

SCRIPTURE AS TALISMAN, SPECIMEN, AND DRAGOMAN

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I would like to call attention to three contrasting attitudes towards the Jewish and Christian Scriptures by my title. Scripture as Talisman represents the use of Scriptures by believers with little knowledge of the original setting of the texts, which are used at times for magical ends and at other times are followed literally without regard to their original contexts. Scripture as Specimen represents the critical analysis of the texts by skeptical scholars who view them simply as objects of academic study without faith in their value as divine revelation. Scripture as Dragoman or “interpreter” represents the scholarly study of Scripture by believers such as ETS members, who seek guidance through careful inquiry into the original setting of the texts to determine their significance for us today.

According to Anthony C. Thiselton,

Even if, for the moment, we leave out of account the modern reader’s *historical* conditionedness, we are still faced with the undeniable fact that if a text is to be *understood* there must occur an engagement between two sets of horizons (to use Gadamer’s phrase), namely those of the ancient text and those of the modern reader or hearer.¹

I. SCRIPTURE AS TALISMAN²

Magic is still quite prevalent in many places of the world today such as the Caribbean and Africa.³ The world of the Bible was a world pervaded by belief in magic.⁴ There are some alleged cases of magic in the OT and in the

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¹ Anthony C. Thiselton, *The Two Horizons: New Testament Hermeneutics and Philosophical Description* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1980) 15.

² According to W. W. Skeat, *A Concise Etymological Dictionary of the English Language* (New York: Capricorn Books, 1963 reprint) 540, “talisman” is derived from Spanish *talisman* “a magical character,” which is derived from Arabic *tilsamān*, plural of *tilsam* “magical image,” which in turn is derived from Greek *telesma* “mystery, initiation.”

³ See Samuel Waje Kunhiyop, “Witchcraft,” in *Africa Bible Commentary* (ed. Tokunboh Adeyemo; Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2006) 374. In Nigeria Christians use the Bible itself as a kind of talisman, placing it on the bed or on a sick individual, as though the book had magical powers.

⁴ See Edwin Yamauchi, “Magic in the Biblical World,” *TynBul* 34 (1983) 169–200; Christopher A. Faraone, *Ancient Greek Love Magic* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1999); idem, “When Spells Worked Magic,” *Arch* 56 (2003) 48–53.

NT.⁵ But rather than speak of these controversial examples, let me discuss some cases where scriptural quotations are clearly used in a magical context. The oldest texts from the Hebrew Scriptures were found inscribed on silver amulets discovered under the supervision of Gordon Franz, a member of ETS/NEAS.

Franz was asked by Gabriel Barkay to supervise a crew in digging a burial cave at *Ketef Hinnom* “The Shoulder of Hinnom” below St. Andrew’s Presbyterian Church in Jerusalem. On Saturday morning, August 4, 1979, they began working at 6 a.m. He writes:

About mid morning, Judy Hadley, an archaeology student at Wheaton College (now a professor at Villanova University) brushed aside some dirt to reveal a rolled up piece of silver. I described it in my journal as a “silver roll” . . . Later it would be called Ketef Hinnom amulet I. . . . A second silver roll came up in the sifting during one of the afternoons. It would become known as Ketef Hinnom amulet II.⁶

The scrolls were not successfully unrolled until 1982, with the first public announcement of their existence made on January 9, 1983. Barkay gave Gordon Franz permission to read a paper on this sensational discovery at a Southeast sectional meeting of the ETS in Columbia, South Carolina in 1987, before the first scholarly article appeared in Hebrew in 1989, and then in English in 1992.

These amulets contain the earliest attestation of the Tetragrammaton, Yod, He, Wah, He, in citing the priestly blessing of Num 6:24–26, “The Lord (Yahweh) bless you and keep you; the Lord (Yahweh) make his face shine upon you and be gracious to you,” as well as a reference to Deut 7:9. As these amulets are dated to the seventh century BC, they certainly cast doubt on recent attempts to date the composition of the Pentateuch to the Persian or even the Hellenistic era.⁷

Prior to the discovery of the Dead Sea Scrolls from Qumran and apart from exceptional cases like the Nash Papyrus, the earliest citations of Hebrew

⁵ Colin Brown and J. Stafford Wright, “Magic, Sorcery, Magi,” *NIDNTT* 2.552–63. Jesus himself was accused of being a magician by such sources as Celsus, the Jewish Talmud, and a few idiosyncratic scholars like Morton Smith. See Edwin Yamauchi, “Magic or Miracle? Demons, Diseases and Exorcisms,” in *Gospel Perspectives VI* (ed. D. Wenham and C. Blomberg; Sheffield: JSOT, 1986) 89–183; Howard Clark Kee, *Medicine, Miracle and Magic in New Testament Times* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988); Graham N. Stanton, “Jesus of Nazareth: A Magician and a False Prophet Who Deceived God’s People?” in *Jesus of Nazareth: Lord and Christ: Essays on the Historical Jesus and New Testament Christology* (ed. Joel B. Green and Max Turner; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1994) 164–80.

⁶ Gordon Franz, “Archaeology is NOT a Treasure Hunt,” *Bible and Spade* 18 (2005) 55.

⁷ Gabriel Barkay, *Ketef Hinnom: A Treasure Facing Jerusalem’s Walls* (Jerusalem: The Israel Museum, 1986); idem, “The Priestly Benediction on Silver Plaques from Ketef Hinnom in Jerusalem,” *TA* 19 (1992) 139–200; Gabriel Barkay, Marilyn J. Lundberg, Andrew G. Vaughn, Bruce Zuckerman and Kenneth Zuckerman, “The Challenges of Ketef Hinnom: Using Advanced Technologies to Reclaim the Earliest Biblical Texts and Their Context,” *NEA* 66 (2003) 162–71; Gabriel Barkay, Andrew G. Vaughn, Marilyn J. Lundberg and Bruce Zuckerman, “The Amulets from Ketef Hinnom: A New Edition and Evaluation,” *BASOR* 334 (2004) 41–71; Elias Brasil de Souza, “The Ketef Hinnom Silver Scrolls,” *Near East Archaeological Society Bulletin* 49 (2004) 27–38.

Scriptures came from magic bowls inscribed in Aramaic from Nippur and other areas of Sasanid Iraq and Iran which are dated c. AD 600.⁸ By far the most popular passage in the Aramaic bowl texts is Zech 3:2, “The Lord rebuke you, Satan! The Lord, who has chosen Jerusalem, rebuke you! Is not this a brand plucked from the fire?”⁹

In the later (8th-13th century) Hebrew and Aramaic incantations from the Cairo Genizah published by L. H. Schiffman and M. D. Swartz Hebrew Scriptures are used in different contexts.¹⁰ Deuteronomy 28:8, which asks the Lord’s blessings upon one’s barns is used by a merchant along with magical words and letters with the adjuration to “all holy letters, to gather the feet of every man and woman and every merchant into the shop . . . May they buy from him of their own will.”¹¹ Many texts from the story of Joseph are used as Joseph was the ideally successful figure. Genesis 49:22, which describes Joseph as a “fruitful vine,” is used as a prophylactic text against the evil eye, evil affliction, evil satan, and all kinds of visitations.¹² An ironic citation is Isa 10:4, used as predicting success in commerce, whereas the original context indicates that it was a reference to the success of Israel’s enemy, Assyria.

Jews in Jesus’ day took literally a command that was originally meant metaphorically, the command in Deut 6:8: “Tie them as symbols on your hands and bind them on your foreheads.” Pious Jews wore “phylacteries” (Matt 23:5), that is, small pouches with slips containing texts from the Torah which were bound on the head and arm. Four examples of such *Tefillin* (literally “prayers” in Hebrew), including capsules made of calf leather, were found in Cave X at Qumran.¹³ The tiny slips, one inch by 1 5/8 inches contain as many as 26 lines, with citations from Exodus (12:43–51; 13:1–16) and Deuteronomy (5:1–33; 6:1–9). Some rabbis suggested that the phylacteries functioned as magical amulets (*b. Ber.* 61, 23b, 30b). Today Orthodox Jews still wear such phylacteries while reciting their morning prayers.

⁸ From the same area and the same period are other bowls inscribed in Syriac and in Mandaic, for Christian and Mandaean clients. In one Syriac bowl text the incantation invokes both “the signet ring of King Solomon son of David” and “the power of the virtue of Jesus the healer.” See Victor P. Hamilton, *Syriac Incantation Bowls* (Ann Arbor, MI: University Microfilms, 1971) 105a–105b. Christians in Antioch continued to observe magical practices as we learn from the sermons of John Chrysostom. Robert L. Wilken, *John Chrysostom and the Jews* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1983) 84, “Magic was practiced by faithful Christians who attended church and participated in the Eucharist, and was presented as a technique to aid the divine.” The Lord’s prayer was incorporated in an amulet to protect against demons and diseases (Papyri Graecae Magicae, 11.226–27). See *Ancient Christian Magic*, ed. M. Meyer and R. Smith (San Francisco: HarperSanFrancisco, 1994) 46.

⁹ For other Scripture citations, see Edwin Yamauchi, “Aramaic Magic Bowls,” *JAOS* 85 (1965) 511–23. Charles D. Isbell in his Brandeis dissertation, *Corpus of the Aramaic Incantation Bowls* (SBLD 17; Missoula: Scholars Press, 1975) 195, also lists the following Hebrew Scriptures which are cited: Num 6:24–25; Isa 44:25; Amos 5:26; Ps 121:7; Song 3:7.

¹⁰ L. H. Schiffman and M. D. Swartz, *Hebrew and Aramaic Incantation Texts from the Cairo Genizah* (Sheffield: JSOT, 1992).

¹¹ *Ibid.* 108.

¹² *Ibid.* 116.

¹³ Yigael Yadin, *Tefillin from Qumran (XQ Phyl 1–4)* (Jerusalem: The Israel Exploration Society, 1969).

II. TEXTS OUT OF CONTEXT

Just as texts taken out of context have been used in magical talismans or for prophylactic purposes against evil spirits, some other texts have been interpreted by believers out of context, resulting in some major consequences. Let me give some examples:

1. *Beards.* An Old Testament text which has been obeyed literally by some Jews and Christians is Lev 19:27: "Do not cut the hair at the sides of your head or clip off the edges of your beard." Scholars believe that this injunction was originally directed against (pagan?) rites of mourning.¹⁴ In Hebrew the word *zāqen* translated "elder" literally means the "bearded one."¹⁵ The rabbis prohibited close shaving with a single blade because this mars the beard; however, they permitted trimming the beard with scissors. Early Christian writers such as Cyprian and Lactantius insisted that beards were a God-given symbol of manhood.

Eastern Orthodox clergy and such Protestant groups as the Amish and Hutterites do not shave off their beards. Though there is evidence in the Hadith (Traditions) that the prophet Muhammad had his head shaved and that he had his hair clipped, other traditions report that he asked mercy "on those who have themselves shaved."¹⁶ There is a hadith (#780) in the collection edited by al-Bukhari which reports the prophet saying, "Do the opposite of what the pagans do. Keep the beards and cut the moustaches short." The Taliban, when in power in Afghanistan, insisted that men grow beards. Barbers have been attacked in Baghdad in the current sectarian strife in Iraq.

2. *Usury.* There are numerous OT passages against "usury," the loaning of money at interest (Exod 22:25–27; Lev 25: 35–37; Deut 23:19, 20; etc.). As the passage in Neh 5:10, 11 indicates, these condemnations came in the context of the wealthy taking advantage of the poor.¹⁷ The rabbis believed that interest was forbidden as taking inappropriate advantage of wealth. Jesus' Parables of the Talents (Matt 25:14–29) and of the Pounds (Luke 19:11–26), however, assumed that the money left with a servant should be invested and earn interest.

¹⁴ E.g. Roland de Vaux, *Ancient Israel: Its Life and Institutions* (New York: McGraw Hill, 1961) 59, 61.

¹⁵ See J. McKenzie, "The Elders in the Old Testament," *Bib* 40 (1959) 522–40; H. Reviv, *The Elders in Ancient Israel* (Jerusalem: Magnes, 1989).

¹⁶ *Mishkat al-Masabih*, trans. James Robson (Lahore: Ashraf, 1963) 2.567.

¹⁷ See Edwin Yamauchi, "Two Reformers Compared: Solon of Athens and Nehemiah of Jerusalem," in *The Bible World: Essays in Honor of Cyrus H. Gordon* (ed. G. Rendsburg et al.; New York: KTAV, 1980) 269–92. The literal reading of the command to tithe, which was defined in agricultural terms in the Torah, led to the unfair burdening of farmers and the exemption of non-farmers from this duty. Solomon Zeitlin, *The Rise and Fall of the Judaean State I. 332–37 B.C.E.* (Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society, 1964) 198–99: "With the emergence of new socio-economic groups, many of the *ame ha-aretz*, the farmers, resented the fact that they alone had to bear the burden of supporting the priests and levites through their payment of the tithes, from which the urban population was exempt."

The early Christian church condemned the lending on interest to clerics in the Council of Nicaea (AD 325) and to laymen at the Council of Carthage (AD 348). The Fourth Lateran Council (AD 1215) allowed Jews to serve as moneylenders, with the ironic result that some Jewish families like the Rothschilds became quite wealthy. Luther and Zwingli condemned the practice, but Calvin allowed it. The Roman Catholic Church condemned usury until the 19th century.¹⁸

The Qur'an (2:275–76; 3:129; 4:161) also condemned usury. When Muhammad died, his last words included a condemnation of the blood feud and usury. There are many *hadith* (traditions) against usury, such as this saying: “Jabir said that God’s messenger cursed the one who accepted usury, the one who paid it, the one who recorded it, and the two witnesses to it, saying they were all alike.”¹⁹ Muslim banks by a legal fiction avoid charging or giving interest. Some Muslims argue that not interest but exorbitant interest is prohibited.²⁰

3. *Worship.* One practice where Muslims reflect the primitive sense of both the Hebrew word (*hishtahāwâ*) and the Greek word (*proskunein*) for “worship” is their act of prostration during their *salat* or prayer five times a day, facing Mecca.²¹ One of the required actions is to touch the forehead to the ground. The Arabic word *sujūd* means “prostration, adoration, worship,” and *masjid* “mosque.”²² Because of this requirement all mosques have no seats or pews, but simply floors covered with rugs.

The ancient background of these words for “worship” is the practice of bowing to the ground before a king, as we see in the Amarna Tablets (14th century BC) addressed to the pharaohs Amenhotep III and IV (Akhenaton).²³ These letters include such expressions as “I fall at the feet of the king, my lord, both Sun and my god, seven times and seven times,” and even “I indeed prostrate myself at the feet of the king, . . . seven times and seven times, on the back and on the stomach.”²⁴

Today, we often associate “worship” with music. But how different are our services from what the Jews and early Christians practiced. For one thing,

¹⁸ See John T. Noonan, Jr., *The Scholastic Analysis of Usury* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1957).

¹⁹ *Mishkat al-Masabih* 2.602.

²⁰ In an essay on “Debt” in *Africa Bible Commentary* 779, Stephen Adei, writes: “Those who are better off materially are not to exploit the poor by things such as charging high interest rates and taking a debtor’s livelihood in lieu of money owed (Deut 24:6; Ps 15:5; Job 24). In rural Africa, moneylenders tend to charge very high interest rates, sometimes over 100 per cent per annum. That is usury and the Bible condemns it.”

²¹ See Edwin Yamauchi, “619 חרה (*hāwâ*),” in *TWOT* 2.267–69.

²² Hans Wehr, *A Dictionary of Modern Written Arabic*, ed. J. Milton Cowan (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1961) 397. The Arabic word is cognate with Hebrew סגר. See *A Concise Hebrew and Aramaic Lexicon of the Old Testament*, ed. William L. Holladay (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1971) 253.

²³ See *The Amarna Letters*, trans. William L. Moran (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1992).

²⁴ See Ellen F. Morris, “Bowing and Scraping in the Ancient Near East: An Investigation into Obsequiousness in the Amarna Letters,” *JNES* 65 (2006) 179–96.

the early church disavowed the use of musical instruments because these were associated with pagan festivals.²⁵ Thus one branch of the Church of Christ is called Non-Instrumental, because they will not use musical instruments.

Though the OT (Ezra 2:65//Neh 7:67) does refer to female singers, these were all secular singers, since only male Levites sang in the temple. The heretic Paul of Samosata (mid-third century), a bishop of Antioch, scandalized other clerics by installing a choir of women. Ephrem the Syrian (306–373) also established a women's choir. But these examples were exceptional. Most Church fathers, on the basis of 1 Tim 2:11's teaching that women should be silent, approved only of male singers. Because the Catholic Church banned female singers, some Europeans introduced *castrati* (young castrated boys) to sing soprano parts in the sixteenth century.

These examples show the variety of ways in which sacred Scripture has been interpreted by Jews and Christians over the centuries, often in ways that may not have been originally intended.

III. SCRIPTURE AS SPECIMEN

The polar opposite of the use of Scripture as Talisman is what I call the use of Scripture as Specimen, that is, as a text which is of interest only as an object for academic analysis. The dominant mood in academic circles has been a confidence in the tools of literary and more recently sociological analysis by scholars in liberal seminaries and in departments of religion at major universities. Miami University's Department of Religion, founded in 1927, is together with that at the University of Iowa the oldest at a state university. In 1995 it changed its name to the Department of Comparative Religions. I have a good friend in the department, with whom I have lunch now and then. Once he told me with a smile, "Ed, you really believe this stuff!"

1. *The Documentary Hypothesis.* The Documentary Hypothesis of the Pentateuch is still widely maintained,²⁶ despite telling criticisms by an impressive array of scholars who have pointed out the artificial nature of the criteria used to establish the hypothesis.²⁷ The subjective nature of the

²⁵ See Everett Ferguson, "Music," in *Encyclopedia of Early Christianity* (ed. Everett Ferguson; New York: Garland Publishing, 1990) 629–32.

²⁶ Duane Garrett, "The Undead Hypothesis: Why the Documentary Hypothesis Is the *Frankenstein* of Biblical Studies," *The Southern Baptist Journal of Theology* 5 (2001) 28–41.

²⁷ See Umberto Cassuto, *The Documentary Hypothesis and the Composition of the Pentateuch* (Jerusalem: Magnes, 1961); Cyrus H. Gordon, "Higher Critics and Forbidden Fruit," *Christianity Today* 4 (Nov. 23, 1959) 3–6; Isaac M. Kikawada and Arthur Quinn, *Before Abraham Was: The Unity of Genesis 1–11* (Nashville: Abingdon, 1985); K. A. Kitchen, *Ancient Orient and Old Testament* (Chicago: InterVarsity, 1966); M. H. Segal, *The Pentateuch: Its Composition and Its Authorship and Other Biblical Studies* (Jerusalem: Magnes, 1967). It was Cyrus Gordon's rejection of the Documentary Hypothesis which attracted numerous evangelicals such as myself to study under

assignment of a given passage to any one of the documents is seen in the case of Exod 33:7–11, which is assigned to E by Walter Beyerlin, to J by Murray Newman, and to D by Martin Noth.²⁸

As Claus Westermann has pointed out, “A further limitation of the Enlightenment’s understanding of history follows from the reduction of events to that which is verifiable through documentary evidence.”²⁹ After decades of a more positive attitude toward the OT as a source for the history of Israel fostered by the interpretation of archaeological and inscriptional data by W. F. Albright and others,³⁰ a pessimistic reaction has set in among many scholars in the last three decades, representing a retroversion to the views of Julius Wellhausen.³¹ The ultimate outcome of skepticism about the traditional sources fostered by such recent movements as Feminism and Deconstructionism is exemplified in the remark of Dorothy Irwin: “Of these [David] narratives as well as all the narratives of the Pentateuch, the historical problem is not so much that they are historically unverifiable, and especially not that they are untrue historically, but that they are radically irrelevant as sources of Israel’s early history.”³² But such a radical rejection of the OT sources on the basis of the lack of archaeological evidence is based in part on a misapprehension of the fragmentary nature of that evidence.³³

2. *Criticism of the Gospels.* In the twentieth century it was especially Rudolf Bultmann (d. 1976) and his disciples who established the historical-critical examination of the Gospels by means of “form criticism.” Bultmann rejected the supernatural and assumed that the figure of Christ was influenced

him. A partial list of evangelical students, who studied under him at Brandeis (or earlier at Dropsie) and also under his students teaching at Brandeis, would include: Carl E. Armerding (1968), Frederic W. Bush (1964), Wilson Chow (1973), Bert DeVries (1967), David H. Engelhard (1970), George Giacomakis (1963), Roy E. Hayden (1962), Harry A. Hoffner, Jr. (1963), David K. Huttar (1962), Walter C. Kaiser, Jr. (1973), Dennis F. Kinlaw (1967), Meredith Kline (1955), William Sanford LaSor (Dropsie, 1949), Arthur H. Lewis (1966), Donald H. Madvig (1966), James Moyer (1969), John N. Oswalt (1968), Charles Pfeiffer (Dropsie, 1953), Elmer Smick (Dropsie, 1951), David T. Tsumura (1973), Wilber Wallis (Dropsie, 1955), Marvin R. Wilson (1963), Herbert Wolf (1967), Dwight Young (1955), and G. Douglas Young (Dropsie 1948). See Cyrus H. Gordon, *A Scholar’s Odyssey* (Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2000) 113–18.

²⁸ See S. Horn, “What We Don’t Know about Moses and the Exodus,” *BAR* 3 (1977) 23.

²⁹ C. Westermann, “The Old Testament’s Understanding of History in Relation to that of the Enlightenment,” in *Understanding the Word: Essays in Honor of Bernhard W. Anderson* (ed. J. T. Butler et al.; Sheffield: JSOT, 1985) 208.

³⁰ See Thomas W. Davis, *Shifting Sands: The Rise and Fall of Biblical Archaeology* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004).

³¹ See Edwin Yamauchi, “The Current State of Old Testament Historiography,” in *Faith, Tradition, and History* (ed. A. R. Millard, J. K. Hoffmeier, and D. W. Baker; Winona Lake: Eisenbrauns, 1994) 1–36.

³² Dorothy Irwin, “The Joseph and Moses Narratives,” in *Israelite and Judaeon History* (ed. J. H. Hayes and J. M. Miller; Philadelphia: Westminster, 1977) 212.

³³ See Rick S. Hess, “Fallacies in the Study of Early Israel: An Onomastic Perspective,” *TynBul* 45 (1994) 339–54.

by an alleged pre-Christian Gnosticism, a construct he based on very late Mandaean texts.³⁴

In the U.S. the highly publicized Jesus Seminar, a group of about seventy NT scholars, attempted to establish the authenticity of Jesus' sayings in the color-coded book, *The Five Gospels*, which represents a well-funded effort to make the judgments of academic scholars known to the broader public.³⁵ The title refers to the fact that the Seminar adopted a very early date for the Gospel of Thomas and accepted its value as an independent source.³⁶ On the other hand, the Seminar totally rejected the Gospel of John because of its high Christology and its depiction of Jesus uttering long discourses rather than short aphoristic statements.

The media highlighted the negative conclusion of the Jesus Seminar that "[e]ighty-two percent of the words ascribed to Jesus in the gospels were not actually spoken by him." The Jesus Seminar claimed that its scholars rigorously applied certain criteria to determine the authenticity of the sayings of Jesus. But despite the appearance of precision in the procedure of voting and the tabulation of results, the criteria used are quite questionable and the judgments always subjective. Often rationalistic presuppositions in actuality predetermined what was allowed to remain as authentic.³⁷

In his 2004 presidential address, "Why Study the New Testament," to the *Studiorum Novi Testamenti Societas* Wayne A. Meeks of Yale University lamented:

What is new is a wide and spreading disillusionment with our practice [of historical criticism] because of its perceived failure to produce the results it promised. Where is that objectivity of vision which we claimed? Where is that confidence which disinterested scientific observation and analysis was supposed to yield?³⁸

3. *Liberal seminaries.* In a symposium held on the Dead Sea Scrolls at the Smithsonian Institution in 1990, Professor James A. Sanders, formerly of Union Theological Seminary and now of Claremont, responded to a

³⁴ See E. Yamauchi, "The Present Status of Mandaean Studies," *JNES* 25 (1966) 88–96; idem, *Gnostic Ethics and Mandaean Origins* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1970; reprint ed., Piscataway, NJ: Gorgias, 2004); idem, *Pre-Christian Gnosticism* (rev. ed.; Grand Rapids: Baker, 1983; reprint ed., Eugene, OR: Wipf and Stock, 2003).

³⁵ *The Five Gospels* (ed. R. W. Funk and R. W. Hoover; New York: Macmillan, 1993). A later work, which was similarly sceptical about the miracles of Jesus, *The Acts of Jesus: What Did Jesus Really Do?* (ed. Robert W. Funk and The Jesus Seminar; San Francisco: HarperSanFrancisco, 1998), for some reason received far less media attention.

³⁶ For critiques of this high evaluation of the Gospel of Thomas see Nicholas Perrin, "Thomas: The Fifth Gospel?" *JETS* 49 (2006) 67–80; Darrell L. Bock, *The Missing Gospels: Unearthing the Truth behind Alternative Christianities* (Nashville: Nelson Books, 2006). For a perceptive analysis of why the media and the public are so fascinated with alternative Gospels, see Philip Jenkins, *Hidden Gospels: How the Search for Jesus Lost Its Way* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001).

³⁷ For critiques see Michael J. Wilkins and J. P. Moreland, eds., *Jesus under Fire* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1995); Craig A. Evans, *Fabricating Jesus* (Downers Grove: InterVarsity, 2006); Ben Witherington III, *What Have They Done with Jesus?* (San Francisco: HarperSanFrancisco, 2006).

³⁸ Wayne A. Meeks, "Why Study the New Testament?" *NTS* 51 (2005) 159.

question from Hershel Shanks, editor of *The Biblical Archaeology Review*, about the value of biblical scholarship for churches, by candidly answering as follows:

I think that there has been an influence, some of it good and some of it not so good. That is to say, the historic mainline churches are pretty much staffed by ministers from graduates of Harvard and Yale and Union and Claremont and so on. The graduates of these seminaries get their degrees for knowing theories about the historical formation of the Bible, but they don't know what the Bible says. This is a great lament I have. We get students now in the mainline seminaries who are ignorant of the Bible in the first place because they are not learning it at home or in church anymore. Then they come to seminary and learn all about J, E, D and P—the documentary hypothesis—but they have not read the Pentateuch yet. . . .³⁹

The corrosive atmosphere to biblical faith which prevails at such leading liberal seminaries as Harvard Divinity School was revealed by Ari L. Goldman, an Orthodox Jewish reporter for the *New York Times*, in a best-selling exposé.⁴⁰ Kelly Monroe, the founder of the Harvard Veritas Forum who came to Harvard Divinity School in 1987, confirms these impressions.⁴¹

Kenneth Calvert, who was president of the student body at Gordon Conwell Theological Seminary and who then earned his Th.M. from Harvard Divinity School before he worked on his Ph.D. with me, related his experience there as follows:

I enjoyed very much the academic rigor and the intellectual atmosphere at Harvard. However, it was my experience that Harvard maintains a definite liberal “orthodoxy” that should not be challenged. If one is orthodox (Jewish or Christian) one is expected to surrender one's orthodoxy. To be an Evangelical is to be stereotyped as silly at best. One's views immediately are quickly derided—particularly if you hold to pro-life, pro-family and traditionalist perspective. Indeed, it was in hearing your work attacked frequently that I decided to study your writings and to work with you at Miami University. That you questioned Bultmannian orthodoxy and the prevailing currents in the study of Gnosticism made you something of an enemy there.⁴²

Wayne A. Meeks of Yale University⁴³ ruefully observes the unexpected results of a devotion to the critical study of the NT:

³⁹ James A. Sanders in *The Dead Sea Scrolls after Forty Years* (ed. Hershel Shanks; Washington, DC: Biblical Archaeology Society, 1991) 82–83.

⁴⁰ Ari L. Goldman, *The Search for God at Harvard* (New York: Ballantine Books, 1991).

⁴¹ Kelly Monroe, ed., *Finding God at Harvard: Spiritual Journeys of Thinking Christians* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1995) 348. See also Kelly Monroe Kullberg, *Finding God Beyond Harvard* (Downers Grove: InterVarsity, 2006) 26.

⁴² In an e-mail on October 25, 2006. On the other hand, evangelical Ph.D. students in the field of ancient Near Eastern Studies such as Daniel Master and John Monson, now teaching at Wheaton, flourished under Lawrence Stager at Harvard.

⁴³ In contrast with the situation at Harvard, evangelical graduate students have found some faculty at Yale University and at Yale Divinity School who are either evangelical or sympathetic to evangelicals such as Harry Stout, Miroslav Volf, Judith Gundry Volf, Lamin Sanneh, and John Hare (the successor to Nicholas Wolterstorff).

In North America, by contrast, polls continue to show that a surprisingly high percentage of people “believe in God,” think religion is important in their lives, and even participate with some regularity in some organized religious activity. What has changed it seems, is that those denominations in which historical critical study of the Bible really had some influence have grown smaller relative to total population. To put it another way, those Christian groups that appear to be growing most rapidly on the American religious landscape, and for whom the Bible is most important, are those which either ignore or deplore the kind of scholarship we do.⁴⁴

4. *Liberal denominations.* In a slim but very perceptive study published in 1969 a distinguished sociologist of religion, Peter Berger, pointed out that the modern academic study of Scriptures in following Bultmann’s rejection of the supernatural was inevitably committing theological suicide.

In other words, the theological surrender to the alleged demise of the supernatural defeats itself in precisely the measure of its success. Ultimately, it represents the self-liquidation of theology and of the institutions in which the theological tradition is embodied.⁴⁵

Since 1960 the seven so-called “mainline” Protestant denominations (United Methodist Church, Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, Presbyterian Church (USA), Episcopal Church, Disciples of Christ, American Baptist Churches, and United Church of Christ) have suffered both membership decline and loss of “market share.” Between 1960 and 2000 the aggregate totals of these denominations dropped 21% from 29 to 22 million. The Disciples of Christ lost 55%, the United Church Christ 39%, and the Episcopal Church 33% of their membership.⁴⁶

The deleterious result of the study of Scripture simply as a “Specimen” for academic study in liberal seminaries is quite clear.

IV. SCRIPTURE AS DRAGOMAN⁴⁷

1. *The living Scriptures.* Whereas the use of Scripture as Talisman involves faith without knowledge, the analysis of Scripture as Specimen too often assumes knowledge apart from faith. It is my contention that only an approach that combines faith and knowledge can do full justice to the extraordinary nature of the Scriptures. It is an approach that involves a dialogue with Scriptures as a *dragoman*. This is a term that is not used today. It is

⁴⁴ Meeks, “Why Study?” 163.

⁴⁵ Peter L. Berger, *A Rumor of Angels* (Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1969) 21.

⁴⁶ The losses would have been even more severe had not sizable groups of evangelical believers remained to attempt to renew their denominations. See Michael S. Hamilton and Jennifer McKinney, “Turning the Mainline Around,” *Christianity Today* 47/8 (August 2003) 34. By contrast, the vigorous growth of evangelical churches was noted long ago by an official of the National Council of Churches, Dean M. Kelley, *Why Conservative Churches Are Growing* (New York: Harper & Row, 1972).

⁴⁷ Under the Ottoman Empire a dragoman was a diplomat, an interpreter of the ruler’s decrees. I owe this comment to Bob Smith.

a transliteration from Spanish of an Arabic word, which means “interpreter,” and which is cognate with the word, “targum,” or Aramaic paraphrase of Scripture. It was often used of guides who were provided to Europeans in the Middle East, who were travelling in terra incognita.

Thomas C. Oden, who turned from his radical liberal theology to become a conservative theologian through his study of the Church fathers, relates the contrast of his attitudes before and after his conversion as follows: “Then I was using the biblical text instrumentally, sporadically and eisegetically to support my modern ideological commitments. Now the Bible is asking my questions more deeply than I ever could before.”⁴⁸

2. *J. B. Lightfoot.* As an example of this approach, let me turn to a nineteenth-century British scholar whose scholarly treatises on Scripture have continued to command universal regard, and whose faith and piety were also respected. I speak of Joseph Barber Lightfoot (1828–1889). As a young high school student I worked on a missionary farm in Hawaii. Our church had a small selection of books for sale. It was here that I discovered the reprint of Lightfoot’s great commentary on the Greek text of Philippians.⁴⁹ I then learned Greek by using J. G. Machen’s introduction.

Lightfoot served as Lady Margaret Professor of Divinity at Cambridge, as a Canon of St. Paul’s Cathedral, and then as Bishop of Durham for the last decade of his life. William Sanday of Oxford, a contemporary, praised Lightfoot for his “exactness of scholarship, width of erudition, scientific method, sobriety of judgment, lucidity of style.”⁵⁰

V. CONTROVERSIES OVER SLAVERY, WOMEN, AND HOMOSEXUALS

1. *Complementarians vs. egalitarians.* But what are we to do when evangelical scholars have sharply incompatible views on such issues as women’s roles in the family and in ministry? At two extremes we have on the one hand the traditional view of male leadership and an exclusively male pulpit ministry represented by the Council on Biblical Manhood and Womanhood (CBMW) first formed at the ETS meeting in Danvers, Massachusetts in 1987.⁵¹ Those who hold these views call themselves complementarians.

The opposing view of egalitarians is represented by the organization Christians for Biblical Equality (CBE), which believes that “[t]he Bible is the inspired word of God, is reliable, and is the final authority for faith and practice,” which “properly interpreted, teaches the fundamental equality of men and women and all racial and ethnic groups, all economic classes, and

⁴⁸ In *How My Mind has Changed* (ed. James M. Wall and David Heim; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1991) 126.

⁴⁹ J. B. Lightfoot, *Saint Paul’s Epistle to the Philippians* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1953 reprint of 1913 ed.).

⁵⁰ Cited in Stephen R. Pointer, “J. B. Lightfoot as a Christian Historian of Early Christian Literature,” *Christian Scholar’s Review* 23 (1994) 427.

⁵¹ CBMW’s exposition of its position may be found at their website, www.cbmw.org.

all age groups, based on the teachings of Scripture as reflected in Galatians 3:28” according to a statement in CBE’s *Priscilla Papers*.

The CBMW has been led by Wayne Grudem, formerly of Trinity Evangelical Divinity School and currently at Phoenix Seminary. I have regarded Wayne as a good friend who has preached at our church in Oxford, Ohio, and whose son Elliott attended Miami University. He has been generous in giving me the helpful notes he recorded on procedures to be followed for planning and running the annual convention and in sending me many of his books.

The CBE is led by Aida and Bill Spencer of Gordon Conwell Theological Seminary, whom I have known since they were members of the InterVarsity group at Rutgers University, where I taught from 1964 to 1969. I have followed their careers and their writings with great admiration.

It is a fool who attempts to step in between two warring sides, because he may anger both sides. I hope, nonetheless, that after I speak, I will still be regarded as a friend by both Wayne and the Spencers. Heretofore I have not written on this issue, except for a brief comment in an article in *Christianity Today* where I said, “I believe that what Paul taught about a woman’s role as a mother and her subordination to her husband is still quite valid. On the other hand, in our own culture and in other cultures where women have a more equal public role with men than did women of the first century, permitting a woman to teach in a church situation does not seem to be an usurpation of man’s authority.”⁵² Let me say at the outset that I agree with some specific examples of the exegesis of complementarians, but at the same time sympathize with the aims of the egalitarians.

The debate has recently become quite heated with the publication in 2001 of egalitarian William J. Webb’s book *Slaves, Women and Homosexuals: Exploring the Hermeneutics of Cultural Analysis*.⁵³ Webb’s proposal of a “Redemptive-Movement Hermeneutic (RMH)” was subjected to an extraordinarily lengthy, detailed review of forty-eight pages by Wayne Grudem in our *Journal* in 2004.⁵⁴ In 2005 William J. Webb set forth in the *Journal* the following four evangelical views on the issue of slavery and women: (1) Explicit Abolitionism, Concrete Hierarchy (Grudem); (2) Principled Abolitionism, Concrete Hierarchy (Schreiner); (3) RMH Abolitionism, Recontextualized Hierarchy (Blomberg, Bock, Strauss); and (4) RMH Abolitionism, Egalitarianism (Webb *et al.*).⁵⁵ In the meantime Wayne Grudem published two more books, criticizing egalitarianism in general and Webb’s views in particular.⁵⁶

⁵² Edwin Yamauchi, “Christianity and Cultural Differences,” *Christianity Today* 16 (June 23, 1972) 8.

⁵³ Downers Grove: InterVarsity, 2001. The Foreword was contributed by Darrell Bock, who does not necessarily agree with Webb, but believes that his book could be helpful in our ongoing debates on these subjects.

⁵⁴ In *JETS* 47 (2004) 299–346.

⁵⁵ William J. Webb, “A Redemptive-Movement Hermeneutic: Encouraging Dialogue among Four Evangelical Views,” *JETS* 48 (2005) 331–49.

⁵⁶ Wayne Grudem, *Evangelical Feminism and Biblical Truth* (Sisters, OR: Multnomah, 2004); idem, *Evangelical Feminism: A New Path to Liberalism?* (Wheaton: Crossway, 2006).

2. *Debates over slavery.*⁵⁷ Both Webb and Grudem are in essential agreement on two of the three topics, that is, they agree that slavery should have been abolished and that homosexuality is condemned in the Bible. Grudem writes,

I expect that most readers will find Webb's explanation of why the Bible regulated but did not immediately prohibit all slavery to be a helpful analysis. Readers may also find helpful Webb's explanation of why the Bible's prohibitions against homosexual conduct are transcultural, not culturally relative.⁵⁸

Grudem also comments:

In claiming that the Bible endorses slavery, Webb shows no awareness of biblical anti-slavery arguments such as those of Theodore Weld in *The Bible Against Slavery*, a book that was widely distributed and frequently reprinted by anti-slavery abolitionists in nineteenth-century America.

The whole basis of Weld's anti-slavery book is that *the moral standards taught in the Bible are right*, and there is no hint that we have to move beyond the Bible's ethics to oppose slavery, as Webb would have us do.

Webb is wrong in thinking that his system is needed to show that the Bible opposes slavery. Yes, some slave owners tried to use the Bible to support slavery in nineteenth-century America, *but opponents of slavery used the Bible* too, and they were far more persuasive, *and they won the argument.*⁵⁹

Neither Grudem nor Webb spends much time rehearsing the debate over slavery prior to the Civil War, when devout and learned Christians passionately argued the prohibition and the anti-prohibition (pro-slavery) interpretation of the Bible. Recent scholarly analysis of the use of Scripture in this debate over a century and a half ago allows us to look at this issue more closely.

a. *Miami University.* I have been teaching since 1969 at Miami University in Oxford, Ohio, 35 miles north of Cincinnati, which was the epicenter of the debates about slavery and abolition. Miami University is named after the Miami Indians who occupied the area of western Ohio. We are not to be confused with the University of Miami, a private school in Boca Raton, Florida. The name of Miami in Florida was given to that city by realtors from Ohio, who invested in the Daytona to Miami railroad.

The basis for our university was laid in the 1787 ordinance governing the Northwest Territories which included the future state of Ohio. Miami University was chartered in 1809; classes, however, did not begin until 1824. In the 1830s Miami was the fourth-largest university in the nation, behind only Harvard, Yale, and Dartmouth.

⁵⁷ Tragically, slavery or quasi-slavery exists for 27 million today (according to Amnesty International), including women lured with false promises to become "sex slaves," and Indians who are fooled into working for gold in Peru and making charcoal in Brazil. See Michael Smith and David Voreacos, "The Secret World of Modern Slavery," *Bloomberg Markets* 15/12 (December 2006) 46-64.

⁵⁸ Grudem, "Should We Move" 300.

⁵⁹ Grudem, *Evangelical Feminism* 77-79.

Throughout the nineteenth century Miami was closely associated with the Presbyterian Church. By 1854 175 of 532 graduates had become Presbyterian ministers. All nine of its presidents until 1902 were Presbyterians.⁶⁰ One of these was Dudley Warfield, the brother of Princeton theologian B. B. Warfield. Dudley, a graduate of Princeton,⁶¹ and bachelor colleagues from the East, who were nicknamed the “Dude Faculty,” introduced football to Miami.⁶² An original faculty member, William Holmes McGuffey, was also a Presbyterian clergyman. While at Miami (1826–1836) he began the *McGuffey Readers*, which sold over 122 million copies between 1836 and the 1920s.

In the nineteenth century fierce debates over abolition and slavery divided both the faculty and the students. Walter Havighurst notes:

For thirty years the question of slavery was a ferment on the campus. In 1832 Miami students formed an Anti-Slavery Society and paraded by torchlights through the village streets. In the Literary Halls they debated abolition and colonization, and in the columns of their magazine they argued about nullification and states’ rights. President Bishop was a leader in the abolition movement and in liberal theology, but his faculty was divided.⁶³

b. *Cincinnati and Lane Seminary*. Ohio, a free state, was separated by the Ohio River from Kentucky, a slave-holding state. Prior to the coming of the railroads, which boosted the status of Chicago, Cincinnati was the metropolis of the Midwest. Its population exploded from 16,230 in 1826 to 161,044 in 1860.⁶⁴ In 2004 the important National Underground Railroad Freedom Center was built in Cincinnati, exhibiting the tragic story of slavery in the U.S., the flight of slaves in the so-called “underground railroad” through Ohio to Canada, and the struggle for the abolition of slavery.

Lyman Beecher (1775–1865), who had studied under Timothy Dwight at Yale, came in 1832 with his family to Cincinnati to become the head of Lane Theological Seminary. Lane was a new Presbyterian seminary located in the Walnut Hills area, two miles north of downtown Cincinnati. Lyman’s house, now named after his famous daughter, Harriet Beecher Stowe, still stands there and has become a museum. In September 28, 2003, the Ohio Bicentennial Commissions erected a historical marker at the former site of the seminary, with these words: “The Lane Seminary debates marked the shift

⁶⁰ Phillip R. Shriver and Edith Foth Puff, *A History of Presbyterianism in Oxford, Ohio 1818–1825–2000* (Oxford: The Oxford Presbyterian Church, 2000).

⁶¹ The first intercollegiate football game was played between Princeton and Rutgers at New Brunswick in 1869. See Richard P. McCormick, *Rutgers: A Bicentennial History* (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 1966) 105.

⁶² Walter Havighurst, *The Miami Years 1809–1969* (New York: G. P. Putnam’s Sons, 1969) 148. In recent years Miami (of Ohio, as our school is referred to by sportscasters) has been known as “The Cradle of Coaches,” for the remarkable fraternity of men who played or coached at Miami and then went on to have successful careers as coaches of collegiate or NFL teams. These include among others: Earl Blaik, Paul Brown, Woody Hayes, Bill Arnsparger, Weeb Ewbank, Sid Gillman, Ara Parseghian, Bo Schembechler, John Pont, Bill Mallory, Jim Tressel, Joe Novak, Ron Zook, Dick Crum, Randy Walker, and Terry Hoepner.

⁶³ Havighurst, *Miami Years* 52.

⁶⁴ Andrew R. L. Cayton, *Ohio: The History of a People* (Columbus: The Ohio State University Press, 2002) 23.

in American antislavery efforts from colonization to abolition, and the ‘Lane Rebels’ became ministers, abolitionists and social reformers across the country.”

The “Lane Rebels” were led by Theodore Weld (1803–1895), whose book Grudem cites.⁶⁵ Weld was converted by Charles G. Finney. In the spring of 1834, while Lyman Beecher was away on a fund-raising trip, Weld, who had become a student at Lane Seminary, converted the majority of students to the abolitionist position that slaveholding was a sin against God. When he defied the order of conservative trustees to cease his agitation, Weld was expelled.⁶⁶ He took with him most of the students, thirty-two of whom enrolled in the new Oberlin College in northwestern Ohio, where Finney taught theology before becoming the president of the college (1851–1866). Weld’s writings, *The Bible Against Slavery* (1837) and *Slavery As It Is* (1839), were widely circulated.⁶⁷ Weld argued that Jesus planted a “kernel of egalitarianism knowing its slow, covert growth would eventually destroy slavery.”⁶⁸

What is rather ironic about Grudem’s citing Weld as an authority for the Christian argument for abolition is that Weld and other abolitionists were also advocates for women speaking in public, adopting Finney’s “New Measure” of allowing women to speak in mixed assemblies. What is more, Weld was married to a Quaker abolitionist, Angelina Grimké, who with her sister Sarah was an outspoken public speaker on behalf of the Anti-Slavery Society. Angelina became the first woman to address an American legislature in 1838. When the Massachusetts Congregational ministers issued a letter condemning her public oratory, “Sarah responded with a lengthy biblical defense, *Letters on the Equality of the Sexes and the Condition of Women* (1839).”⁶⁹ Sarah linked the “misuse of Scripture” to defend slavery and to require female submission.⁷⁰

c. Scripture and slavery. Though the popular misinterpretation of Gen 9:25, the alleged “Curse of Ham,” was used in popular tracts to justify black slavery, this argument was not used by the scholarly Presbyterian clergy who engaged this issue in public debates.⁷¹

⁶⁵ It is worth noting that Kevin Giles, a noted Australian egalitarian author, also cites Theodore Weld. See Kevin Giles, “The Biblical Argument for Slavery: Can the Bible Mislead? A Case Study in Hermeneutics,” *EQ* 66 (1994) 13, n. 48.

⁶⁶ Samuel E. Schreiner, Jr., *The Passionate Beechers: A Family Saga of Sanctity and Scandal That Changed America* (Hoboken, NJ: John Wiley & Sons, 2003) 83. See also Lawrence T. Lesick, *The Lane Rebels: Evangelicalism and Antislavery in Antebellum America* (Metuchen, NJ: Scarecrow, 1980).

⁶⁷ C. E. Stockwell, “Weld, Theodore Dwight (1803–1895),” in *Dictionary of Christianity in America* (ed. Daniel G. Reid, Robert D. Linder, Bruce L. Shelley, and Harry S. Stout; Downers Grove: InterVarsity, 1990) 1240–41.

⁶⁸ J. Albert Harrill, “The Use of the New Testament in the American Slave Controversy: A Case History in the Hermeneutical Tension between Biblical Criticism and Christian Moral Debate,” *Religion and American Culture* 10 (2000) 154.

⁶⁹ M. L. Bendroth, “Grimké, Sarah Moore (1792–1873) and Angelina Grimké Weld (1805–1879),” in Reid *et al.*, *Dictionary of Christianity in America* 500.

⁷⁰ J. R. Hassey, “Christian Feminism,” in Reid *et al.*, *Dictionary of Christianity in America* 435.

⁷¹ See Edwin Yamauchi, *Africa and the Bible* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2004) ch. 1, “The Curse of Ham.”

Mark A. Noll lists four responses to the question of the Bible and slavery, which were made prior to the Civil War:

The first option was to admit that the Bible sanctioned slavery and, therefore, to abandon the Bible, at least in anything like its traditional shape, in order to attack slavery. This option was by far the least popular, but it enjoyed widespread publicity since it was defended by radical abolitionists of great notoriety like William Lloyd Garrison and Gerrit Smith.

The response that most directly contradicted this first position was to conclude that, since the Bible sanctioned slavery in passages like Genesis 14:14, Leviticus 25:44ff., or I Corinthians 7:21ff., faithful Christians should accept the legitimacy of slavery as it existed in the United States out of loyalty to the Bible's supreme divine authority. This was the stance of most southern theologians, however they might differ on the practical questions left in the wake of this conclusion—whether slavery should be supported as a positive good, reformed to bring it in conformity with broader ethical standards, or opposed through a casuistry of expediency.

A third, and the most complicated, response was held by some abolitionists and moderate emancipationists. They conceded that, while the Bible did indeed sanction a form of slavery, careful attention to the text of Scripture itself would show that the simple presence of slavery in the Bible was not a necessary justification for slavery as it existed in the United States. Countless variations of this argument appeared in the generation before the war, . . . this argument required a movement from the words of the Bible to theories about how the Bible should be applied to modern life, and it often seemed indistinguishable from the next response.

That fourth response, also promoted by the less radical abolitionists and some moderate emancipationists, was to distinguish between the letter of the Bible (which might be construed to allow slavery) and the spirit of the Bible (which everywhere worked against the institution).⁷²

Noll further comments:

The best-known alternative was the move from the Bible's letter to its spirit that abolitionists like Jonathan Blanchard, Albert Barnes, Henry Ward Beecher, and Gerrit Smith practiced, with varying degrees of deference to traditional views on Scripture. This move led directly or indirectly to the theological liberalism of the last third of the twentieth century.⁷³

d. *Anti-abolitionist George Junkin*. An advocate of an anti-Abolitionist stance was George Junkin, who was the second president of Miami University.⁷⁴ Over a period of two days from September 19 to September 20, 1843,

⁷² Mark A. Noll, "The Bible and Slavery," in *Religion and the American Civil War* (ed. Randall M. Miller, Harry S. Stout, and Charles R. Wilson; New York: Oxford University Press, 1998) 43–44.

⁷³ *Ibid.* 51. Henry Ward Beecher, the son of Lyman and the brother of Harriet, became the most famous preacher and orator in America. From his pulpit in Brooklyn his sermons and writings against slavery were widely influential. See Halford R. Ryan, *Henry Ward Beecher: Peripatetic Preacher* (New York: Greenwood, 1990).

⁷⁴ Havighurst, *Miami Years* 84. After leaving Miami in 1844, Junkin became president of Lafayette College and then of Washington College in Lexington, Virginia. Though opposed to abolition, he was more opposed to secession; he ministered to Union soldiers during the Civil War. One of his daughters married "Stonewall" Jackson, the famous Confederate general.

Junkin spoke for eight hours in Cincinnati in a public debate over abolition.⁷⁵ His main thesis was that “believing masters ought to be honored and obeyed by their own servants, and tolerated, not excommunicated from the church of God.” He was in favor of sending Africans to the free colony in Liberia.⁷⁶ He was able to cite many Scriptures, parsing the Hebrew and the Greek words, to demonstrate that slavery existed during both the OT and the NT eras, and that there was no explicit text which advocated the abolition of slavery either from Moses, Jesus, or Paul. He argued, “That there is not a sentence in the New Testament, which by fair and just interpretation according to the rules of grammar, gives ground for the logical inference, that, the simple holding of a slave or slaves, is inconsistent with Christian professions, and Christian character.”⁷⁷

e. *Abolitionist Jonathan Blanchard.* Jonathan Blanchard (1811–1893), who would later become the first president of Wheaton College, came to Lane Seminary in 1837, when the school was still recovering from the departure of the rebels led by Weld. He became the pastor of the Sixth Presbyterian Church in Cincinnati. He was an ardent abolitionist who had been greatly impressed by the stories he had heard from someone who had been involved in the slave trade.⁷⁸ He called on churches to deny fellowship to any who held slaves or who defended slavery. In October, 1845, he engaged in a four-day long debate, eight hours per day, against Dr. Nathan Lewis Rice over the issue of abolition.⁷⁹ This was held in the Tabernacle, the largest venue in Cincinnati.⁸⁰

Rice believed that the Bible’s teachings should lead to a gradual and voluntary elimination of slavery. Clyde Kilby relates, “As Rice methodically

⁷⁵ George Junkin, *The Integrity of Our National Union, vs. Abolitionism: An Argument from the Bible*, available from <http://dixs.library.cornell.edu/cgi/t/text/pageviewer-idx.c=mayantislaavery;idno=06837713;view=image;seq=1>.

⁷⁶ The American Colonization Society, founded by Robert Finley in 1816, was supported by James Monroe, Andrew Jackson, Francis Scott Key, and Daniel Webster. Its purpose was to transport emancipated blacks back to their original home. In 1820 the first ship sailed to West Africa with 88 emigrants. This eventually led to the founding of Liberia in 1847 as an independent nation. Though part of the motivation was benevolent, another aspect was the racist assumption that blacks could not be assimilated into a white society.

⁷⁷ Junkin, *Integrity* 45.

⁷⁸ Like Blanchard, William Wilberforce in England was inspired to work for abolition from a knowledge of the barbarity of the African slave trade. John Newton, the converted slaver, persuaded Wilberforce to remain in Parliament rather than to go into the ministry. Wilberforce successfully lobbied Parliament for over 20 years until the bill to abolish the Slave Trade was passed. A film, *Amazing Grace*, was released in 2007 to celebrate the bicentennial of his achievement.

⁷⁹ *A Debate on Slavery: Held in the City of Cincinnati, on the First, Second, Third, and Sixth Days of October, 1845, Upon the Question: "Is Slave-Holding in Itself Sinful, and the Relation between Master and Slave, A Sinful Relation? Affirmative: Ref. J. Blanchard, Pastor of the Sixth Presbyterian Church, Cincinnati. Negative: N. L. Rice, D.D., Pastor of the Central Presbyterian Church, Cincinnati* (New York: Negro Universities Press, 1969 reprint; originally published in 1846 by Wm. H. Moore & Co.).

⁸⁰ For a detailed analysis of this debate, see Laura Rominger, “The Bible, Commonsense, and Interpretive Context: A Case Study in the Antebellum Debate over Slavery,” *Fides et Historia* 38/2 (2006) 35–54.

tied Blanchard in knots over how to interpret the proslavery implications of specific texts, Blanchard returned repeatedly to ‘the broad principle of common equity and common sense,’ ‘the general principles of the Bible,’ ‘the whole scope of the Bible.’⁸¹ He also appealed to the Declaration of Independence.

Blanchard was a clever speaker, who used sarcasm to amuse his listeners. He appealed triumphantly to the English translation of the Authorized Version as a decisive proof of his thesis:

The whole question turns on the single question what was the *status* of these Hebrew bond-servants? And I shall show you that, whatever it was, it was not slavery. . . . *If they were slaves, the translators of our Bible would have called them so. . . .* Our version of the Bible was issued by royal authority, in the year of our Lord, 1607; the year of the first settlement of the United States, at Jamestown, Virginia; in an age of Biblical study, and by forty-seven men learned, not only in books, but in affairs. Now in only two places in the Old and New Testament, have the translators used the word slaves. One is Jeremiah, II, 14, in which instance it is put in Italics, showing there is no corresponding word for it in the Hebrew. And the other is Revelation, XVIII, 13, (where the original Greek is not “*Doulos*” but “*Somaton*” the genitive plural of “*Soma*”—“a human body.”) Where “slaves and *souls of men*” are spoken of as the traffic of the mother of harlots.⁸²

f. *Harriet Beecher Stowe*. In the end, the person who had the most impact on the populace was not the pompous Junkin, nor the passionate Blanchard, but a woman, Lyman Beecher’s daughter Harriet. Harriet (1811–1896) married a widower, Calvin Stowe, in 1836. Stowe, who was a teacher at Lane Seminary, was a linguist who knew Hebrew, Latin, Greek, Arabic, German, Italian, and French. Just before her wedding Harriet wrote to her friend Geogiana, “Well, my dear G. about half an hour more and your old friend, companion, schoolmate, sister, etc., will cease to be Hatty Beecher and change to nobody knows who.”⁸³

Harriet and her sister Catherine⁸⁴ organized the Western Female Institute in Cincinnati, and helped to smuggle slaves fleeing Kentucky on their way north. From these contacts Harriet learned of the brutal treatment of slaves which she so vividly recreated in her fiction. Her famous novel *Uncle Tom’s*

⁸¹ Clyde Kilby, *Minority of One* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1987) 97.

⁸² *Ibid.* 336. In one of the first articles I published, “Slaves of God,” *BETS* 9 (1966) 31–49, I tried to explain why the King James Version did not use the word “slave” in the 17th century. When I married my wife Kimie in 1962, she had been doing research on the use of *doulos* “slave” in the NT, and I inherited many of her notes. I realize some forty years later that I did not acknowledge this debt in print at the time.

⁸³ Schreiner, *The Passionate Beechers* 91.

⁸⁴ Catherine was an advocate of female education but an opponent of female suffrage. She was a prolific author who wrote 28 books, including *An Essay on Slavery and Abolitionism with Reference to the Duty of American Females* (Philadelphia: Henry Perkins, 1837), in which she sets forth the duties Christians have toward the “sin” of slavery. See Mark David Hall, “Catherine Beecher: America’s First-Female Philosopher and Theologian,” *Fides et Historia* 32 (2000) 65–80. I owe this reference to my graduate student, Jenny Rempel.

Cabin was first serialized in 1851 in an Abolitionist paper and then published as a book in 1852. To demonstrate that she was not simply making things up, she published in the following year *A Key to Uncle Tom's Cabin; Presenting the Original Facts and Documents upon which the Story is Founded*.⁸⁵ She wrote, "What is peculiar to slavery, and distinguishes it from free servitude, is evil, and only evil, and that continually."⁸⁶ Marie Caskey reports, "When the Emancipation Proclamation was brought to the Senate, the entire floor and gallery rose to acknowledge Mrs. Stowe's presence and roared its acclamation."⁸⁷

g. The Civil War. When the Civil War broke out in 1861, G. Wallace Chessman recounted:

Most saddening was the parting at Old Miami, where the sons of Dixie marched away the same morning as the "University Rifles." The two groups rode together the twelve miles from Oxford to Hamilton, there to separate, the one turning north to Camp Jackson in Columbus, the other south to Cincinnati. The war that set brother against brother would not except classmates.⁸⁸

The Civil War was brought on by the inability of Christians, who all believed in the Bible as God's Word,⁸⁹ to agree on how to apply the ancient texts to a modern situation. It had been the decision of the American Baptist Missionary Union in 1844 not to appoint slaveholders as missionaries which led to the establishment of the Southern Baptist convention. Elizabeth Fox Genovese and Eugene Genovese conclude, "But southern evangelicals, having cited chapter and verse, successfully enlisted the Bible to unify the overwhelming majority of slaveholders and non-slaveholders in defence of slavery as ordained of God. The antislavery spokesmen failed to demonstrate that the Bible repudiated slavery; primarily, they appealed to the ideals of the Enlightenment and Declaration of Independence."⁹⁰

Mark Noll has some astute observations on two scholarly theologians, who in his judgment made the best case for the application of the NT to the

⁸⁵ Port Washington, NY: Kennikat, 1853.

⁸⁶ *Ibid.* iii.

⁸⁷ Marie Caskey, *Chariot of Fire: Religion and the Beecher Family* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1978) 206.

⁸⁸ E. Wallace Chessman, *Ohio Colleges and the Civil War* (Columbus: Ohio State University Press, n.d.) 6. Ten Miami alumni (including Benjamin Harrison) became generals for the North, and three for the South. A former professor, Albert T. Bledsoe, who had moved with McGuffey to the University of Virginia, became the assistant secretary of war for the Confederacy. Lottie Moon, an Oxford resident, became a spy for the Confederates.

⁸⁹ Noll, "The Bible and Slavery" 48: "During the war itself, the American Bible Society distributed more than 3 million Bibles or New Testaments to combatants; something like 300,000 Bibles passed from northern publishers into the South (despite a ban on trade between the sections)." Both sides read these Bibles to justify their own righteous war.

⁹⁰ Elizabeth Fox-Genovese and Eugene D. Genovese, *The Mind of the Master Class: History and Faith in the Southern Slaveholders' Worldview* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005) 490. Gene Genovese is the foremost authority on slavery in the Americas. When I was his colleague at Rutgers from 1964 to 1969 he was an atheist and a Marxist. Since then he and his wife, a noted feminist scholar, have converted to Catholicism, much to the shock of their colleagues.

difficult issue of slavery in their day. They were Robert Breckinridge (1800–1871) of Kentucky and Charles Hodge (1797–1878) of Princeton, who both argued against slavery.

Both Breckinridge and Hodge felt the force of proslavery arguments, yet both resisted the hermeneutical logic of the South. Breckinridge did so by attempting to define slavery not in the abstract, but as it existed concretely in the slave states. Hodge moved in a different direction. In a series of learned works he conceded the biblical grounding for slavery as an institution, but argued that a proper understanding of Scripture, as well as a right judgment on American circumstances, should move toward the amelioration of slavery and then its effacement.⁹¹

It strikes me that Breckenridge's argument resembles Grudem's point that American slavery was not the same as ancient slavery, and Hodge's argument resembles Webb's thesis that the innate principles of the NT did lead to the abolition of slavery.

3. *Disputes over women.* Twenty-four years ago Frank E. Gaebelein in his presidential address to the ETS wrote,

Another piece of unfinished business relates to the place of women in our society. Evangelicals were divided on the Equal Rights Amendment. But there are areas, quite apart from constitutional action, in which women need greater freedom and more support and recognition. An attitude of male domination rather than of mutual submission in Christ still persists among us and we need to do more about it.⁹²

Gaebelein also called attention for the need of evangelicals to respond to environmental concerns.⁹³

Wayne Grudem contends that an egalitarian reading of the NT can lead to liberalism. But he acknowledges that some of his friends who are strong defenders of inerrancy, including former ETS presidents Stan Gundry,⁹⁴ Walter Kaiser,⁹⁵ and Roger Nicole⁹⁶ are egalitarians. Most significant is the fact that Roger Nicole was one of the founders not only of the ETS but also of the CBE. According to my information, which may be incomplete or inaccurate, other ETS presidents who have been either egalitarians or have been sympathetic to the egalitarian position have been Walter Dunnett, Millard Erickson, Frank Gaebelein, Vernon Grounds, Alan F. Johnson, Kenneth Kantzer, and Richard Pierard.

⁹¹ Noll, "The Bible and Slavery" 59.

⁹² Frank E. Gaebelein, "Evangelicals and Social Concern," in his paper published in *JETS* 25 (1982) 21.

⁹³ That evangelicals have been all too slow to respond is shown by John Jefferson Davis, "Ecological 'Blind Spots' in the Structure and Content of Recent Evangelical Systematic Theologies," *JETS* 43 (2000) 273–86.

⁹⁴ Stanley Gundry, "From *Bobbed Hair, Bossy Wives and Women Preachers to Women Be Free: My Story*," *Priscilla Papers* 19/2 (2005) 19–24.

⁹⁵ Walter C. Kaiser, Jr., "Correcting Caricatures: The Biblical Teaching on Women," *Priscilla Papers* 19/2 (2005) 5–11.

⁹⁶ Roger Nicole, "Biblical Egalitarianism and the Inerrancy of Scripture," *Priscilla Papers* 20/2 (2006) 4–9.

a. *1 Timothy 2:9–15*.⁹⁷ I agree with several of Wayne Grudem’s specific refutations against egalitarian arguments in trying to interpret such key passages as *1 Timothy 2*. Like Grudem I do not agree with Richard and Catherine Kroeger, who posit a Gnostic background in *Ephesus*.⁹⁸ To counter the arguments by egalitarians like Craig Keener⁹⁹ that the reason for Paul’s command for the women at *Ephesus* to keep silent was the probability that they were uneducated, Grudem provides a wealth of sources to demonstrate that there were opportunities for women in the Greco-Roman world to have access to education.

Now the controversial passage *1 Timothy 2:9–15* contains three issues dealing with women, which I will call A, B, and C, that have often been analyzed separately but which should be interpreted as dealing with the same group of women.

Issue A: Modesty in Dress, Rather than Ostentation (vv. 9–10)

Issue B: Silence in Submissiveness (vv. 11–12)

Issue C: Women’s Responsibilities to Their Families (v. 15)

As to Issue A, Wayne Grudem writes, “This passage does not prohibit jewelry or braided hair; it prohibits ostentation or excessive emphasis on jewelry or braided hair as a woman’s source of beauty. Christian women should still obey that understanding of this passage today.”¹⁰⁰

As to Issue C, Andreas Köstenberger wrote an exhaustive study entitled “Ascertaining Women’s God-Ordained Roles: An Interpretation of *1 Timothy 2:15*,” published in the *Bulletin for Biblical Research* (1997), which I commend to all. He suggested that possibly a proto-Gnostic background may have been behind the influences which caused women to neglect their childbearing duties. He writes, “If these lines of thought are correct, the present passage would speak powerfully to a cultural context where many are seeking to ‘liberate’ women from all encumbrances of family responsibilities in order to unleash them on a quest for self-fulfillment apart from such function.”¹⁰¹

I commend a new book which convincingly establishes, at least for me, the *Sitz im Leben* of the *1 Tim 2:9–15* passage. It is *Roman Wives, Roman Widows: The Appearance of New Women and the Pauline Communities* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2003) written by Bruce Winter, director of the Institute

⁹⁷ On the Pauline authorship of the Pastoral Epistles, see Earle E. Ellis, “Pastoral Letters,” in *Dictionary of Paul and His Letters* (ed. Gerald F. Hawthorne, Ralph P. Martin, and Daniel G. Reid; Downers Grove: InterVarsity, 1993) 658–66; idem, *The Making of the New Testament Documents* (Boston/Leiden: Brill, 2002) 406–18, 422–25.

⁹⁸ Grudem, *Evangelical Feminism*, ch. 24, “Women Teaching False Doctrine in *Ephesus*?”

⁹⁹ Craig S. Keener, *Paul, Women & Wives: Marriage and Women’s Ministry in the Letters of Paul* (rev. ed.; Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 2004) 110, 112. For his persuasive exposition of why women should be silent in *1 Corinthians 14:26–40*, see Craig S. Keener, *1–2 Corinthians* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005) 118–19.

¹⁰⁰ Grudem, *Countering the Claims* 200.

¹⁰¹ Andreas J. Köstenberger, “Ascertaining Women’s God-Ordained Roles: An Interpretation of *1 Timothy 2:15*,” *BBR* 7 (1997) 143.

of Early Christianity in the Graeco-Roman World, and the former warden of Tyndale House, Cambridge.

First, Winter cites the Stoic philosopher Musonius (late first cent. AD), who taught that women ought to have the same education as men. Second, he cites an exhaustive new study by E. A. Hemelrijk, who documents a steep increase in educated women in the first and second centuries.¹⁰² Third, he comments on the reference to women's clothing as a key to understanding the desire of some women at Ephesus to aspire to emulate the "new women," who were thrusting themselves into the public sphere.

As to issue B, Winter comments, "In any case, 1 Timothy 2:11–12 refers not to a wife's submissiveness to her husband but rather to how the godly wife should respond to Christian instruction. This is conveyed by means of both negative and positive injunctions. The sentence reads literally, 'the wife in silence must learn in all subordination' . . . The repeating of 'in' (ἐν) without any use of 'and' (καί) indicates that the silence was to be exercised during instruction."¹⁰³ Musonius, who advocated that women should be educated, was concerned that such education not make them arrogant. He wrote:

Women who associate with philosophers are bound to be arrogant for the most part and presumptuous, in that abandoning their own households and turning to the company of men they practice speeches, talk like sophists, and analyze syllogisms, when they ought to be sitting at home spinning.¹⁰⁴

As to the much disputed meaning of the word ἀυθεντέω (KJV "to usurp authority"; RSV and NIV "to have authority"), Winter asks, "Did it reflect a concern that Christian women wanted to have authority in Christian gatherings (which included men) or to dominate in the same way that some 'new' women were accused of doing in the civil courts and the forum?"¹⁰⁵ In the light of all of our lexical and epigraphic evidence, he suggests that the latter is the probable case.¹⁰⁶

Given the antithetical comments that preceded (2:11) and followed (2:12b) . . . it seems that here the term carries not only the connotation of authority but also an inappropriate misuse of it.

The significance to be given to this term needs to be assessed in the light of the preceding background discussion relating to 1 Timothy 2:9–11 and 15, the dress codes being proscribed there and the desire on the part of some first century women not to have children.¹⁰⁷

¹⁰² E. A. Hemelrijk, *Matrona Docta, Educated Women in the Roman World from Cornelia to Julia Domna* (London: Routledge, 1999).

¹⁰³ Winter, *Roman Wives, Roman Widows* 114.

¹⁰⁴ Cited in *ibid.* Cf. *The Satires of Juvenal* (trans. Rolfe Humphries; Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1958) 63–90, *The Sixth Satire Against Women*.

¹⁰⁵ Winter, *Roman Wives, Roman Widows* 116.

¹⁰⁶ Winter is aware of the studies by George W. Knight III, "Authenteō in Reference to Women in 1 Timothy 2.12," *NTS* 30 (1984) 143–57 and H. Scott Baldwin on this word published in *Women in the Church: A Fresh Analysis of 1 Timothy 2:9–15* (ed. A. Köstenberger, T. R. Schreiner, and H. S. Baldwin; Grand Rapids: Baker, 1995) 269–305, which argue on the basis of extrabiblical parallels that the word simply means "have authority."

¹⁰⁷ Winter, *Roman Wives, Roman Widows* 119.

b. *Past applications of 1 Timothy 2.* But if for the sake of argument we accept the view that the complementarian exegesis of 2 Timothy 2:11–12 for women “to keep silent” is correct for the first-century horizon and must still be applied, we must still ask how this command is to be applied in our horizon today. As I indicated earlier, for centuries this command kept women from singing in churches. Furthermore, this command was used to oppose the movement of suffrage for women, even by some women themselves. Susan B. Anthony (1820–1906) suffered great abuse from clergy who opposed her public speaking. It was not until 1920 with the 19th Amendment that women gained the right to vote.

The nineteenth-century abolitionists such as Welds linked the issues of slaves and women together. The social reality of slavery in the nineteenth century was so much worse than the status of slavery in the first century that they advocated the abolition of slavery. We must all acknowledge that the social reality of women in the twenty-first century is much better than the status of women in the first century.

Wayne Grudem clarifies for us differences between complementarians:

There are two different groups among those who hold that the Bible teaches different roles for men and women. The first group I call “Two-Point Complementarian” because they hold that men and women are equal in value but have different roles in (1) the home and (2) the church.

The other group, which I call “One-Point Complementarian,” holds that men and women are equal in value but have different roles in (1) the home.¹⁰⁸

Even among the first group, there are significant differences as to how women might function in church and in parachurch situations. For example, some “Two-Point Complementarians” are quite generous in the latitude they will allow women. Harold Hoehner of Dallas Theological Seminary presented a paper at this conference, “Can a Woman Be a Pastor-Teacher?” a question which he answered in the affirmative by making the distinction between the offices of presbyter/elder and overseer, which are reserved to men, and the gifts of pastor/teacher which are open to all, including women.

Wayne Grudem, on the other hand, represents those who would prohibit women from teaching or preaching before groups which include men, even in so-called parachurch situations. This is the position which encounters the greatest practical problems in today’s changed society.

c. *Co-education.* James Fairchild, the founder of Oberlin College (founded in 1833), and Charles Finney believed that women should be educated with men, and that indeed they would exercise a “civilizing” influence upon men. Oberlin was also the first in 1835 to admit African Americans. By the 1850s 40% of the students at Oberlin were women; by 1861 Oberlin with 1313 students was the largest college in Ohio.

For a long time most women were educated separately from men. At Oxford, Ohio, there were three separate women’s schools, the Oxford Female

¹⁰⁸ Grudem, *Countering the Claims* 286.

Institute (established in 1849), the Western Female Seminary (established in 1853),¹⁰⁹ and the Oxford Female College (established in 1854). Miami University did not become co-ed until 1888 over the objections of Professor Hepburn, who lived long enough to see the first women's dormitory dedicated in his name!

As everyone is aware, the ratio between women and men has increasingly tipped in favor of women. At Miami University the ratio is now 54% female and 46% male. Among the 102 members of the Coalition of Christian Colleges and Universities (CCCU) the ratio of women students is now 59% female and 41% male. The ratio of faculty among CCCU schools is now 35% women and 65% men.¹¹⁰

What this also means is that there has been an increasing number of women attending seminaries. In the 250 seminaries surveyed by the Association of Theological Schools the number of women has increased from about a quarter to about a third of all seminary students between 2001 to 2005. Hebrew Union College in Cincinnati, the rabbinical seminary for the liberal Reformed Jews, now has a ratio of 60% women to 40% men.

In the mid-1980s Dallas Theological Seminary began admitting women to all its degree programs, though it did so with the observation that "if a woman graduate from any of our degree programs sought ordination, we would be concerned." Currently at Dallas there are women faculty in OT, Christian Education, and Pastoral Ministries. Darrell Bock informs me that "[m]en can opt out of taking them, but usually do not."¹¹¹

With co-education came new opportunities for women to teach. There is no evidence that this was the case in the first century. Winter asserts, "We know that they were taught by their mothers or by male instructors, but there is no record of women undertaking the task of a teacher in a professional sense, either in salaried posts in great houses or in running schools as sophists."¹¹²

d. *Wayne Grudem's principle.* Wayne Grudem articulates the following rule:

The principle then is simple: *parachurch organizations should follow New Testament commands written to churches when those organizations are engaged in the activities that the command is talking about.*¹¹³

He then spells out what this should ideally mean in practice:

¹⁰⁹ Mt. Holyoke had been founded in 1837 by Mary Lyon. Her friend Helen Peabody became the president of Western Female Seminary (later renamed Western College).

¹¹⁰ The data was supplied to me by Dr. Ronald Mahurin of the CCCU.

¹¹¹ At Bethel Seminary three women are on the faculty, including one who is a dean and another who is an associate dean. At Truett Seminary (begun in 1994) at Baylor University there are women faculty in all disciplines. At Western Seminary there are full time women professors in Counseling, and one woman who is teaching Hebrew. At Wheaton, there are women in the graduate Counseling Program, and four women who teach Bible and Theology to undergraduates, one of whom teaches a course to grad students.

¹¹² Winter, *Roman Wives, Roman Widows* 115–16.

¹¹³ Grudem, *Evangelical Feminism* 110.

Teaching the Bible to an assembled group of men and women is so much like the situation Paul had in mind when he said, “I do not permit a woman to teach or to exercise authority over a man” (1 Tim. 2:12), that only men should do this. I believe that such a principle should apply not only to meetings in local churches but also to Bible conferences, weekend retreats, and annual meetings held by parachurch organizations or denominations. For similar reasons, I do not think it appropriate for women to hold Bible teaching positions in Christian colleges and seminaries.¹¹⁴

Now a blanket prohibition against women speaking before any mixed audience would ironically deny the complementarians the opportunity to hear some of their best women advocates, such as Edith Schaeffer and Betty Elliot. Complicating the issue is the availability of women speakers like Beth Moore and Anne Graham Lotz on video. Can these be shown to a mixed audience?

If egalitarianism is pushed too far, it does pose a real problem of liberalism, but complementarianism pushed too far can enmesh us in a tangle of legalism. Who can tell what activities are permitted to a woman or not in these vastly different circumstances? Wayne Grudem has set out in detail where he thinks we have to draw the line, so to speak.¹¹⁵

The conclusion is that Paul did not allow women to teach *the Bible* or have governing authority over the assembled church. But this text would not prevent women from teaching *skills* (such as Greek or Hebrew or counseling) or teaching *information* (such as reporting on missionary activity or giving a personal testimony) to the church. The passage talks about Bible teaching, and therefore it is appropriate to distinguish between teaching *the Bible* and teaching *skills* or *information*.¹¹⁶

But how can one teach Hebrew without using the Hebrew Bible? Wayne Grudem would not listen to a woman teaching in an assembly, but he believes that it would be quite proper to read a commentary by that same woman because “it is as if the author were talking privately to me.”¹¹⁷ That seems to be a fine distinction. In other words, one is compelled to resort to a kind of casuistry, that is, deciding case by case what is permitted and what is not permitted, because our horizon is so different from the first horizon.

VII. HOMOSEXUALITY

As noted before, Grudem and Webb are in general agreement that the Scripture condemns homosexuality.¹¹⁸ Chapter 32 of Wayne Grudem’s

¹¹⁴ Ibid.

¹¹⁵ Grudem, *Countering the Claims* 54–56. He draws up a fairly comprehensive list of 28 possible activities in which women might be involved, and draws the line between no. 9 and the remaining 19 activities. But he concedes that other complementarians might well draw the line elsewhere.

¹¹⁶ Ibid. 34–35.

¹¹⁷ Ibid. 45.

¹¹⁸ For recent succinct summaries on this subject, see Robert A. J. Gagnon, “The Old Testament and Homosexuality: A Critical Review of the Case Made by Phyllis Bird,” *ZAW* 117 (2005) 367–91; Thomas R. Schreiner, “A New Testament Perspective on Homosexuality,” *Them* 31/3 (2006) 62–75.

Evangelical Feminism is entitled “The Final Step: Approval of Homosexuality.” He describes how the mainline denominations (Episcopal Church, Presbyterian Church-USA, Evangelical Lutheran Church of America, United Methodist Church, American Baptist Churches), have moved to positions allowing homosexual clergy and gay unions.

Wayne Grudem cites as examples of erstwhile evangelical feminists Virginia Ramey Mollenkott¹¹⁹ and Letha Scanzoni,¹²⁰ who began by urging toleration for homosexuals¹²¹ and ended up by embracing homosexuality themselves or endorsing homosexual relations. He also cites the case of Judy Brown—but this is important, no others.

Wayne Grudem himself does not explicitly link the evangelical feminists in the CBE with the slide into an approving attitude toward homosexuality. Indeed, he writes, “I am thankful that the egalitarian group Christians for Biblical Equality has remained clearly opposed to the moral legitimacy of homosexuality.”¹²² But because he criticizes egalitarians on other grounds, some uninformed readers may make the connection.

I should therefore wish to set the record straight on behalf of the leaders of the CBE, especially their first president, Catherine Kroeger. Last fall I called Wayne’s attention to a new history of the evangelical feminist movement by Pamela Cochran of the University of Virginia, which narrates the emergence of the CBE.¹²³

The Evangelical Women’s Caucus was formed in 1974, led by Virginia Ramey Mollenkott, Letha Scanzoni, and Nancy Hardesty to promote women’s rights, such as the Equal Rights Amendment. Many well-known evangelicals such as Virginia Hearn, Alvera Mickelson, Gretchen Gaebelein Hull, and others originally took part in this movement. But then at a contentious convention at Fresno, California in 1986, when the leaders pushed through a resolution supporting homosexual rights, a minority of more conservative evangelicals left the movement.

It was at this juncture that these evangelical feminists called upon Catherine Kroeger, the leader of the Minneapolis delegation, to establish the Christians for Biblical Equality in 1987.¹²⁴ Therefore it should be noted that though a few evangelical feminists became quite radicalized to the point that they now embraced or approved of homosexuality, others such as Catherine Kroeger and Linda Belleville have suffered no little opprobrium from these radicals for their conservative stand on this issue.

¹¹⁹ Virginia Mollenkott and Letha Scanzoni, *Women, Men, and the Bible* (Nashville: Abingdon, 1977).

¹²⁰ Letha Scanzoni and Nancy Hardesty, *All We’re Meant to Be: A Biblical Approach to Women’s Liberation* (Waco, TX: Word, 1974). This is listed at the 23d most important of the 50 books that have shaped evangelicals by *Christianity Today* 50/10 (October 2006) 53.

¹²¹ Letha Scanzoni and Virginia Ramey Mollenkott, *Is The Homosexual My Neighbor? Another Christian View* (New York: Harper & Row, 1978).

¹²² Grudem, *Countering the Claims* 283.

¹²³ Pamela D. H. Cochran, *Evangelical Feminism: A History* (New York: New York University Press, 2005).

¹²⁴ *Ibid.* 96.

VIII. GOOD NEWS AND CONCERNS

1. *Christian colleges.* The good news is that evangelical Christian colleges are flourishing.¹²⁵ Their robust growth far outpaces other private colleges and public universities. Over the period between 1990 and 2004, whereas all public four-year universities grew 12.8%, and four-year private colleges grew 28%, the 102 members of the Coalition of Christian Colleges and Universities grew an astounding 70.6%.¹²⁶ Those educated by these colleges will undoubtedly be for the most part egalitarian in orientation.

A Jewish journalist who visited various religious schools including such evangelical colleges as Baylor, Gordon, Westmont, and Wheaton titles one of her chapters, "What Revolution? How Feminism Changed Religious Colleges While They Weren't Looking." She concludes, however, that their students have not been swayed to radical feminism. Somewhat to her surprise she found that these religious colleges were helping students integrate their faith with modernity.¹²⁷

2. *Evangelical seminaries.* According to the website of the Association of Theological Schools (www.ats.org), the twelve largest of the ATS's 250 schools according to Full Time Equivalents (numbers in parentheses) are all evangelical seminaries: Southwestern Baptist (2062), Fuller (1981), New Orleans Baptist (1567), Asbury (1315), Southern Baptist (1312), Gordon-Conwell (1181), Dallas (1122), Southeastern Baptist (917), Trinity Evangelical Divinity School (910), Bethel (833), Concordia (789), and Reformed (672). These total 14,661 students in 12 seminaries, which constitutes about 18% of the 82,000 total divinity students. By striking contrast there are only 2,623 M.Div. students in the 54 Roman Catholic seminaries in the U.S. and Canada, or an average of less than 50 per school; the total of all students in Catholic seminaries is 7,536 or an average of 140 students per school.¹²⁸

3. *Women and minorities in the ETS.* Five years ago Darrell L. Bock in his presidential address to the ETS said, "I am arguing that the primary value of the ETS is the mixture that is here (and we need to do better with regard to that mixture, ethnically, in terms of gender, and internationally)."¹²⁹ I am afraid that the ETS has a long way to go before we come close to reflecting the gender and the ethnic composition of evangelicals in the U.S., to say nothing of evangelicals worldwide. Not counting those who were involved in Study Groups last year, out of 322 proposals that I received as the

¹²⁵ For their history, see William C. Ringenberg, *The Christian College: A History of Protestant Higher Education in America* (rev. ed.; Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2006).

¹²⁶ The data was provided by Dr. Ronald Mahurin of the CCCU.

¹²⁷ Naomi Schaefer Riley, *God on the Quad: How Religious Colleges and the Missionary Generation Are Changing America* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 2005) 149.

¹²⁸ For the crisis of the Catholic priesthood, see Andrew M. Greeley, *Priests: A Calling in Crisis* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2004).

¹²⁹ Darrell L. Bock, "The Purpose-Driven ETS: Where Should We Go? A Look at Jesus Studies and other Example Cases," *JETS* 45 (2002) 13.

program chair for our 2005 convention, only 26 or 8% were from women. In contrast to other organizations with which I have worked such as the Conference on Faith and History and the American Scientific Affiliation, which have had women presidents, and the Institute of Biblical Research, which has women on its council, the ETS does not have a single woman on the committees that are listed in our journal. The Near East Archaeological Society has one woman among its board of 30 directors.

Fifteen of the proposals were from Asians (all Koreans I would guess) or less than 5%. There were only three with Hispanic surnames or less than 1%. Of course, I am not able to tell from names whether a person proposing a paper was black or white, but I suspect that the number of African Americans was minuscule.

4. *World Christianity.* Philip Jenkins, a historian at Penn State University who is the most perceptive analyst of religion today, predicts with certainty that the growth of Christianity will overwhelmingly take place in areas outside of the U.S. and Europe, that is, in Latin America, Africa, and Asia. Six countries in the world will have 100 million Christians in 2050; only one will be in the industrialized West (USA). Jenkins notes that Christians in the areas of the global South (Latin America, Africa, Asia) will be predominantly evangelical and charismatic, tipping the balance in favor of churches that are theologically conservative.¹³⁰

The growth of evangelical Christianity in Korea has been especially phenomenal, with estimates of as high as 40% of the population committed to an earnest, zealous brand of Christianity. Koreans have sent out more missionaries than any nation save the U.S. Koreans have now poured into our seminaries; about a quarter of the students at Fuller are Korean.

The vigor of parachurch organizations such as InterVarsity, Navigators, and Campus Crusade is apparent at state universities. At Miami University about a thousand students are involved in such organizations. Since 1996 with the passing of Proposition 209 in California, the influx of Asians at elite universities has been phenomenal. And as Tim Stafford reports, many, if not most, of these are evangelicals.¹³¹ At Yale University, for example, half the members of the Crusade chapter are Asian American; at Berkeley over 90% of the parachurch members are Asian Americans. This cohort is also contributing to rising numbers in our seminaries.

We may therefore conclude that despite our differences and detractors, evangelical Christians both here and abroad can be encouraged that we are united in looking to Scripture as our sure “dragoman” to guide us in these tumultuous days.

¹³⁰ Philip Jenkins, *The New Faces of Christianity: Believing the Bible in the Global South* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006).

¹³¹ Tim Stafford, “The Tiger in the Academy,” *Christianity Today* 50/4 (April 2006) 70–73.