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Evangelical Feminism & Biblical Truth. An Analysis of more than 100 Disputed Questions, Wayne Grudem, Sisters OR: Multnomah Publishers, 2004 ISBN 1-57673-840-X 540 p. + 225 for 8 appendices + 90 p. for bibliography and indices – Recovering Biblical Ministry by Women. An Exegetical Response to Traditionalism and Feminism, George & Dora Winston, n.p.: Xulon Press, 2003 [orig. Dutch ed. by Apeldoorn: Novapres, 1996; 2nd print 1999] ISBN 1-591601-82-7 525 p. + some 25 p. indices

Both of these two are impressive books. Not only because of their number of pages, but because of their content. Grudem has been known for a long time as an advocate for the so-called complementarian position on the Bible and gender. He also is one of the editors of the standard defense of this view (Recovering Biblical Manhood and Womanhood. A Response to Evangelical Feminism 1991). He has co-edited two other monographs on the topic since then. This new book is meant to be a supplement to the earlier, standard work. According to the preface the book wants to update the ongoing discussion, arguments and research and it is explicitly meant to be used as a kind of a reference book. After two introductory chapters, 118 “disputed questions” are dealt with in chps. 3-12, questions which set the egalitarian camp against the complementarian view. Each chapter groups a couple of questions around one of the following key themes: (1) a biblical vision of manhood and womanhood as created by God and (2) in the church, (3) evangelical feminist claims from Genesis 1-3, (4) from the rest of the Old Testament and (5) the Gospels and Acts, (6) evangelical feminist claims about marriage and (7) about the church from the New Testament epistles, (8) about the church from 1 Timothy 2, (9) about how to interpret the bible, claims (10) from theology and from ideas of fairness and justice, (11) claims that the complementarian view is harmful. The book closes with chapters (13) “Is evangelical feminism the new path to liberalism? Some disturbing warning signs” and (14) “The current state of evangelicalism regarding biblical manhood and womanhood.”

Grudem's book leaves no stone unturned. He deals with every question imaginable that is connected with the biblical texts on the topic from Genesis 1 to 1 Timothy 2. The complementarian view itself is nowhere explicitly expounded, but the two introductory chapters explain the position well: man and woman are equal in value and dignity, they have different roles in marriage as part of the created order, both equality and differences reflect the differences and equality in the Trinity. The idea of headship and subordination also stretches out into the realm of the church. That becomes clear, when texts dealing with leadership in the church are closely connected with questions of family as in 1 Timothy 3:4-5. 1 Timothy 2:11-15 is the clearest statement restricting some governing and teaching roles in the church to men. In all cases Grudem tries to argue in the best way possible taking into account the most recent research and literature on each topic. The appendices contain among other things the most updated version of earlier papers on kephale and authenteo. The book is meant to be used as a reference book when looking for answers to a specific argument in the debate. Extensive indices proof very helpful and a special website for future arguments, additions and corrections has been put up (www.EFBT100.com; see also www.cbwm.org).

While Grudem is clearly complementarian, the Winstons book “proposes a third way” (vii). George and Dora Winston have both taught for more than 30 years at the Belgian Bible Institute. According to the authors, their book “is merely an attempt to determine what the *Bible* teaches” and concerning the current gender-debate, they are convinced, “that inerrant Scripture, interpreted according to straightforward grammatical-historical exegesis, provides a coherent total picture and common ground upon which open minded people from both camps

can meet” (viii). They make it explicit, that their most important dialogue partner is the above mentioned book “Recovering Biblical Manhood and Womanhood”.

Starting with some methodological questions and rejecting the deculturizing and traditionalist approaches as sidetracks, the first part of the book addresses the question of authority.

According to the Winstons we find within the Bible five different relationships in which God recognizes the authority of one person over another: wife/husband, children/parents, citizens/magistrates, church members/church officers and employees/employers. The important point: “... both males and females can be either in authority or in submission with respect to each other depending on the relationship in which they are placed to one another ...”. It is not gender which decides who has authority over whom, but “relationship”.

Headship and submission are limited to the sphere of marriage, not only in Eph 5:22-33, but also in 1 Cor 11:3, 14:34 and 1Tim 2:12. In these passages *aner* and *gyne* must be translated by “husband” and “wife” and not by “man” and “woman”. This becomes the main thesis of the book: No gender-based distinctions may be made outside of marriage.

The next part of the book (pp.175-296) deals with gender-based distinctions and concludes, that men and women are equal, but (in their sexuality and connected with it in some functional physical and psychological differences) not identical. Ch. 9 is especially crucial, because it answers the question “Do gender-based distinctions apply outside of marriage?” with a blunt “no”. This then means that gender-based distinctions do not apply in the sphere of the church either. Consequently, chh. 10-11 try to answer questions in connection with Gal 3:28 (its application is restricted to the church) and to show that 1Cor 11:11 and Eph 5:21-22 teach reciprocal submission.

The rest of the book (p. 299-525) argues, that in the church women may teach, be ministers of the Word according to their gifts (Part 4: Speaking for God) and that they can take every office (Part 5: Church Office; yes, Junia was a woman Apostle and 1Tim 5:2 is talking about women elders). There is an index of names and scripture but no bibliography. Looking at the literature that has been cited, some will probably want to criticize a lack of interacting with newer research on the texts and issues involved. But this is not the real weakness of the book. The Winstons have done an admirable job in bringing into the ongoing discussion a fresh viewpoint and an immense effort has been made in answering every possible objection to their view. There is much to gain for every reader in the exegetical discussions and in some places the book is almost a compendium on biblical texts to one topic (e.g. on partnership in marriage). The book and its main thesis surely deserve a closer look and answer from both camps of the debate on women’s roles in church. For this reviewer the Winston's main argument is still open to question, not only because their view is unique and quite isolated (despite of their reference to Luther and other older commentators, who took *aner* and *gyne* in 1Tim 2 as referring to husband and wife, they can not be counted as advocates of this view of the Winstons), but also because in their discussion of methodology, they insist, for example, that induction is the only way to argue a case, and deduction is always misleading (pp. 7f). Their treatment and exegesis of 1Tim 2:11-12 (pp. 106-115.355-362) furthermore is not convincing. According to the authors, in this passage Paul wants “to indicate to married women who teach in church only *how* they are to go about it: with unostentatious dress (vv.9-10), after learning in a quiet spirit (v.11), and so as to avoid lording it over their husbands (v.12). But when it has not been possible to *prevent* women’s teaching in church, ways have been found to *limit* such teaching” (362). I doubt that this is what the text is saying. I think it is highly unlikely that by using Adam and Eve (v.13) for his argument, Paul is thinking of *married* women and men *only*. In a text like this one, where an unambiguous hint to marriage is lacking, the burden of proof lies with those who want to read the narrower meaning for the terms *aner* and *gyne*. As so often in this debate (almost) everything comes down to 1Tim 2! Because a question/answer or objection/answer format is used throughout the whole book, one misses in-depth studies of the most important texts within their biblical context. This is

especially wanting in a book that claims in its subtitle to give “an exegetical response” to the pertinent questions.

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