practically interpret these verses for the North Indian context?
2. How do you believe God originally created males and females to relate?
3. How do you believe God desires males and females to relate in the manifested Kingdom of God?
4. How do you believe God intends male and female believers to relate currently?

Church Work

1. Do you believe the Holy Spirit gives spiritual gifts based on gender?
2. Do you think believers should consider gender when determining how a person can be used?
3. Is there any Christian job that a woman should not do?
4. In your opinion, does the church in North India mostly free or hinder women’s gifts of evangelism, leadership, church planting/pastoring?
5. What do you think would be the effect on the surrounding North Indian context of Hinduism if women were also released to use these gifts of evangelism, leadership, church planting/pastoring? Best Case scenario? Worst Case scenario?
6. In your opinion, who are the spiritual change agents in the Hindu religion?
7. In your opinion, does this affect how women are accepted or rejected as church planters/pastors/leaders in the North Indian Hindu context?
8. How do you deal with the difficult passages in the Bible in regards to women? For example – don’t have authority, be silent, etc.
9. How do the majority of believers in your context deal with the difficult passages?
10. What do you think are the greatest reasons that North India is not yet reached with the Gospel?

Open-Ended Question

Is there anything that I have not asked that you would like to share about the North Indian context regarding this topic?

APPENDIX Q

CASE STUDY INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

Each case study participant will also be asked questions from the ethnographic interview. These additional questions will be asked as well.

1. Who should plant churches?
Males Females
2. These people should lead/pastor house churches.
Males Females
3. What qualities should determine the church planter or the church pastor?
Gender Gifts from the Holy Spirit Walking in the Fruit of the Holy Spirit
Spirit Other
4. Have you always believed that both males and females could do the same tasks in the Body of Christ?
5. What events took place or what situations took place to change your mind?
6. Has it been easy/difficult to actively live your new understanding on Scripture?
7. How do you evaluate what makes a good church planter/church leader?
8. In your own networks, how many male church planters do you have?
9. How many female church planters?
10. Male Church pastors?
11. Female Church pastors?
12. Have you noticed any differences in the quality of work of your male and female workers including honesty, finances, counting of numbers, fruit?
13. In your top 10 church planters, how many are men and how many are women?
14. What are you currently doing to demonstrate that you equip both males and females?
15. What type of impact are you having currently in the North Indian context as you equip both males and females? (Can I have your data?)
16. Why does God give spiritual gifts?
17. How do you believe leadership is developed in a person?
18. How do you think Jesus used power on the earth?
19. What characteristics define a good Christian leader?
20. How would you describe kingdom leadership?

APPENDIX R

CONSENT AND RELEASE FORM

My name is Leslie Neal Segraves, and I work in several nations in Asia and the USA. I am currently in a doctorate program at the School of International Studies at Fuller Seminary. Through this study program, I have to do field research. I am looking for people who can help me.

I am seeking to understand how men and women in the church view their relationships with one another and how this view determines how men or women can serve in the church in North India and China.

The study will be based on ethnographic interviews and case studies. These will be conducted with you (if you agree) and other persons and through writings and materials I gather on these same methods. In the process of covering this study on relationships between men and women and how they can serve, my project will touch on how God wants us to view these relationships and the ways he wants both men and women to serve.

I commit to you the following:

- Your name will not be used.
- I will not draw any connection or attention to your identity in my writings.
- If you desire to see my final project and what I discover through my research, I will be happy to share that with you.

By signing below, you commit the following to me:

- You agree to take part in any/all of the methods listed above – interviews and case studies.
- You give me permission to use direct quotations you make.
- You give me permission to tape sessions so that I can remember accurately what was actually said.
- You release me to use the information I gather and any publisher of future materials pertaining to this study.

“I have read this statement and willingly consent to be part of this research project.

Name (Please Print): _____

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Researcher's Name _____

Signature: _____ Date: _____

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VITA

Leslie was born and grew up in Chattanooga, TN. As an eight year old, she became interested in areas of the world that had no access to the Gospel and dreamed of becoming a Bible smuggler! As a 12 year old, recognizing God's heart for the nations in Scripture, Leslie told God she wanted to line her life up to his global purposes. She attended Samford University in Birmingham, Alabama and received a BA in Communications. While there, she gained experience serving God in American Samoa, South Africa, Indonesia, and Pakistan. During her journeys to both Indonesia and Pakistan, God stirred her heart for the 10/40 Window – the area of the world with 95% of the world's least reached peoples.

After graduating from Samford, she went to seminary in Texas where she received a Master of Divinity. While serving in apartment ministry and leading a prayer group on campus, Leslie began to see God's plans to use the Church to spread his glory. At this time, Leslie claims a dual burden arose – for the least reached to know Christ and for the Church to live in radical abandon to God's mission.

While at seminary, Leslie met Chad who would become her husband 6 months later in March 1998. After graduating, she and Chad co-founded 10/40 Connections, an organization that cultivates connections in a fragmented world increasing the Church's momentum to extend the hope of Christ among the least reached. Leslie and Chad have lived in the 10/40 Window about 5 of their past eleven years of marriage. Today, Leslie and Chad continue to co-direct 10/40, where Leslie serves as the Executive Director. 10/40 cultivates connections related to church planting/evangelism, poverty transformation, justice/mercy, church mobilization/discipleship, and male/female partnership.

Because Leslie and Chad have had the opportunity to partner together in both marriage and ministry, they have learned the value of a redeemed husband and wife partnering together for the sake of the Gospel - based on gifts, rather than gender. They have seen that mutual partnership and leadership does not lead to chaos, but rather to unity that reflects both the Trinity and kingdom standards.

Leslie began her doctoral studies in 2005 while continuing her work as the Executive Director of 10/40 Connections. After receiving her doctoral degree in June 2009, she will maintain her same job.

In 2008 on January 4, Joeli entered into Leslie's and Chad's lives. Leslie and Chad named her Joeli after Joel 2:28-29. On 4 December 2008, Leslie and Chad's second child (Joy) met Jesus after a miscarriage in the first trimester.

Leslie desires to live her life focused and surrendered to Jesus Christ who paid so much to reconcile the world to himself.