

Keep 'em in the kitchen?

Pastoring is not among women's rights when it conflicts with Biblical standards



Women are capable of performing almost any job.

Plenty of women can do plenty of things better than men. Plenty of women have the biblical knowledge to pastor a church. But women should not be pastors.



APRIL TOWERY
opinion editor

When feminism and Biblical doctrine come to a crossroads, the Bible wins every time. Gloria Steinem's got nothing on the creator of our universe.

Equal rights is an important part of society today. The progression of women is a necessity. However, one cannot argue with the truth of the scriptures.

1 Timothy 2:12 states, "I do not permit a woman to teach or have authority over a man." This is not derogatory toward women. Jesus loved women.

In *Women, Authority and the Bible*, Roger Nicole writes, "No book more appropriately supports the dignity and worth of women than the Bible."

An example of this is the way Jesus Christ spent time with widows, prostitutes, mothers and daughters.

Maybe it's "old school" to interpret this portion of the Bible literally. After all, it says women should not braid their hair. This, however, simply means that women should not flaunt their beauty and their bodies to such a point they become "a stumbling block" for the men of the church.

No one is qualified to judge which parts of the Bible are logical and which are not. The Bible is without error.

The Bible tells its readers to not commit murder. They follow this guideline, because it makes sense. The Bible instructs Israelites to not eat rabbits. Because this is less logical, it is no less authoritative. The Bible can, however, be interpreted to adapt to society. To eat or not to eat rabbit is a societal adaptation. A woman pastoring a church is not.

Paul instructs men to greet one another with a holy kiss. Today, this may be misconstrued, so men greet one another with a handshake. It is an adaptation by society.

The Rev. Julie Pennington-Russell will assume her role as the senior pastor of the Calvary Baptist Church in August. This marks the first time a Southern Baptist congregation in Texas has voted to employ a female pastor.

Pennington-Russell is most likely a qualified pastor. She may very well know the scriptures well enough to quote them. She may be a better pastor than many male pastors. But Pennington-Russell should not be a pastor.

Ephesians 5:22-23 states, "The wife is to be in submission to her husband. As Christ is the head of the church, so the man is to be the head of his home and family."

Let's keep in mind submission does not equate inferiority. The president of General Motors does not feel inferior to the chair of the board. They discuss issues and work them out together, but the chair makes the final decision.

A man who lords over his wife is at fault. A woman does not

have to be a slave to her husband, but she should allow her husband to make financial, family and spiritual decisions for the household.

My parents moved to Colorado a year ago. My mother was scared of starting a new life, living in a town where she had no friends and leaving her daughters behind. She and my father discussed the move every night for months. They prayed together and looked at the issue from every angle. My mother gave her input as to what she thought would be best for the family. But my father made the decision to move.

Similarly, in the church family, women have a voice. They are given a role in the church if they want one. They pray with and for the men. They participate in the church functions. They sing in the choir, and they vote in church elections. But it is men who are the leaders — the deacons, the elders, the pastors.

The issue is authority. Women should not be in a position of authority in the church. Being in submission is not a bad thing. Male pastors submit to the elder board. The elder board submits to the Holy Spirit.

Submission is simply appreciating the decisions of another, allowing someone else to make the last call, respecting authority. It doesn't have to connote a slave-like, dinner-on-the-table-by-5 p.m., apron-wearing, June Cleaver-esque housewife.

Women are ready for progress. But women have also got to admit that there is a limit to what they can and cannot do, what they should and should not do.

Not because I am weak, but because of the way I am designed, I have no doubt that almost every male on this campus could bench press more than I can. People have to accept that men and women are not the same. We are designed differently, and we have different roles in society.

Jesus Christ himself said he only speaks the words of those who send him.

Women have rights, and women have plenty of opportunities. Submitting to authority is simply allowing someone to be in charge.

In *Hard Sayings of Paul*, Manfred T. Brauch writes, "The 'submission' enjoined on women is most likely a submission to the elders in the church, who are guardians of the truth and ordered worship. The prohibition against their teaching is occasioned by their involvement in false teaching."

"Finally, the prohibition against 'authority over a man' must be understood within the context of their rejection of the authority of others, probably the male leaders in Ephesus whose orthodox, authoritative teaching is being undermined by their heretical views."

Every statement in the Bible brings with it context and opportunity for interpretation. The Bible is error-free, but some passages do require interpretation. The passage regarding the male role in the church should not be offensive, but rather a guideline to employ in our churches.

April Towery is a senior journalism major.

Condoning same-sex marriages contradicts Christian doctrine

No contractor worth his salt would build a house without following blueprints. No judge who wanted to remain in the judiciary would make a ruling that violated the law. And no church that wanted to be taken seriously would act in a way that conflicted with the Bible.

Or would they?

Same-sex marriages are one of the thorniest issues facing Christian churches today. It is an issue that is slowly but surely making itself more prominent within mainline Christian denominations today. Throughout the last few years, movements have begun within several denominations to accept same-sex marriages. The response of churches nationwide to this issue will have a profound effect on American society and Christianity itself.

Support for same-sex unions in mainline Christian denominations shows that the movement is gaining momentum. Last weekend in Morristown, N.J., delegates to the Episcopal Diocese of Newark chose the Rev. John Croneberger as their new bishop. Croneberger supports ordaining sexually active homosexuals and same-sex marriages. Croneberger will succeed Bishop John S. Spong who also supports the unions.

Last September, the Rev. Jimmy Creek, the former head pastor of First United Methodist Church of Omaha, Neb., performed a marriage ceremony for a lesbian couple. When Creek was tried before a jury of ministers for breaking church law, only eight of the 13 jurors found him guilty of actions disobedient "to the order and discipline of the United Methodist Church." A guilty verdict from nine of the jurors was required to remove Creek from the pulpit.

At issue for churches is whether or not their mission to love others overrides the biblical perspective on homosexuality. Proponents of same-sex unions will be quick to point out that in the Gospels, Jesus never address the subject. However, of the six or so scriptures that do broach the issue, none offers an endorsement of the practice.



JOHN LEMONS
columnist

If mainline Christian denominations embrace same-sex marriages, the repercussions will be significant. Americans, on the whole, still seem to be uncomfortable with the idea. Since the Hawaii Supreme Court ruled in 1993 that denying marriage licenses to same-sex couples violated the Hawaii law, more than two dozen states have moved to ban same-sex marriages. In 1996, Congress passed the Defense of Marriage Act which denies the recognition of same-sex marriages and federal benefits to couples in these unions.

But if many churches, who have long been the moral backbone of this country, decide same-sex unions are OK, the rest of the country is sure to follow.

The interesting question, then, is what will happen if churches decide that holy matrimony does not necessarily have to be between a man and a woman — there is no telling. However, every time Americans have experimented with changing marriage, the results have been disastrous.

Consider the distribution of the birth control pill in the 1960s. Suddenly sex was no longer fell solely within the domain of marriage. The result was an epidemic of sexually transmitted diseases. Or, consider the explosion of the divorce rate that occurred through the 1970s. As a result, marriage was no longer seen as a lifelong commitment — a move that has been catastrophic to families.

Obviously, redefining marriage is a risky prospect.

The most significant repercussion for churches, though, will be the effect of ignoring biblical authority by sanctioning same-sex unions. If churches throw away their reliance on the Bible, they will in turn lose their own authority.

Therefore, if they intend to subject themselves to biblical authority, churches need to gently but firmly say no to same-sex marriages.

While this is an issue that is likely to polarize churches for years to come, it is also one that will only be resolved by turning to a higher authority.

After all, no one wants to live in a house where the contractor failed to follow the architects blueprints.

John Lemons is a graduate student in electrical engineering.

that has been measured and reported.

For instance, he states, "The majority of Aggies, however, if asked about the Confederacy, will think of only one thing — slavery." Is this true, or is this merely his opinion? Is there a poll to back this up? He continues, "Unfortunately, when most Americans look at that flag, they see something very different. They are reminded of slavery, Jim Crow laws and lynchings, atrocities that scar the United States even today."

This is laughable considering the

empirical evidence. In 1994, a Louis Harris national poll concluded that 88 percent of Americans are not offended by the battle flag, including 68 percent of all black Americans.

This overwhelming majority is twice the percentage that elected Bill Clinton.

The 11 percent of all Americans (as well as the less than one third of black Americans) who were in fact offended are hardly a majority.

Extensive regional polls in Georgia, South Carolina and Mis-

issippi yield very similar and statistically consistent results.

I'm sure Lemons must have had to take a statistics class somewhere along the way of his education. He should understand that "most" and "majority" mean 50 percent or more. The reality is that the people who are offended by Confederate flags are a small, albeit loud and politically powerful, minority — not a "majority" as claimed by Lemons.

Larry L. Beane II



MAIL CALL

In response to John Lemons June 3, Aggies for Dixie column:

Having just read Lemons' column on the Confederate flag controversy, one has to wonder if he has become lax in his research and writing abilities as a grad student in electrical engineering. Several times in the piece, Lemons makes blanket statements that are factually untrue regarding the perception of the Confederate battle flag.

This is not merely a matter of opinion, but rather an empirical fact

The Battalion encourages letters to the editor. Letters must be 300 words or less and include the author's name, class and phone number.

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