

LIBERTY UNIVERSITY

SCHOOL OF MUSIC

**Women in the Leadership of Church Worship Upholding and Manifesting Biblical  
Principles of their God-given Design.**

A Thesis Submitted to  
The Faculty of the School of Music  
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DWS in Christian Worship

by

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## **Abstract**

Despite the existing literature and changes in church governments that promote women in leadership roles of church worship, there remains a gap that specifies the biblical feminine qualities of women in worship leadership. These specifics should clarify the manifested characteristics of those women in leadership who exhibit the biblical distinctness of their gender from that of the male gender. Historical study shows in past generations that many denominations have banned women from such leading roles because of the interpretation of Scripture pertaining to the man being the head over the woman. This stance has been changing in the 21<sup>st</sup> century with the significant and influential pressure for reform of the Women's Liberation Movement. The writing of books, theses, and dissertations by Christians on the subject have also greatly influenced significant changes in viewpoints within the body of Christ. This study of clarification for biblical characteristics of a female in the leadership of church worship is because the unbiblical characteristics of modern society promoted for females in leadership are permeating many churches of all denominations and/or non-denominational churches in an alarming manner. This qualitative study examines the issue of discerning God's desire of characteristics and their manifestations for women in worship leadership, primarily through the lens of the Bible. Along with the Bible as the authoritative Word of God, it also considers relevant literature from Christian exposition, secular sociology, psychology, and archived visuals. This paper will expose the biblical uniqueness and celebration of the female role and her giftings to be used for God's glory.

## **Dedication/Acknowledgements**

“Now to him who is able to do far more abundantly than all that we ask or think, according to the power at work within us, to him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus throughout all generations, forever and ever. Amen” (Eph 3:20-21, ESV). This passage is the message of my heart for all that has been accomplished. God has overwhelmed me with his love, grace, encouragement, and enablement each step of the way. I know that I can do nothing without him, but I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me (John 15:5, Philippians 4:13). I give him praise and thanksgiving with the acknowledgement of his deserving all glory and honor.

The Lord used many people along the way to give both encouragement and practical teaching to help me learn, grow, and accomplish this challenge. The most important person to honor is my brother, Pastor Jack Walter. He took over the void of the loss of our father when I was still in my 20's. It was his words of believing in me that gave me courage to enroll for the doctoral program. Jack, along with his wife Jan have been cheerleaders, prayer warriors, and voices from the Holy Spirit in my life.

I would also like to thank my children, grandchildren, and many cherished friends for their continuing support and love along the way. In practical ways, three women stand out as amazing mentors and teachers. Mrs. Peggi Douglas taught me so much about navigating on a PC, while both Dr. Brenda Widger and Dr. Mindy Damon poured understanding and honing of writing skills into my being. They are beautiful, intelligent, and godly women who exemplify what my thesis wants to convey. I am also so thankful to Dr. Thomas Seel and Mr. James Hodges for reading, editing, and further perfecting the writing of this thesis. My greatest appreciation goes to my advisor Dr. Jerry Newman. What a shining and brilliant example, mentor, guide, and friend!

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## Chapter One: Introduction

The dilemma for women of strong personality, talent, and leadership qualities to maintain characteristics of biblical roles as God puts forth in the Word of God remains a debated topic in many arenas. In describing her personal experience of a great disagreement in her church, Beth Allison Barr writes, “What was happening to us was none of those things. My husband was fired after he challenged church leadership over the issue of women in ministry.”<sup>1</sup> The writer of this thesis experienced firsthand the pain of most leaders within a certain denomination dogmatically interpreting I Timothy 2:8-14, (English Standard Version) as meaning that women should be seen and not heard, along with children, in the company of men. This experience was especially true within the local church. This passage focuses upon a Christian woman’s outward appearance, her demeanor in a teaching setting, and her position of submission to the male gender under Christ. This interpretation eliminates the ability for women to use their gifts and influence in significant ways within gatherings and Christian worship.

The Bible teaches that both genders are given gifts, according to Romans 12:6-8. This passage states, “Having gifts that differ according to the grace given to us, let us use them: If prophecy, in proportion to our faith; if service, in our serving, the one who teaches, in his teaching; the one exhorts, in his exhortations; the one contributes, in generosity; the one who leads, with zeal; the one who does acts of mercy, with cheerfulness.” Tim Cole leans on this passage in a wonderful article about both genders using their gifts in ministry. He writes, “This means, practically, that in Jesus’ church, room must be made for women to utilize their

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<sup>1</sup> Beth Allison Barr, *The Making of Biblical Womanhood: How the Subjugation of Women Became Gospel Truth* (Grand Rapids: Brazos Press, 2021), 3.

enablement and fulfill their divinely ordained roles in the Body.”<sup>2</sup> These differing ideas cause confusion and factions. In turning to the Word of God for primary answers, one must be of the conviction that it is authoritative, and it is God-breathed (II Timothy 3:16-17). According to Scripture references such as James 1:7, Hebrews 13:8, Malachi 3:6, Jude 1:3, and Ephesians 4:4-5, the Word of God does not contradict itself because God never contradicts himself. In a published list of beliefs, Moody Bible Institute states, “The Bible is infallible in all it affirms to be true and therefore reliable. We, however, may be fallible in our interpretation of the Bible.”<sup>3</sup> The problem arises when things are taken out of context and/or the Word of God is used to support a human opinion rather than allowing the Holy Spirit’s intent to be the foundation of truth and practice. One must follow Jesus’ example of allowing Scripture to interpret Scripture. Pete Lange writes in his book, “Here are two phrases to keep in mind in the pursuit of faithful biblical interpretation. ‘Context is king,’ and, ‘a text without a context is a pretext.’”<sup>4</sup> Carmen Joy Imes references Bible scholar Jordan Schnitzer who focused on interpreting Scripture with Scripture. She writes, “Schnitzer does not answer all the exegetical questions at play ... his organizational approach allows a reader to explore exegetical allusions throughout the Bible—where Scripture interprets Scripture.”<sup>5</sup>

At the other end of a pendulum swing is the church with men acting in the submissive role or being involved in leadership to a very minimal extent. Many articles speak about the outcome of society’s effect on the church. One such article is by Kristen Clark and Bethany Baird. They

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<sup>2</sup> Tim Cole, “Men and Women: Equal in Gifting, Romans 12:6-8,” Redeemer Bible Church, January 9, 2018. <https://www@redeembible.org>.

<sup>3</sup> Moody Bible Institute. “The Inspiration and Inerrancy of the Bible,” Positional Statements. Accessed February 21, 2023. <https://www@moodybible.org>.

<sup>4</sup> Pete Lange, “Scripture Interprets Scripture: What Does this Mean,” *Christ for You*, June 24, 2020.

<sup>5</sup> Carmen Joy Imes, “Scripture Interprets Scripture. This Book Shows How,” *Christianity Today*, February 25, 2022.

conclude that there is a direct correlation between the changes in women's roles and demeanor in society and what is taking place in church worship.<sup>6</sup> A similar article written by Michelle Lesley says, "Just as men in secular society have stepped back to avoid being run over by headstrong women, or even joined them in their quest for female dominance, evangelical men have abdicated their God-given positions of leadership in the church and home, sometimes even joining women in their violation of Scripture by inviting them into unbiblical positions of leadership and by sitting under their teaching and preaching."<sup>7</sup>

In the 21<sup>st</sup> century there arose a cultural movement known as the Gender Theory which has a residual effect on the church culture at large.<sup>8</sup> J. Warner Wallace has this to say: "The authors of the New Testament also encouraged us to continue our relationships with the world around us but to be careful to live in a way that pleases God, not the culture: I John 2:15, I Corinthians 5:9-10, Romans 12:2, and James 1: 27."<sup>9</sup> As Christians are living today in a culture that is shifting to ideologies that stray further and further away from biblical principle and design, the body of Christ must look at specific concerns to avoid being swept into those ideas and practices unpleasing to God. As shown in previous paragraphs, Christians need to allow Scripture to be the ultimate proof-text for interpreting Scripture. Christians must know and practice biblical principles without making rules and regulations that are legalistic and imbalanced with the intention of God for each man, woman, and child. The primary concern is the study of a

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<sup>6</sup> Kristen Clark and Bethany Baird, "The Feminist Attack on God's Design for Womanhood." *Girl Defined*. Accessed February 10, 2023.

<sup>7</sup> Michelle Lesley, "Feminist Infiltration and the Emasculation of Christian Men." *Discipleship for Christian Women*, May 13, 2016.

<sup>8</sup> Sharon James, *Gender Ideology* (Ross-shire, Scotland: Christian Focus, 2019) *Eikon*, Spring Issue 2020.

<sup>9</sup> J. Warner Wallace, "Christian Worldview: What Does I Mean to be 'In the World' but not 'of the world'," *Christian Living*, July 21, 2017.



woman's biblical role and those characteristics differentiating from a man while exercising her God-given gifts.

As an exploration of these ideas, this study will seek to answer the following questions:

Research Question One: What are the biblical principles that should be upheld by female worship leaders according to their God-given gender design?

Research Question Two: What are the manifested characteristics of female worship leaders who uphold biblical principles according to their God-given gender design?

### **Background of Topic**

As early as the 19<sup>th</sup> century, male leaders of protestant Christianity gave new thought to the idea of women in worship. Under such men as Charles Finney and D.L. Moody, women were now permitted to partake in the communion table and be influential lay leaders.<sup>10</sup> More and more opportunities presented themselves for women as different ministries both within and without the church buildings began to blossom. As technology, industry, and science grew, the ability to reach out with the gospel in various ways and in new places afforded opportunities of both genders to fill the need. Both secular colleges and universities were springing up in the 1900's that allowed women the opportunity to be trained alongside men. Women had abilities that God wanted to be used. One such example comes from the Southern Baptists. Beth Allison Barr writes, "In 1963 the Southern Baptist denomination ordained Addie Davis, and in 1974 it sponsored a conference affirming women's role in ministry."<sup>11</sup> As musicians began to thrive among the female gender, questions arose as to the extent of leadership a woman could have in

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<sup>10</sup> James White, *A Brief History of Christian Worship* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1993), 145, 168.

<sup>11</sup> Barr, *The Making of Biblical Womanhood*, 175.

the music worship service. Many Christian universities over the 20<sup>th</sup> century have included the training of women in music and other various ministry fields.

Historical church movement must always continue to be biblical in truth, principle, and practice. God's Word and the doctrines therein never change, even if the role and disposition of women drastically change in secular society. Understanding the Word and its purpose for the female gender is imperative. A study of historical changes for women in leadership, especially in church worship leadership, is also imperative background material for the God-honoring conclusions of this thesis.

A knowledge of God's design of the female gender and her role in life while dwelling on the earth begins in the book of Genesis, e.g. Genesis 2:18-23 and Genesis 3:16. One may find from this first book, and continuing throughout Scripture, e.g. Ephesians 5:22-23, Colossians 3:18, I Timothy 2:15, and I Peter 3:1, that a woman is designed significantly different from a man in anatomy and the function of childbearing and the nurturing of children. Secular books, as well, give very scientific data to support the differences between females and males not only physically, but also in emotional variation.<sup>12</sup> This physical study has many ramifications for the desire of the secular world opposing God to blur all lines of distinction between men and women. This blurring is carried out by appearance and desire to function in any role the other gender is capable of fulfilling.

Beyond the debates about the physical blurring of the genders, there are debates with the idea of men having headship or dominion over women. Much has been written and dissected about the meaning of verses from Genesis 2 and 3 and carrying over into the New Testament in

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<sup>12</sup> Natalie Wolchover, "Men Vs. Women: Our Key Physical Differences Explained," *Live Science* September 22, 2011.

references such as I Corinthians 11 and Ephesians 5.<sup>13</sup> The specific concern is understanding the difference between genders having equality in Christ and yet differing in the role of authority within the home and church that biblically belong to the male gender. In a book review, Thomas Creedy writes, “It’s worth noting, though, that the right conclusion (equality is biblical) can be undermined by the wrong working, the wrong route. Indeed, when that happens, that throws doubt upon the wider set of conclusions and theological issues.”<sup>14</sup> When determining the strength of leadership and other giftings of a woman, the questions remain as to the characteristics she maintains to lead without being the authority of the home or church in which God has given men the responsibility. Denominations and other groups within Christianity are very divided as to the specific roles and characteristics that are in question for women leading in church worship.

Many church leaders are now acknowledging and encouraging women to come forward to lead in church worship along with other ministries outside the physical walls of a church building. Some of these churches have ignored biblical doctrine and principles altogether.<sup>15</sup> Engaging on the other extreme, some have clung to the traditional dogma of the Fundamentalists or followers of Bill Gothard’s principles which totally subjugate women.<sup>16</sup> The people of these groups seek to limit and put tight restrictions on what ways women may serve in church worship. Others, like the writing of Beth Allison Barr, seek to be biblical but completely disagree with the interpretation of questioned passages of the Pauline Epistles which speak to the headship of the

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<sup>13</sup> M. Chad Glover, “Integrating Faith and Practice” Course paper at Midwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, February 21, 2020.

<sup>14</sup> Penelope Wilcock, *Equality is Biblical: Lifting the Curse of Eve* (London, England: SPCK Publishing, 2020).

<sup>15</sup> Liam Adams, “New Methodist denomination forms after years of debate on LGBTQ policies,” *This is Nashville at WPLN News* May 18, 2022, Accessed February 10, 2023, <https://wpln.org.-post-new-method>.

<sup>16</sup> Don Veinot, Joy Veinot, and Ron Henzel, *A Matter of Basic Principles: Bill Gothard and the Christian Life* (Wonder Lake: Midwest Christian Outreach, 2003).

male gender.<sup>17</sup> Along with these, there are yet still others who are seeking to take a very biblical but balanced approach to women using gifts and talents given by God in church worship leadership. One such person is Michelle McClain-Walters. In a very general sense, she spoke to the characteristics of the women in leadership of church worship. She writes, “Not at all like the feminist movement, this new breed of women will not attempt to carry out their mission copying the dress and behavior of men. No, quite the contrary. These women will be arrayed in the softest silk and elegant high heels.”<sup>18</sup>

### **Statement of the Problem**

Despite the existing literature and changes in church governments that promote women in leadership roles of church worship, there remains a gap, or the said problem, to be resolved. The problem examined in this study is the historical lack of clarity for the manifested characteristics of those women in worship leadership who exhibit the biblical distinctness of their gender from that of the male gender. Having different physical features, different personalities, different talents, and different spiritual giftings is true of every man and woman. God has made each person as unique as the fingerprints each human distinctly owns. The only differences between men and women are characteristics of gender and specific roles that need to be honored as God designed. These differences are found in the Word of God and are obviously ignored by the present agendas in the mainstream society of such groups as the LGBTQIA.<sup>19</sup> If a woman has been given responsibility by God to flourish in all God has endowed her with, then there are

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<sup>17</sup> Beth Allison Barr, *The Making of Biblical Womanhood* (Grand Rapids: Brazos Press, 2021).

<sup>18</sup> Michelle McClain-Walters, *The Esther Anointing: Becoming a Woman of Prayer, Courage, and Influence* (Lake Mary: Charisma House, 2014), 1,2.

<sup>19</sup> Kevin Le, “What Does the Full LGBTQIA +Acronym Stand For,” *Good Rx Health*. Updated October 19, 2022.

specific and biblical ways to do this. God supplies all knowledge and understanding in his Word. II Peter 1:3 states “His divine power has granted to us all things that pertain to life and godliness, through the knowledge of him who called us to his own glory and excellence.” Carolyn Moore writes, “What is most maddening is that neither the woman leader nor the people she leads may be fully aware of the subtle, unconscious pressure being applied against all of them by this fallen world.”<sup>20</sup> A firm biblical stance must be brought to light as a litmus test in a very precarious and subtle rebellion of Satan against the body of Christ. Satan not only wants Christians to not function in God’s intention of their gender, but to also bring division amongst God’s people. Philippians 2:2 says, “Complete my joy by being of the same mind, having the same love, being in full accord and of one mind.” One may hear God’s heart on unity in an Old Testament scripture as well. Psalm 133:1 says, “Behold, how good and pleasant it is when brothers dwell in unity.”

### **Statement of the Purpose**

A qualitative study method will be employed to determine the characteristics of women in leadership of church worship who uphold and exemplify the biblical principles for their God-given gender design. As set forth by the work of John Creswell on research methods, a qualitative methodology will be used to gather information and study material.<sup>21</sup> His book states that the qualitative approach is: “a Constructivist worldview, ethnographic design, and observation of behavior.”<sup>22</sup> The book also states in an explanatory table of various methods that qualitative methods are as follows: “emerging methods, open-ended questions, interview data,

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<sup>20</sup> Carolyn Moore, *When Women Lead: Embrace Your Authority, Move Beyond Barriers, and Find Joy in Leading Others* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan Reflective, 2022), 30.

<sup>21</sup> John Creswell, and J. David Creswell, *Research Design: Qualitative, Quantitative, and Mixed Methods Approaches* (Thousand Oaks: SAGE Publications), 2018.

<sup>22</sup> Ibid.

observation data, document data, and audiovisual data, text and image analysis, themes, interpretation of patterns.”<sup>23</sup> This methodology is much more suitable for this study than the quantitative or mixed methods that are also explained in Creswell’s book.

### **Significance of the Study**

There is great significance for both men and women in this study of the specific characteristics that a godly and biblical woman in leadership of church worship will uphold and exemplify. The title of a book by Bob Kauflin illustrates the significance of this study and clarification: *Worship Matters: Leading Others to Encounter the Greatness of God*.<sup>24</sup> A woman who desires to lead others in worship to encounter the greatness of God must value and exemplify the biblical characteristics of her gender given by the greatness of God’s design. This study of clarification for biblical characteristics of a female in leadership church worship is so important because the secular, and usually unbiblical, characteristics that are promoted for females, or the blurring of gender, in leadership are permeating many churches of all denominations and/or non-denominational churches in an alarming manner.<sup>25</sup> One need only look at a YouTube channel of different worship services around the world with women in leadership. The shocking attire, hairstyles, and aggressive or domineering demeanor and speech of some of the women follow the blurring of gender roles that modern society is thrusting upon the world.

The greatest significance and importance of this study is for females that are in the leadership role of church worship. Trying to be biblically sound and pleasing to God can be very

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<sup>23</sup> John Creswell, and J. David Creswell, *Research Design: Qualitative, Quantitative, and Mixed Methods Approaches* (Thousand Oaks: SAGE Publications, 2018).

<sup>24</sup> Bob Kauflin, *Worship Matters: Leading Others to Encounter the Greatness of God* (Wheaton: Crossway, 2008).

<sup>25</sup> Josh McDowell, and Ben Bennett, *Free to Thrive: How You Hurt, Struggles, and Deepest Longings Can Lead to a Fulfilling Life* (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 2021), 137.

confusing if there are differing opinions as to females' role, and if these are being argued in each ear by various church leaders. In a book by Blanchard, Hybels, and Hodges, they state, "The point is that your greatest responsibility as a leader is to lead yourself."<sup>26</sup> Having a firm peace and conviction as to the role and the necessary characteristics that God has called a female leader to manifest is paramount. Female leaders will need these in handling the pressures that will come, along with possible criticism.

### **Research Questions**

As an exploration of these ideas, this study will seek to answer the following questions:

Research Question One: What are the biblical principles that should be upheld by female worship leaders according to their God-given gender design?

Research Question Two: What are the manifested characteristics of female worship leaders who uphold biblical principles according to their God-given gender design?

### **Hypothesis**

Research Question One may be answered with the following hypothesis:

Hypothesis One: The biblical principles that should be upheld by female worship leaders according to their God-given gender design include submission to God and male headship, aspiration to distinct/modest feminine beauty inwardly and outwardly while also being a loving nurturer to her children, and, also, those around her.

The word "submission" has had a bad connotation since the days of The Women's Liberation Movement of the 1970s. Many were of the opinion both in some churches and homes that women were somehow inferior or of lesser rank in relation to men. A glimpse of this truth is

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<sup>26</sup> Ken Blanchard, Bill Hybels, and Phil Hodges, *Leadership by the Book: Tools to Transform Your Workplace* (Grand Rapids: Harper Collin, 2017), 93.

found from an article on the women's rights movement. It states, "Do you realize that just 25 years ago married women were not issued credit cards in their own name? That most women could not get a bank loan without a male co-signer? Those women working full time earned fifty-nine cents to every dollar earned by men?"<sup>27</sup> Feeling as though women were to be seen and not heard, or of the same caliber as purchased property was the outcry of women calling for reform. This is illustrated by the following quote and the emphasis therein. "While the first-wave feminism of the 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries focused on women's legal rights, especially the right to vote, the second-wave feminism of the women's rights movement touched on every area of women's experience- including politics, work, the family, and sexuality."<sup>28</sup> In breaking down the meaning of the word "submission", the word simply means "under the same mission." The Webster Dictionary says "sub" is a prefix meaning "under; beneath." The same dictionary says "mission" means "task; objective."<sup>29</sup> In any collaboration or project involving more than one person, someone must be designated as the leader to avoid chaos. Myles Munroe makes this very clear in several of his books on leadership. He writes, "Keep in mind that although true leaders draw other people to their vision, they do not 'clone' them to be just like themselves; they do not seek to recreate themselves in others. Rather, they enable others to use their unique gifts and abilities to fulfill their own inherent purposes."<sup>30</sup> It is equality in cooperation using different roles and giftings to accomplish a common desire. This is obviously the plan God designed for the two

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<sup>27</sup> Bonnie Eisenburg, and Mary Ruthsdotter, "History of the Women's Rights Movement", *National Women's History Alliance*. Accessed November 5, 2023.

<sup>28</sup> Elinor Burkett, "Women's Rights Movement," *Encyclopedia Britannica*, December 2, 2022.

<sup>29</sup> *The Merriam-Webster Dictionary*, (Springfield, Massachusetts: Merriam-Webster, Incorporated, 2016), 710, 460.

<sup>30</sup> Myles Munroe, *The Power of Character in Leadership*, (New Kensington: Whitaker House, 2014), 57.



different genders to act and create as one entity. The extremes of belief or practice on either end of the spectrum are not biblical. Biblical submission gives great freedom and purpose to women as is designed by God, who is the embodiment of love.

Research Question Two may be answered with the following hypothesis:

Hypothesis Two: The manifested characteristics of female worship leaders who uphold biblical principles according to their God-given gender design are observable in their attitude/demeanor, dress/speech, and the proper priorities in time management.

I Corinthians 13: 4-5 speaks very well to the aspect of attitude/demeanor. It reads, “Love is patient and kind; love does not envy or boast; it is not arrogant or rude. It does not insist on its own way; it is not irritable or resentful.” A woman’s attitude is also one based on the biblical principle of submission and respect for male headship. Ephesians 5:33 reads, “However, let each one of you love his wife as himself, and let the wife see that she respects her husband.” As one example of the area of dress, the following is a quote from a secular article: “In fact, dress scholars Mary Ellen Roach and Joanne Eicher, find that dress is one of the main ways we send social signals because what we wear shows our identity.”<sup>31</sup> I Corinthians 6:20 says, “For you were bought with a price. So, glorify God in your body.” I Corinthians 10:31 states, “So, whether you eat or drink, or whatever you do, do all to the glory of God.” In regarding how a godly woman in leadership should speak, James 1:19 is very applicable. It says, “Know this, my beloved brothers: let every person be quick to hear, slow to speak, slow to anger.” Colossians 4:6 reads, “Let your speech always be gracious, seasoned with salt, so that you may know how you ought to answer each person.”

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<sup>31</sup> Vanessa Van Edwards, “Fashion Psychology: What Your Choice in Clothes Say About You,” *Science of People*. Accessed February 3, 2023.

Maintaining appropriate priorities are also part of the vital characteristics of a godly woman in attitude/demeanor. Time is life and life is time. How one spends time and with whom one spends time reveals what are priorities to that individual. Time management is very revealing for women of talent and leadership strengths in church worship. Many projects can call for a women's time in this role. Keeping God's priorities is a main area to explore. Carolyn Moore writes, "We need to know ourselves well enough that we won't say yes because of flattery heaped on us by someone with an agenda, nor will we let ourselves tolerate things that take up our time and keep us from flourishing."<sup>32</sup> These biblical truths simply set the stage for the study of specific characteristics and specific ways for the women in specific scenarios in leadership roles of church worship to honor God's desire for them.

A woman may have all the proactive characteristics of biblical principles at work in occupying a leading role in church worship and yet be challenged by the selfish or immature toxicity of others. Carolyn Moore writes extensively on this subject in her book. She says, "It is difficult to form your identity as a leader when you are constantly trying to figure out how to live into the authority given to you while people around you are questioning your place."<sup>33</sup> This situation also calls for biblical characteristics of a retroactive nature for a proper response. Women in leadership roles of church worship seek to characterize an honorable daughter of the King, who is the Lord Jesus Christ.

### **Summary**

The foundational thoughts of purpose for this thesis must stay in priority and give guidance to the study. First, one must realize that throughout church history, the body of Christ

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<sup>32</sup> Carolyn Moore, *When Women Lead*, 151.

<sup>33</sup> *Ibid.*, 31.

has been challenged with changes and sharp disagreements about those changes of emphasis or methods of functioning within the gathering services of the local church. These variations come about as society changes around them. Politics, engineering, science, the arts, philosophy, and religion all have roles to shape the challenge of staying true to the Word of God that is unchanging. The Word of God does not change because God does not change. Hebrews 13:8 reads, "Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and today and forever."

Secondly, the focus is on one such challenge facing the church in the present. This challenge is not only the role of women in church worship, but more specifically, defining the biblical characteristics a woman must maintain as she uses the giftings God has given her. At present, the range of acceptance and outward manifestations of women in leadership of church worship is as broad and long as the alphabetical list of denominations of the protestant world. This creates further division in the body of Christ, which God desires to be in unity. More importantly, it questions the design of God for women in distinction from men. Biblical principles are very clear-cut in Scripture. Therefore, there needs to be a clear-cut understanding of the characteristics that women as worship leaders should embrace and manifest.

Two research questions and hypotheses have been given for the study to focus upon. These guiding thoughts will stay at the helm of the study and conclusions found. They bring the subject matter from a very broad discussion of women in ministry to specific characteristics of godly female leaders of worship. These characteristics show the use of their giftings while also differentiating them from the male gender.

This qualitative study will seek to bring those characteristics to light and give a standard from the Word of God to follow when there are many worldly influences guiding those characteristics instead. The core concepts of this study are the biblical principles and truths that

give distinctness to the female gender and the specific characteristics women in leadership of church worship manifest to give credence to those truths. These concepts provide a theological, philosophical, and methodological examination of women in the leadership of Christian church worship.

In the broader scope, this study seeks to understand the verse in Hebrews 12:2 that says, “Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewal of your mind, that by testing you may discern what is the will of God, what is good and acceptable and perfect.” The will of God contrasts with the rebellious will of those in opposition to God. James 4:4 says, “You adulterous people! Do you not know that friendship with the world is enmity with God? Therefore, whoever wishes to be a friend of the world makes himself an enemy of God.” I Corinthians 2:14 says, “The natural person does not accept the things of the Spirit of God, for they are folly to him, and he is not able to understand them because they are spiritually discerned.”

Stephen Miller makes a very important statement to all worship leaders. This statement brings a weighty responsibility, especially for women, in worship leadership. He writes, “If worship is truly offering our entire world back to God, then worship leaders are leading the church in worship in a much more extreme and radical way than just standing on a stage and singing songs. We are showing them what it means to be a Christian.”<sup>34</sup> Specifically, the female worship leader is demonstrating what it means to be a Christian woman in the fullness of her gifts and talents, and, also, the fullness of her femininity.

Tony Stoltzfus writes a very foundational thought for each female leader to consider as a child of God. He says, “Destiny is something you are, not something you do.... The more you

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<sup>34</sup> Stephen Miller, *Worship Leaders: We Are Not Rock Stars* (Chicago: Moody Publishers, 2013), 121.

become who you were made to be, the more you'll do what you were born to do (Eph 1:4-5)."<sup>35</sup>

The Christian female worship leader needs to manifest characteristics that every Christian woman should desire. The added responsibility of this study is differentiating them from men who are in leadership. Women are to use their God-given talents and gifts to the fullest, as was brought out in previous paragraphs. Being able to manifest leadership using those gifts and talents while remaining feminine in contrast to a man is an exciting study, and so needed in this day and hour.

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<sup>35</sup> Tony Stoltzfus, *Leadership Counseling: The Disciplines, Skills, and Heart of a Christian Coach* (Virginia Beach: Transformational Leadership Coaching, 2005), 71.

## **Chapter Two: Literature Review**

This chapter will employ theological, philosophical, and methodological resources in the study of the personal attributes and leadership qualities of a Godly woman leading worship. It will contain Christian exposition of biblical passages as the main foundation to this study. It will further examine scholarly secular findings in the areas of both sociology and psychology. Finally, a look at archived visuals and charted documents will be reviewed for further substantiation to the Bible and other written materials.

### **A Biblical Woman**

The logical place to begin the study from a biblical perspective is in the book of Genesis. “So, God created mankind in his own image, in the image of God he created them; male and female he created them” (Genesis 1:27). Genesis 2:7 records that God formed a man from the dust of the earth. It was not until verses 18-25 of this chapter that God created a woman from the rib of the first man. God created two different genders of beings; the New Testament confirms this idea in Paul’s letter to the Corinthians. He writes, “For man was not made from woman, but woman from man. Neither was man created for woman, but woman for man,” (I Corinthians 11: 8-9). Genesis establishes both the two different genders with differentiating characteristics, and the leadership that God places upon the male gender. According to Genesis 1:18 a woman was needed and made to be a helper to the man. Keil and Delitzsch write this about the passage: “Of such a help the man stood in need, in order that he might fulfill his calling, not only to perpetuate and multiply his race, but to cultivate and govern the earth. It is established from the beginning that the man and the woman are equally dependent upon one another although they have

different roles.”<sup>36</sup> Keil and Delitzsch go on to say, “By this the priority and superiority of the man, and the dependence of the woman upon the man, are established as an ordinance of divine creation. This ordinance of God forms the root of that tender love, which the man loves the woman as himself, and by which marriage becomes a type of the fellowship of love and life, which exists between the Lord and His Church (Eph. Vi:32).”<sup>37</sup>

From a theological standpoint and concerning the authority which God gave to men in the church, a statement by Gregory Brewton is noteworthy. He speaks to both genders in addressing the worship minister in relation to the senior pastor. He writes, “Because of the pastor’s role in the church, worship ministers must be comfortable coming under the pastor’s authority.”<sup>38</sup>

In this instance, both genders are in submission to the authority of the pastor of the local church because God ordained it to be so. We find this verified in I Timothy Three and, also, Titus One. The passage in the letter to Timothy refers to the pastor as an overseer. Halley writes of these verses in Titus also. He says, “Qualifications of an Elder (1:5-9), ‘Elder’ (5), and ‘Bishop’ (7), are here used as identical terms for the same office. Their qualifications, as here enumerated, are practically the same as those given in I Timothy 3: 1-7.”<sup>39</sup>

It is noteworthy to also conclude this overseer was of the male gender with no consideration of the female gender to hold this office. The same observation may be made in the letter to Titus. Verses one and two state, “This is why I left you in Crete, so that you might put what remained into order, and appoint elders in every town as I directed you- if anyone is above

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<sup>36</sup> Gregory B. Brewton, *Guide to Worship Ministry: The Worship Minister’s Life and Work* (Eugene: WIPF & STOCK, 2018), 27.

<sup>37</sup> Keil and Delitzsch, *Commentary on the Old Testament*, 89, 90.

<sup>38</sup> Gregory B. Brewton, *Guide to Worship Ministry: The Worship Minister’s Life and Work* (Eugene: WIPF&STOCK, 2018), 27.

<sup>39</sup> Henry H. Halley, *Halley’s Bible Handbook*, (Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, 1965), 643.

reproach, the husband of one wife..." These verses never give any directive to a woman in qualification.

I Timothy 5:17 states, "Let the elders who rule well be considered worthy of double honor especially those who labor in preaching and teaching." God establishes authority among humans in general and, also, between the genders for the sake of things being accomplished "decently and in order," (I Corinthians 14:40). In explanation of this structured organizational plan of Paul, Lea and Griffin teach that Paul divided the church into three main groups. This breakdown is found in I Timothy Chapter 3. They make it clear that Paul focused on qualifications and not specific duties. They show this three-way division as follows: "he discussed overseers or bishops (3:1-7), deacons or church helpers (3:8-10,12-13), and then the women helpers (3:11)."<sup>40</sup> It is clear that men are the authority figures in the church.

Theologically, men are also the authority in the home. I Corinthians 11:3 says, "But I want you to understand that the head of every man is Christ, the head of a wife is her husband, and the head of Christ is God." Ephesians 5:22-24 states, "Wives, submit to your own husbands, as to the Lord. For the husband is the head of the wife, even as Christ is the head of the church, his body, and is himself its Savior: Now as the church submits to Christ, so also wives should submit in everything to their husbands."

In referencing these passages and others in I Timothy, it is important to note the thoughts of a prominent female Christian writer. Carolyn Moore writes the following: "These passages must be taken within the context of the overall message of the Bible. They must be read through the lens of Deborah's story (Judges 4-5) and through the lens of Mary's charge (John 20:18);

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<sup>40</sup> Thomas D. Lea, and Hayne P. Griffin, Jr., *The New American Commentary* (Nashville: B&H Publishing Group, 1992), 105.



through the lens of Galatians 3:28 ('there is neither Jew nor Gentile, neither slave nor free, nor is there male or female'), and the stories of Phoebe, Priscilla, Tryphena, Tryphosa, and the great women who co-labored in the gospel with Paul (Rom.16)."<sup>41</sup>

There is an interesting thought in the commentary given by Farrar and Thomas on this passage that seems to conflict with women's place in the New Testament passages. In reference to the verses of women being in subordination and comparing Galatians 3:28 they write, "This, however, is merely an ordinance of earthly application. In the spiritual realm 'there is neither male nor female' (Gal. iii:28)."<sup>42</sup> After further exegesis of the passages they go on to say, "It was, perhaps, an abuse of this principle which had led the Corinthian women to assert themselves and their rights more prominently than decorum warranted."<sup>43</sup>

In dissecting the verses in I Timothy 2, Liefeld sums up in contextual understanding the approach to take as the study progresses about the place of women. He writes, "While it is not held that these existed in well-defined forms in the New Testament period or that they were a significant formative factor in the teachings of the Pastoral Letters, we must not ignore the fact that deviation from reasonable norms of interpersonal behavior would have been noted against the Christians."<sup>44</sup> In digesting each passage in comparison to one another on the place of women in the Christian church and home, there is one very sure conclusion to make. These passages teach that all are one in Christ and yet are endowed with different genders, giftings, callings, and

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<sup>41</sup> Carolyn Moore, *When Women Lead*, 9.

<sup>42</sup> F.W. Farrar, and David Thomas, *The Pulpit Commentary Volume 19* (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1962), 361.

<sup>43</sup> Ibid.

<sup>44</sup> Walter L. Liefeld, *The NIV Application Commentary* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, 1999), 106.

roles. Each is given as a vehicle for God to have loving fellowship with the believer, reveal himself to a lost world, and bring glory to himself.

In reference to this discussion Archibald M. Hunter writes, “Shall we put this in modern terms: ‘In the Christian society there can be no place for white or black, management or labor, man or woman.’”<sup>45</sup> This quote calls for equality although the ethnicities, the genders, and the roles still distinctly exist. God gave the ultimate leadership role of management (or overseeing) to males (of any race), while women are co-equal in intelligence, talents, spiritual gifting, and value. God gave the males physical dominance and different emotional processing with purpose to lead and protect the females. This discussion of the male physical dominance has surfaced in modern sports and military articles and news commentaries.

The most recent and well-known controversial discussion has arisen when a male athlete decided to be a female. He entered competitive sports against other females and dominated when he was previously just average among the males. Riley Gaines shares her painful story of being robbed of a trophy by a transgender named Lia Thomas. Harriet Alexander writes, “Gaines competed against transgender University of Pennsylvania swimmer Lia Thomas on the NCAA championships in March 2022, and said the experience of racing Thomas- who raced in the men’s competition until 2019- ‘felt like I was going into the race with my hands tied behind my back.’”<sup>46</sup>

There is also an emotional difference between genders. This came to light in a military study on gender and mental health. A team of practitioners had this to say in a report for military

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<sup>45</sup> Archibald M. Hunter, *The Layman’s Bible Commentary Volume 22* (Richmond: John Knox Press, 1966), 31.

<sup>46</sup> Harriet Alexander, “Swimmer Riley Gaines slams ESPN for honoring ‘arrogant cheat’ trans athlete Lia Thomas in Women’s History Month special,” *Daily Mail*, March 2023.

gender difference<sup>47</sup>: “Women serving in the U.S. military are more likely to report mental health problems than men, including symptoms of depression and posttraumatic stress disorder (PTSD).”<sup>48</sup>

Myles Munroe goes into detail in a chapter of one of his books that explains physiologically how the brains of a female and male are different.<sup>49</sup> He starts with the premise that women are primarily emotional feelers while men are primarily logical thinkers. He writes this about the male brain: “In contrast, there are fewer nerves connecting the two hemispheres of the male’s brain, so that the logical and emotional sides are not as closely connected. Because of this, he basically needs to ‘shift gears’ to move from his dominant logical side to his emotional side.”<sup>50</sup>

Christopher West also has a wonderful book on the gender issue from a biblical and physiological perspective.<sup>51</sup> This book goes into the differences in physical features. It then explains the difference in the brain chemistry that makes genders different emotionally. Finally, it draws a beautiful realization of how and why God created the male and females to work in collaboration. He writes, “As we’re already seeing, the body is not only biological. Since we’re made in the image of God as male and female, the body, as we will unfold in some detail, is also theological.”<sup>52</sup>

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<sup>47</sup> Lisa H. Jaycox, Andrew R. Morral, Amy Street, Terry L. Schell, Dean Kilpatrick, and Linda Cottrell, “Gender Differences in Health Among U.S. Service Members,” *Rand Health Quarterly*, May `5, 2023.

<sup>48</sup> Ibid.

<sup>49</sup> Myles Munroe, *Woman: Understanding the Purpose and Power of Woman* (New Kensington: Whitaker House, 2001), 145.

<sup>50</sup> Ibid.

<sup>51</sup> Christopher West, *Our Bodies Tell God’s Story: Discovering the Divine Plan for Love, Sex, and Gender* (Grand Rapids: Brazos Press, 2020), 5.

<sup>52</sup> Ibid.

Of all his creations, God made only the human species in his image and told them to rule over the animal world (Genesis 1:28). However, the fact that male and female exist in the animal world as well, is worth noting. Lisa Bevere did a study of the habits between a lion and a lioness. She writes, “In the lion world, there is no gender confusion... Both are comfortable in their skin and celebrate the unique strengths of their respective gender.”<sup>53</sup> Myles Munroe concludes that God made the genders different for the sake of perfect balance. He writes, “Whatever God drew out of Adam to make Eve, the man needs in order to be complete.”<sup>54</sup>

When humans distort or try to reverse the natural laws that God has designed mankind to function within, the outcome does not go well. God makes his position on this very clear and calls these things rebellion with his judgement coming upon these men and women. Romans 1:26-27 states, “For this reason God gave them up to dishonorable passions. For their women exchanged natural relations for those that are contrary to nature; and the men likewise gave up natural relations with women and were consumed with passion for one another, men committing shameless acts with men and receiving in themselves the due penalty for their error.” Another important passage about God’s perspective is in Jude. Verse 7 says, “Just as Sodom and Gomorrah and the surrounding cities, which likewise indulged in sexual immorality and pursued unnatural desire, serve as an example by undergoing a punishment of eternal fire.” Looking back to the Old Testament’s first book, one may find in Genesis 19 God saving Lot and his family from the cities as he destroyed them by fire.

A study was conducted from 2008- 2011 on suicide risk in lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender individuals. The article states, “Despite strong indications of elevated risk of suicidal

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<sup>53</sup> Lisa Bevere, *Lioness Arising* (New York: Waterbrook Press, 2010), 91.

<sup>54</sup> Myles Munroe, *Woman*, 150.

behavior in lesbian, gay bisexual, and transgender people, limited attention has been given to research, interventions or suicide prevention programs targeting these populations.”<sup>55</sup>

A more recent study done in August of 2023 has this to report: “Research shows that lesbian, gay, bi, transgender, and queer teens are at increased risk of suicide and mental health issues like depression and anxiety. One of the most startling statistics these teens consider suicide and make suicide attempts at about *four times* the national rate for all adolescents.”<sup>56</sup>

Key importance in this discussion is a recent statistical chart from 2020 -2022 from *The Trevor Project* showing this increase by percentages.<sup>57</sup>

Another study which included all ages of the LGBQ community wrote this:

“Lifetime suicide attempts were reported by 31% of young LGBQ people, compared to 24% of the middle cohort, and 20% of the oldest group. In the middle and older cohorts, 24% and 29% respectively, of first suicide attempts occurred at age 26 or older, and half (14%) of these attempts happened after age 41 in the older group.”<sup>58</sup>

Not only does God not want this unnatural gender confusion in the church, but the devastation caused by it needs to be addressed by truth. Worship leaders need to recognize the power of music and the arts. There is such an opportunity to show these hurting people the Savior who is the Light of the World. Dianne Langberg writes, “He (God) is pursuing us in love,

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<sup>55</sup> Ann P. Haas, and associates, “Suicide and Suicide Risk in Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender Populations: Review and Recommendations,” *Journal of Homosexuality*, January 4, 2011.

<sup>56</sup> Amit Paley, “New Research on LGBTQ Teen Suicide Rates,” *The Trevor Project*, August 29, 2023.

<sup>57</sup> Amit Paley, “2022 National Survey on LGBTQ Youth Mental Health,” *The Trevor Project*, 2022.

<sup>58</sup> Rachel Dowd, “Suicide Prevention Month: A Summary of Data on LGBT Suicide,” *Williams Institute Press*, August 31, 2020.

in order to bring light, and he longs for us to stand with him against the darkness and the infrastructures of our own lives that evil has erected so that we can pursue others with his love, for his name's sake."<sup>59</sup>

### **Outward Appearance and Demeanor**

Biblically there are very clear-cut instructions for the woman regarding demeanor and outward appearance. I Timothy 2:9-10 are the most specific verses concerning these matters. Paul focuses on modesty, self-control, and the lack of outward flaunting that overshadows and misrepresents inward piety and reverence. Former president of Grand Rapids Baptist College and Seminary, Dr. Wilbert Welch, weighed in on the passage. He writes, “[Paul’s] instruction that the women of the church ‘adorn’ themselves modestly is not part of an ‘anti-attractive’ campaign. In fact, he said they *should* adorn themselves,’ not detract.”<sup>60</sup>

Kevin A. Pierpont says of this passage, “I Peter 3 helps us understand what Paul is saying- Peter says the adornment should not *merely* be external. It’s not wrong to wear gold, pearls, fine clothing or to braid one’s hair. What is wrong is the emphasis on the external to the neglect of the heart.”<sup>61</sup> Henry Halley has a similar statement about these verses. He writes, “We do not understand verses 3-4 to prohibit a woman’s desire to be attractive in personal appearance, but rather a caution overdoing it, remembering that no amount of refinery can be a substitute for gracious Christian Personality.”<sup>62</sup>

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<sup>59</sup> Diane Langberg, *Redeeming Power: Understanding Authority and Abuse in the Church* (Grand Rapids: Brazos Press, 2020), 169.

<sup>60</sup> W. Wilbert Welch, *A Charge to Keep* (Elgin: Regular Baptist Press, 1982), 43.

<sup>61</sup> Kevin A. Pierpont, “It’s the Heart-I Timothy 2:9-10,” *Living Truth Ministries* (accessed December 10, 2023).

<sup>62</sup> Henry H. Halley, *Halley’s Bible Handbook* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, 1965), 664.

I Corinthians 11:2-16 has an exhortation from Paul about women covering their heads in the assembly. The apostle makes the argument that a contrast of the genders should be apparent by the physical hair on one's head. He speaks of women covering their heads in public, which some sects today take very literally. In their commentary on these verses Farrar and Thomas say, "That, however, was but a matter of present and passing interest, one standing related to the customs and sentiments of a particular age. Our concern is not with the details of apostolic advice, but with the *principles* upon which St. Paul deals with a particular case."<sup>63</sup>

Contrasting genders in outward appearance and modesty are the principles that are brought out in these passages. Walter L. Liefeld writes, "Acceptable standards of modesty will vary with places and generations, but Paul wanted the women to cultivate the fear of God rather than vanity. Paul urges the women to produce good works instead of devoting attention to mere physical appearance."<sup>64</sup>

It is obvious as one walks through Bible passages that there is a positive attitude toward outward beauty. The following passages are key for this point: Genesis 12:11-14, Genesis 24:16, Exodus 28:2, &40, Esther 1:11 & 2:7, II Samuel 14:25, II Chronicles 20:21, Psalm 50:2, Proverbs 6:25, Proverbs 31, Isaiah 3:17, and Hosea 14:6. Each of these speaks of beautiful outward appearances of both people and things. The New Testament verses, of which this paper deals in detail, focus on not allowing the outward beauty to take precedence over the inner beauty of a heart.

The most prevalent of these verses is I Peter 3:3-4 which says, "Do not let your adorning be external- the braiding of hair and the putting on of gold jewelry, or the clothing you wear- but

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<sup>63</sup> F.W. Farrar, and David Thomas, *The Pulpit Commentary Volume 19* (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1962),392.

<sup>64</sup> Walter L. Liefeld, *The NIV Application Commentary* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing, 1999), 96.

let your adorning be the hidden person of the heart with the imperishable beauty of a gentle and quiet spirit, which in God's sight is very precious." This leads to a biblical study of the demeanor God desires for women.

A very important starting point for God's message to females concerning their demeanor is found in Proverb 31:30. It reads, "Charm is deceitful, and beauty is vain, but a woman who fears the Lord is to be praised." Reflecting on this passage, Myles Munroe writes, "She was designed to act and function as God does, in love and grace. Therefore, Proverbs 31 is saying, 'While you are doing what God has called and gifted you to do, don't forget the importance of His character in your life.'"<sup>65</sup>

As an example of the verses from Proverbs, Michelle McClain -Walters speaks about Esther from the Old Testament in this regard to demeanor. Discussing the inner characteristics of Esther she writes, "Her real beauty was an unfading beauty than rose from within. Such beauty does not rely on superficial helps; it's deeply rooted in faith and trust in God."<sup>66</sup> Leslie Ludy says the same idea in a rather brutal reality. She writes, "Rather, she builds her life around Christ. And this requires major sacrifice when it comes to scoring male approval because the purity and righteousness that radiates from a set-apart young woman will not appeal to self-focused, sex-obsessed modern man"<sup>67</sup>

In somewhat of a backwards way, one may also comprehend proper demeanor from the personification of folly vs wisdom. "The foolish woman is restless and noisy; She is naïve and easily misled and thoughtless and knows nothing at all [of eternal value]" (Proverbs 9:13,

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<sup>65</sup> Myles Munroe, *Woman*, 201.

<sup>66</sup> McClain-Walters, *The Esther Anointing*, 43.

<sup>67</sup> Leslie Ludy, *Set-Apart Femininity: God's Sacred Intent for Every Young Woman* (Eugene: Harvest House Publishers, 2008), 60



Amplified Bible). The comparative and contrasting verse is found in I Peter 3:4. It reads, “But let your adorning be the hidden person of the heart with the imperishable beauty of a gentle and quiet spirit, which in God’s sight is very precious” (English Standard Version). The New Testament confirms the principles of the Old Testament. Therefore, looking back and forth at passages from both Testaments reveals the consistency and not the confusion of Scripture.

Another biblical example to show the opposite of God’s desire is found in Proverbs 7:10-13. Of this passage Leslie Ludy writes, “This woman is physically aggressive towards guys, sensually dressed, always ‘on the prowl’ for men, and uses strategic flirting and manipulation to lure guys into her seductive power. She is careless of her purity and her heart, and she looks to male approval to bring her pleasure.”<sup>68</sup> Later in the book of Proverbs we see the contrasted description of a godly woman in Chapter 31. It is clear from this text that a personal and intimate relationship with the Lord is the antidote and the true fulfillment to a woman’s longings. Jaynes and Terkeurst write, “That’s why a personal, ongoing relationship with Jesus Christ is Principle #1 for the Proverbs 31 woman. If your relationship with Jesus is stagnant, then you can’t possibly overflow with His love into the other areas of your life.”<sup>69</sup>

### **The Meaning of Silent and Submitted**

One may ask if this relationship with the Lord leads to a woman being silent. Perhaps the most controversial subject of women’s demeanor is the idea of a “meek and quiet spirit” that was quoted from I Peter 3. The question centers on whether that kind of a spirit leads to actual restraint in physical speaking, teaching, or leading. Paul spoke of this restraint in I Corinthians 14 in which he exhorts women to be silent in the church. One must either 1) totally ignore and

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<sup>68</sup> Ibid., 108.

<sup>69</sup> Sharon Jaynes, and Lysa Terkeurst, *Seven Life Principles for Every Woman: Refreshing Ways to Prioritize Your Life* (Chicago: Moody Press, 2001), 50.

discount those pages of the Bible, 2) so question the context and possibility of error on Paul's part that all other Scripture may also be twisted and convoluted to fit a personal desire, or 3) take the verses at face value and let Scripture interpret Scripture.

This is where the need for looking at biblical principle is so imperative. It is without question that God never expected a woman to go physically silent at large. He commissioned female prophets and leaders both in the Old and New Testament. The gifts and commands to minister the Gospel were given to both genders. The context is obviously about the leadership of the male and warning the women to not take over that role in the church in such a way that the men became subordinate to the women. This conclusion is made by the closing statements Paul makes in I Corinthians 14: 34-35. One may understand his reasoning as he writes, "... but should be in submission, as the Law also says. If there is anything they desire to learn, let them ask their husbands at home..." This fits all other biblical contexts of women giving reverence, respect, and authority to the male.

Farrar and Thomas give an excellent background of this passage and the "Law" that Paul was referring to.<sup>70</sup> In conclusion of their study they write, "The apostle's objection was to the *public* character of the act, and, when he is speaking of 'meetings of the Church,' in this very chapter, he is referring to gatherings to which unbelievers had access."<sup>71</sup> They go on to speak of Paul's emphasis on the responsibility of the men to have understanding and answers when the women were asking the questions and wanting discussion of truth at home. In speaking specifically about the Christian women, they write, "Intelligent service is expected from them. Highest culture is as open to them as to men. There is nothing unwomanly in being well

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<sup>70</sup> F.W. Farrar, and David Thomas, *The Pulpit Commentary*, 477.

<sup>71</sup> *Ibid.*

informed.”<sup>72</sup> It returns to the discussion of the male in leadership delegating roles and positions to the woman under his guidance and ultimate responsibility.

The issue should not be about men being lords over women or that women are secondary to men. It is the God-given design that a male should protect, provide for, lead, and love a woman “... as Christ so loved the Church” (Ephesians 5:25-27). The second and very important part of this partnership is found in verse 33 of this same chapter. It reads, “However, let each one of you love his wife as himself, and let the wife see that she respects her husband.” Dr. Eggerichs writes, “What was missing was that very short phrase, ‘the wife must respect her husband’...Respect does something to the soul of a man. God made him that way.”<sup>73</sup> Jaynes and Turkeurst write, “Not only is the husband the leader in the relationship, but he also is the wife’s lover. As is the case with leadership, the wife can offer ‘gifts’ that go a long way toward helping her husband be the kind of lover she always dreamed of.”<sup>74</sup>

Women in worship leadership must start with these truths for God’s blessing on her efforts. It is the picture of the Bride of Christ submitting their allegiance and reverence to the One who called them to salvation. She is commanded of God to respect her husband and the men in leadership over her. There is no qualifying note that this is dependent upon the man deserving that respect. It is *a position* that is requiring respect and not the acts or character of a man himself.

Peter addresses the issue in I Peter 3:1-5. He writes, “Likewise, wives, be subject to your own husbands, so that even if some do not obey the word, they may be won without a word by the conduct of their wives....” A very difficult subject to confront is the questioning of the

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<sup>72</sup> F.W. Farrar, and David Thomas, *The Pulpit Commentary*, 477-478.

<sup>73</sup> Emerson Eggebrecht, *Love & Respect* (Colorado Springs: Thomas Nelson, 2004), 46,47.

<sup>74</sup> Sharon Jaynes, and Lysa Terkeurst, *Seven Life Principles for Every Woman*, 66.

authority figures that are seeking a woman's submission who may not comply to or except the truths of the gospel. When obedience to, or the following of a male in rebellion to God is present and prohibits her from serving God, or puts her in an abusive situation, then a woman must remove herself from that position of submission. Where to draw that line must be delicately and prayerfully led by the Holy Spirit. Acts 5:29 reads, "But Peter and the apostles answered, "We must obey God rather than men." This is in the face of other verses which exhort Christians to obey those in authority over them, such as Titus 3:1 and Romans 13:1. A historical event that put Christians in this same dilemma was before the Revolutionary War. This was a time when the colonists had to decide whether it was unbiblical or of God to disobey the British king who had rule over their territories. Prayerful colonists stood up to the improper rule of the British and ultimately formed the United States of America. The Word of God has perfect and consistent principles for believers to follow for every circumstance. God's will will be revealed by prayer and seeking the leading of the Holy Spirit (Romans 8:27).

Another debated passage, written also by the Apostle Paul, is found in I Timothy 2:12. Paul prohibits women from "teaching" or "exercising authority" over men. Church leadership has sometimes become so focused on the way to detail a woman's silence or subordination that the main point Paul is trying to make is missed. He is simply wanting men to take the lead. This same Paul gave this insight in I Corinthians 11-14. A teacher from Northside Church of Christ in San Antonio writes, "He (Paul) acknowledges that both men and women were praying and prophesying when the church met (I Corinthians 11:4-5) and then speaks to the equality of men and women (I Corinthians 11: 11-12)."<sup>75</sup>

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<sup>75</sup> Northside Church of Christ/San Antonio, "Understanding I Corinthians 14:34-35," (accessed December 31, 2023), <https://www.nscoc.org>

Henry Halley discusses these passages in his Bible Handbook in precise and scholarly fashion.<sup>76</sup> He explains the culture, demeanor of the temple prostitutes, and the need for the women of Christ to exemplify a radical difference, even though they had found a new freedom in Christ. He writes, “Christian women, living in a heathen society, should be cautious in their innovations, lest they bring reproach on their religion. It is bad generally when women become too much like men.”<sup>77</sup> Halley seems to desire to bring such balance and equilibrium to this subject. Being balanced in the interpretation of these biblical discussions further the desire for unity among Christians. Halley writes with great resolve in saying, “Men and women are of equal value in God’s sight. But there are certain natural distinctions between women and men, without which human society could not exist.”<sup>78</sup>

The present-day world is now seeing the demise of society because of the demise of these distinctions. Both Hollywood and the White House have been promoting the agenda of Gay Pride. Peter Turchin asks the following in a recent article: “How has America slid into its current age of discord? Why has our trust in institutions collapsed, and why have our democratic norms unraveled?”<sup>79</sup> Another author who does not claim to be a Christian wrote an article on the parallels of the Fall of Rome and the United States. Interestingly, he makes this statement: “Why did Rome decline and fall? In my belief, Rome fell because of a fundamental change in ideas on the part of the Roman people- ideas which relate primarily to personal responsibility and the

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<sup>76</sup> Henry H. Halley, *Halley’s Bible Handbook*, 597

<sup>77</sup> Ibid.

<sup>78</sup> Ibid.

<sup>79</sup> Peter Turchin, “America is Headed Toward Collapse,” *The Atlantic*, June 2, 2023.

source of personal income.”<sup>80</sup> It is interesting to note the space of time of this quote and the events of its fulfillment with the extinction of gender roles and responsibilities.

Sadly, those in opposition to what God designed believe that individuals and society will benefit from a genderless and neutrality of human species. Eva Schicker writes, “Gender neutrality embodies the idea that society at large, in its policies, language, social structures, and behaviors needs to go beyond stereotyping according to types, identity, and gender roles.”<sup>81</sup> After much explanation to a Christian world of what is going on in modern society about gender roles or the doing away with gender, Peter Lynas concludes by saying: “The question is not how do I see myself? But how does God see me?”<sup>82</sup>

God’s Word makes the genders and their respective roles very clear. Nature itself teaches these differences and God planned everything perfectly for the health, happiness, and well-being of every human. I Corinthians 11: 14-16 says, “Does not nature itself teach you, that, if a wears long hair, it is a disgrace for him, but if a woman has long hair, it is her glory? For her hair is given to her for a covering.” This again is not about a specific length of hair but about the principle of differentiating between the genders. Finally, in Psalm 18:30 are found the following words: “This God- his way is perfect; the word of the Lord proves true; he is a shield for all those who take refuge in him.”

In writing to women about the inner beauty, godly demeanor, and feminine characteristics God desires, Leslie Ludy sums up authentic female fulfillment so well. She writes, “When we lay everything at the feet of Jesus and find our deepest fulfillment, rest, peace, and joy in His

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<sup>80</sup> Lawrence W. Reed, “The Fall of Rome and Modern Parallels,” *FEE*. November 1, 1979.

<sup>81</sup> Eva Schicker, “Designing for Gender Neutrality,” *UX* September 10, 2021.

<sup>82</sup> Peter Lynas, “Baffled by non-binary? Here’s a biblical and pastoral response to trans issue,” *Premier Christian Magazine*. August 24, 2021,

presence alone- not dulling our spiritual life with worldly counterfeits – we are ushered into the supernatural, superhuman existence God designed us to live.”<sup>83</sup>

### **Women in Worship Leadership**

If then, in understanding the role of men in authority over us, the consideration of a woman in worship leadership needs to be addressed. According to a biblical theology, the woman has been given talents and spiritual giftings to use for God’s glory along with every man. According to Psalm 139: 14-16 it is God who designed humanity very specifically inside our mother’s womb. This includes everything written in DNA. I Corinthians 12:4-6 records Paul speaking of the gifts to be used in the church and gives no gender distinction; the premise is the headship and authority of the man in the church and home. If the church and the husband of a woman has recognized her gift and delegated that role to her in their oneness, she should gladly accept. She submits to God by submitting to her husband. They, as a couple, submit themselves to the pastor. She is leading worship and the worship team while under the guidance and leadership of these men in her life. The same is true of a single woman. In this case, she answers directly to the leadership of the church.

In methodology, Michelle McClean-Walters has yet another balanced and biblical thought to this submissive characteristic.<sup>84</sup> She writes, “The Lord is giving revelation and insight, causing men and women to understand their different roles in relationship to one another. I believe the Lord is restoring unity, respect, and collaboration in male-female relationships to accomplish His purpose in the earth.”<sup>85</sup> Another author also has an important thought that plays a key role in this study. Women sometimes have negative issue about the word “rule” that is found in the Old

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<sup>83</sup> Leslie Ludy, *Set-Apart Femininity*, 75-76.

<sup>84</sup> McClean-Walters, *The Esther Anointing*, 117.

<sup>85</sup> Ibid.

King James version of Genesis 3:16. Paul Ellis writes, “It will help if we distinguish the verbs rule and lead. None of us is called to lord it over others, but all of us are called to lead, to exercise influence, and to shine.”<sup>86</sup> Many issues such as this may be easily resolved if there is thorough Bible study and good discipleship of the principles therein (Ephesians 5:26).

Titus 2:3-5 speaks directly to women with respect to the home and a biblical methodology of the core concepts. This passage says, “Older women likewise are to be reverent in behavior, not slanderers or slaves to much wine. They are to teach what is good, and so train the young women to love their husbands and children, to be self-controlled, pure, working at home, kind, and submissive to their own husbands, that the word of God may not be reviled.” This is not at all in conflict with the busy and industrious woman of Proverbs 31 who is buying and selling goods. They work hand in hand, and one may see the full picture of balance. Each passage reveals the tremendous roles of a woman’s influence and accomplishment for the Lord.

The tremendous opportunity of influence a woman holds is for leading and ministering and not for controlling. A woman who simply wants control because she leans on her talents and abilities is not in line with biblical principles. Aggressive, loud, demanding, and proud women who control rather than lead with a servant’s heart is biblically to be admonished rather than put in roles of worship leadership. Munroe writes, “The woman’s influence-power, in its fallen state, is so potentially destructive that God felt He needed to put her under regulation for her own protection and the protection of others.”<sup>87</sup> Another author addresses this potential problem by the specificity attached to being a visible leader on a platform. Stephen Miller makes a strong point to consider in his book as he writes, “Perhaps just as common and deadly of a practice, however,

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<sup>86</sup> Paul Ellis, *The Silent Queen: Why the Church Needs Women to Find Their Voice* (Beach Haven: Kings Press, 2020), 125.

<sup>87</sup> Myles Munroe, *Understanding the Purpose and Power of Woman*, 188.



is to use even the deepest truths of God to serve our own prideful pursuit of platform and prominence. Because we are in a culture that makes ‘idols’ out of men and women who can sing, people may have a difficult time not putting talented worship leaders in the rock-star limelight.”<sup>88</sup>

The female worship leader has been offered a privilege by God to exercise her “calling” and gifting. She has the protection and approval of men over her while taking on a monumental responsibility and load of work. It is a sacred “calling”. Dr. Whaley writes about this “call” and says, “Honestly, this is where authentic worship begins and ends... expressing the nature of the One who is calling. It means recognizing the Lord’s voice and obeying his call from a heart of love for him and with a desire to submit to his purposes to the point that change of heart almost immediately begins taking place.”<sup>89</sup>

### **Biblical Leadership**

This leads to an examination of the theology of leadership from God’s heart and economy. The Word of God gives so many examples of God’s way of thinking about leadership. God’s way seems to be opposite from the singularity of one thinking exclusively in logical terms. A prime example of this is the story of Gideon found in Judges 6-8 of the Old Testament. Logic would say that as many men as possible are needed to go up against another army of enormous number. Instead, God had Gideon whittle down the number of soldiers accepted until the odds were ridiculously against his own favor.

God loves to do the impossible and let humans understand that he, God, is in charge and will get the glory for his mighty acts and miracles. A scholarly writer on worship named Gerald Borchert had this observation: “As mere human beings who worship the Creator and Redeemer,

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<sup>88</sup> Stephen Miller, *Worship Leaders: We are not Rock Stars* (Chicago: Moody Publishers, 2013), 17.

<sup>89</sup> Vernon M. Whaley, *Exalt His Name: Understanding Music and Worship* (Calumet City: Evangelical Training Association, 2019), 18.

we must readily admit that we do not understand beforehand how God works; however, we can observe how the holy God is engaged in bringing together everything to fulfill the divine purposes in the world.”<sup>90</sup> It was obvious that Moses, Joseph, and David of the Old Testament were showing themselves to be natural leaders at a young age. However, God allowed each of them to experience some very difficult years and circumstances to reveal that their giftings and callings were to be totally dependent upon God.

Zechariah 4:6 records the message to another Old Testament leader. He wants to engrain this fundamental truth within every leader seeking God’s power and his glory. This verse says, “Then he said to me, ‘This is the word of the Lord to Zerubbabel: Not by might, nor by power, but by my Spirit, says the Lord of hosts.’” It is interesting to note that the context of this verse was about the place of God’s dwelling and the worship of his people. Halley writes, “What is here said is meant directly for Zerubbabel and the House he was building. But there is unmistakable reference to a later More Glorious House, to be built by a Descendant of Zerubbabel, called The Branch.”<sup>91</sup>

As leaders, it is easy to become self-reliant. Consistent meditation on the Word of God keeps one from this mistake. In the New Testament Jesus said in John 15: 5b, “for apart from me you can do nothing.” The good news in contrast is found later in a message from the apostle Paul. Paul writes in Philippians 4:13, “I can do all things through him who strengthens me.” In another letter to the Galatians Paul encapsules the thought by saying, “I have been crucified with Christ. It is no longer I who live, but Christ who lives in me. And the life I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me. (Galatians 2:20).”

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<sup>90</sup> Gerald L. Borchert, *Worship in the New Testament: Divine Mystery and Human Response* (St. Louis: Chalise Press, 2008), 96.

<sup>91</sup> Henry H. Halley, *Halley’s Bible Handbook*, 379.

All other leadership qualities remain relatively self-centered until a person recognizes that they, as an individual, are simply an empty vessel given to God. This surrender to God must be in total dependence for him to flow through them. Being dead to self and being constantly filled with the Holy Spirit is the foundation and the only prerequisite for true leadership. Bob Kauflin writes, “That’s why as worship leaders our primary concern can’t be song preparation, creative arrangements, or the latest cool gear. Our primary concern has to be the state of our hearts.”<sup>92</sup>

This puts fear and worry to rest when the circumstances look bleak in the natural way of thinking. God has promised to work supernaturally through the believer and answer their petitions as one who represents him. John 14:12-14 says, “I assure you and most solemnly say to you, anyone who believes in Me [as Savior] will also do the things that I do; and he will do even greater things than these [in extent and outreach], because I am going to the Father. And I will do whatever you ask in My name {as My representative}, this I will do, so that the Father may be glorified and celebrated in the Son. If you ask Me anything in My name {as My representative}, I will do it” (Amplified Version).

The ability to experience this is found in the power of the Holy Spirit. Of the many, many verses to attest to this, Acts 11:24 shows the reality of a leader in God’s hands. It reads, “For he (Barnabas) was a good man, full of the Holy Spirit and of faith. And a great many people were added to the Lord” (English Standard Version). In specific reference to women, Acts 1 and 2 are a reassurance of God using the females as well as the males in ministry. Peter Foxwell writes, “Jesus Poured Out His Spirit on Women- A group of 120 believers, which included both men and women disciples (Acts 1:15), was waiting to receive power to become Jesus’ witnesses (Acts

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<sup>92</sup> Bob Kauflin, *Worship Matters: Leading Others to Encounter the Greatness of God* (Wheaton: Crossway, 2008), 26.

1:8). Subsequently, they were all filled with the Holy Spirit, and they all began to proclaim the wonders of God (Acts 2: 1,4,12).<sup>93</sup>

Another common denominator of prominent Bible characters and leaders whom God used may be seen. None of them sought a position for themselves or tried to take leadership out of personal pride and expectancy. God summoned each one and put them in those places of leadership. Sometimes the person was even reluctant due to personal insecurity of capability or stature in society. It is imperative to keep Dr. Whaley's words in mind as one studies the lives of men and women that God has used in significance. He says, "Yet God neither chooses nor anoints a worship leader based on talent. He chooses based on one's willingness to humble him- or-herself to a servant level."<sup>94</sup>

Consider the people mentioned before in previous pages. Moses was an old man when God called him, who had given up on what he thought was his destiny. He argued that he was not adequate and was "slow of speech" (Exodus 4:10-12). Joseph was sitting in a prison, presumably for the rest of his life, when he became leader of an entire nation (Genesis 41:37-44). Gideon was hiding in a winepress and felt he was the least among his family and other men (Judges 6-7). David was bringing food to his brothers after tending sheep on the back side of a hill (I Samuel 17). Samson brought down entire walls of a building by God's power in his own greatest moment of weakness (Judges 13-16). Peter was a rugged fisherman who had denied the Savior after boasting his allegiance to the death. He had gone back to fishing following the crucifixion when suddenly Jesus called him to "feed my sheep" (John 21). Saul was an arrogant

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<sup>93</sup> Peter Foxwell, "Was Lydia a Leader of the Church in Philippi," *Journal of Biblical Perspectives in Leadership* Issue 1, Vol 10, 2020.

<sup>94</sup> Vernon M. Whaley, *Called to Worship: From the Dawn of Creation to the Final Amen* (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 2009), 304.

persecutor of Christians when God called him to serve the Truth and the Light of Men (Acts 9). Myles Munroe writes, “Failing in leadership is not as grave as failing to deal with that failure effectively. If you’ve fallen, you must make personal changes that will enable you to ‘fall up,’ transforming your life from the inside out.”<sup>95</sup>

The same ironies are true of female figures in the Bible. Sarah, in Genesis 21, was not able to have children in the natural, but God chose her to be able to bear Isaac in her old age. Moses’ mother was commissioned against all odds by the Pharaoh’s daughter to be the nursemaid for Moses in Exodus 2. Deborah did not demand to go to battle but was begged by Barak to go and lead the army in Judges 4-5. Ruth was simply gleaning in a field in total survival mode when God decided she would become the wife of Boaz in the book of Ruth. Esther did not manipulate her way to become queen. She was summoned and then chosen for the position in Esther 2. Mary was a lowly and unknown girl ready to marry a carpenter when God called her to carry the Messiah in Luke 1. Jesus sought out a Samaritan woman who otherwise would not have come to know the Way, the Truth, and the Life. It was while speaking to her that Jesus said, “God is spirit, and those who worship him must worship in spirit and in truth” (John 4:24). She became an amazing witness to her entire town according to John 4. An adulterous woman was set free both spiritually and otherwise by Jesus who had been dragged before him for judgment by religious rulers in John 7-8. History books are full of these same “callings” to leadership of unlikely characters down through the ages.

Women of all periods in history have the same opportunity as the women of the Bible. Studying famous women of the 20th century recalls a few names that bear the same example.

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<sup>95</sup> Myles Munroe, *The Power of Character in Leadership: How Values, Morals, Ethics, and Principles Affect Leaders* (New Kensington: Whitaker House, 2014), 228.

God, it can be said, chose these unlikely women to be leaders for the kingdom. Some prominent examples are Evangeline Cory Booth, Charlotte “Lottie” Moon, Fanny Crosby, Sojourner Truth, Amy Carmichael, Corrie ten Boom, Harriet Beecher Stowe, Lillias Trotter, Lucy Jane Rider Meyer, Mary Kay Ash, Aimee Semple McPherson, Jennifer Wiseman, Clara Barton, Harriet Livermore, and Kathryn Kuhlman.<sup>96</sup> Each of these women were a testimony for Christ and made a mark on the entire world. Paul Ellis puts an exclamation mark on the accomplishments of these types of women when he writes, “When the church is standing in unity, with more regard for the gifts of the Spirit than the gender of the person who has them, then we will really live.”<sup>97</sup>

Two specific female worship leaders stand out as unlikely and contemporary in influence. Darlene Zschech of Hillsong Ministries and Kari Jobe of Gateway Church in Dallas. Both women were just being servants to their local pastors when God allowed them to lead in huge capacities. They example femininity, polished giftings, God-fearing character, and are humble women with a heart to serve. Kari’s father is still a pastor, and it can be said that the entire family lives to serve Christ and minister to people in all walks of life.<sup>98</sup> It is encouraged for others to listen to Kari’s testimony.<sup>99</sup> Darlene gave her testimony on the 700 Club in 2021 and is recommended as well.<sup>100</sup> These women embody the words of Carolyn Moore when she writes,

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<sup>96</sup> Laura Polk, “20 Women Who Shaped History,” *Crosswalk*, January 9, 2018.

<sup>97</sup> Paul Ellis, *The Silent Queen: Why the Church Needs Women to Find Their Voice* (Beach Haven, New Zealand: Kings Press, 2020), 168.

<sup>98</sup> Kim Jones, “Biography of Christian Artist Kari Jobe,” *Learn Religions*, May 30, 2019.

<sup>99</sup> Kari Jobe, “Testimony,” *The Belonging Co, All the Earth Album 2017*. <https://YouTube.com/Testimony of Kari Jobe>.

<sup>100</sup> Editor of AAE, “Christian Worship Leader & Singer-Songwriter; Breast Cancer Survivor,” *AAE* retrieved January 1, 2024, <https://www.allamericanspeakers.com>. Also, YouTube: *700 Club Interactive* May 26, 2021.

“Esther reminds us that when the authority is spiritual, the leader is willing, and the will of God is waiting, the world is deeply influenced for the good.”<sup>101</sup>

A sad example of a female worship leader gone astray is Tasha Cobbs-Leonard. She has aligned herself with famous secular and ungodly music artists. Tasha is publicly praising and praying for people like Beyonce, who uses her music and tours to spread ungodly philosophy and dishonoring opposition of biblical modesty.<sup>102</sup> The most famous of Beyonce’s costumes in 2023 was portraying her nakedness with a serpent wrapped around her.<sup>103</sup> The lure of fame and fortune is an ever-present force in the life of one in leadership. This example is being pointed out with Matthew 7:20 in mind. It reads, “Thus you will recognize them by their fruits.” All leaders have fallen prey to some degree or other at times. It is simply mentioned as a warning to each female worship leader. Hebrews 3:13 reads, “But exhort one another every day, as long as it is called ‘today,’ that none of you may be hardened by the deceitfulness of sin.”

Thankfully, there are authors who are writing and speaking the admonitions needed for worship leaders to avoid straying from purity. Stephen Miller is such an author and writes, “This is a very tempting place to be as a worship leader, as that sort of public appreciation can be intoxicating. But fame and glory are well-trained assassins, and they have slain many who have pursued them for themselves.”<sup>104</sup> In her doctoral thesis paper Alicia Garcia writes, Christian women who embrace progressive Christianity are therefore no longer worshippers of the God of

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<sup>101</sup> Carolyn Moore, *When Women Lead: Embrace Your Authority, Move Beyond Barriers, and Find Joy in Leading Others* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan Reflective, 2022), 135.

<sup>102</sup> Editor for Truth + Fire, “Something in the Milk Ain’t Clean: Avoid Tasha Cobbs-Leonard in 2018,” *Truth+Fire*. January 10, 2018.

<sup>103</sup> Haute LeMode, “The Beyonce Renaissance Tour Fashion Review,” *New York*, December 2023 <https://www.YouTube.com>

<sup>104</sup> Stephen Miller, *Worship Leader*, 17.

the Bible but are idolators who practice the progressive ideologies of relativism, pluralism, and cultural tolerance. “<sup>105</sup>

The desired outcome for each leader seeking to do away with flaws by God’s grace is spoken of in a book by McIntosh and Rima. They write, “Eventually there will come a time when we can actually rest in our leadership as we calmly and confidently lead for God’s glory rather than to satisfy ourselves.”<sup>106</sup> This means a leader of worship must be a worshipper in private. John MacArthur reminds the reader of this as he says, “We have seen already that worship is not merely an activity to be injected into our schedules at certain intervals; rather worship is itself a whole-life commitment, an all-encompassing response to holy God, possible only for those who have been redeemed.”<sup>107</sup>

Worship is not just singing a song. It even goes beyond the liturgical elements observed in a corporate gathering of a Sunday service. Worship truly is a lifestyle. Myles Munroe writes, “When your relationship with God is deep and lasting, praise comes no matter what you are experiencing, because how you feel does not change who God is in your life.”<sup>108</sup>

Along with a pure heart, the worship leader needs to understand why people giving corporate praise and worship is so vital. Harold Best makes it clear that God has given us the instruction to meet corporately. He writes, “But beyond the common need for people to be together, and along with the work of the Holy Spirit pulling us into each other’s company, we are

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<sup>105</sup> Alicia Garcia, “The Responsibility of Christian Female Influences: A Biblical Response to Progressive Christianity,” Doctoral thesis paper at Liberty University 2020. <https://digitalcommons.liberty.edu>

<sup>106</sup> Gary L. McIntosh, and Samuel D. Rima, *Overcoming the Dark Side of Leadership: How to Become an Effective Leader by Confronting Potential Failures* (Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 2007), 157

<sup>107</sup> John MacArthur, *Worship: The Ultimate Priority* (Chicago: Moody Publishers, 2012), 123.

<sup>108</sup> Myles Munroe, *Rediscovering Kingdom Worship*, 79.



given instruction to be together (Heb 10:25), and the writers to the churches, especially Paul, take corporate gatherings to be regular and common occurrences.”<sup>109</sup>

According to Romans 15:13, God’s intention is to bring the Christian to a place of complete joy, peace, and hope because of the magnificence of God. This verse says, “May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, so that by the power of the Holy Spirit you may abound in hope.” Glenn Packiam states this immense concept so well. He writes, “The New Testament orients the Christian forward on the basis of an event in the past. The life, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ have brought about a new and firm reason for hope.”<sup>110</sup> This puts the philosophy and purpose for organization of Sunday morning service elements in a new light.

A biblical theology is what produces proper biblical philosophy of worship. Michael Walters wrote an inspiring book on leading a congregation in authentic worship. His premise is as follows: “If pastors want to revitalize the worship of the church, they must begin to revitalize the worshipers. This is accomplished by calling people to view life- every aspect of it- as a response to God.”<sup>111</sup> Worship is recognizing who God is, what he has done, what he is doing, what he has promised, and the delight of his presence. Rehearsing these elements through reading, speaking, giving, praying, singing and other expressions of the Fine Arts is vital. It is the believer’s response to his truth, grace, and the filling of the Holy Spirit. This authentic worship grounds and grows the individual. It also produces the manifestation of the Spirit’s giftings in the corporate setting. I Corinthians 12:1-7 says, “Now concerning spiritual gifts,

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<sup>109</sup> Harold M. Best, *Unceasing Worship: Biblical Perspectives on Worship and the Arts* (Downers Grove: IVP Books, 2003), 63.

<sup>110</sup> Glenn Packiam, *Worship, and the World to Come: Exploring Christian Hope in Contemporary Worship* (Downers Grove: IVP Academic, 2020), 61.

<sup>111</sup> Michael Walters, *Can’t Wait for Sunday: Leading Your Congregation in Authentic Worship* (Indianapolis: Wesleyan Publishing House, 2006), 196.

brothers I do not want you to be uninformed.... To each is given the manifestation of the Spirit for the common good.”

The way the gifts are manifested in the corporate setting has caused great division. While following biblical principles listed for worship in the New Testament, one needs to remember the story of David’s worship in the Old Testament. David Manner brings this out in his book and speaks of David admonishing Mical for her disdain of his worship style. He writes, “His (David) primary focus was on why he worshipped. He was willing to cross the Rubicon because of *the why* even though it meant changing *the how*.”<sup>112</sup>

Worship manifests that hope in the present and in the future. That hope is Jesus who gives, salvation, wholeness, and fulfillment. In application and methodology of manifesting his presence and gifts corporately, Manner goes on to give churches something profound to consider. He writes, “But being willing to cross that Rubicon may also then mean that our churches will ‘speak’ to and among the surrounding culture in a voice so unique, authentic, and unified that it turns heads.”<sup>113</sup> Townes and Whaley express the same thought in their book on worship. They share this insight: “At the end of the day, worship practices will continue to change as the evangelical community becomes more culturally diverse, commits itself to communicating to the next generation with clarity and focus, and worship leadership continues to develop innovative ways for creative expression.”<sup>114</sup>

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<sup>112</sup> David W. Manner, *Better Sundays Begin on Monday: 52 Exercises for Evaluating Weekly Worship* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 2020),81.

<sup>113</sup> Ibid.

<sup>114</sup> Elmer L. Towns, and Vernon M. Whaley, *Worship through the Ages: How the Great Awakenings Shape Evangelical Worship* (Nashville: B&H Publishing Group, 2012), 362.

## Leadership Skills of the Worship Leader

Organizing the flow of a service with this foundation will dictate the mechanics and details of the elements. Considering time signatures and key signatures for the music is important, but first things come first. Stephen Miller writes, “A well thought-out liturgy forces us as worship leaders to face our weaknesses and grow in the gospel, while enabling us to form our people in the whole truth of the Scriptures.”<sup>115</sup> The rehearsal of a worship team must follow only after a worship leader has spent much time in proper preparation before the Lord and with other church leadership. Dr. Whaley offers a wonderful example and guide for these staff meetings in a recent book. It considers theology, philosophy, and methodology and every reader should employ it.<sup>116</sup>

When the worship leader is settled with God’s leading of themes, Scripture, and coordination of the pastor’s message, then that individual may proceed with the compilation of the service elements for the next corporate gathering. A leader having a great organizational skillset is biblical and necessary to carry out the vision according to the principles found in Proverbs 22:29. Numerous books talk of details in the role of leading, but none can be accomplished without being organized. The famous speaker on leadership John Maxwell wrote, “The secret of your success is found in your daily routine.”<sup>117</sup>

Being organized means that priorities must be set, and the time management of those priorities must be determined. A female leader must consider not only her personal relationship with the Lord, but also quality time with her husband and children. Studying Titus 1 and 2, along with I Timothy 3, reveals that leaders were required to demonstrate faithfulness at home before

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<sup>115</sup> Stephen Miller, *Worship Leaders*, 83.

<sup>116</sup> Vernon M. Whaley, *Exalt His Name: Understanding Music and Worship Book 2*, 95.

<sup>117</sup> JD Meier, “Great John Maxwell Quotes,” *Sources of Insight*. Accessed January 3, 2024.

they were considered eligible for leadership.<sup>118</sup> Lysa Terkeurst gives this advice: “To start, list each of the principal roles in your life. I wrote down being a child of God, a wife, a mother, a keeper of my home, a faithful steward of the time and money entrusted to me, a friend, and a servant to those in my church and community (Based on the seven principles of the Proverbs 31 woman).”<sup>119</sup>

Once a woman gets to the responsibility of leading worship and is sitting at a desk to map out her organizational plan, another list of priorities must appear within that framework. These priorities reveal another characteristic of a great leader. Communication must appear at the top of that list. After God and her husband, her authority at church is the Sr. pastor. If there are communications to be made with him, that should be the first order of business. Those communications should be followed by needed communication with other staff members. The third priority of importance is the worship team.

John Maxwell also said, “The art of communication is the language of leadership. The art of effective listening is essential to clear communication, and clear communication is necessary to manage success.”<sup>120</sup> Being positive and confident in those communications is also necessary. Carolyn Moore writes, “Meet a successful female spiritual leader, and you will find someone who passionately believes in her work, is convinced it is both unique and important, and will gladly give her passionate ‘Can!’ to see it succeed.”<sup>121</sup>

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<sup>118</sup> Candice Watters, “Should a husband place ministry or family first,” *Focus on the Family*, February 18, 2014.

<sup>119</sup> Sharon Jaynes, and Lysa Terkeurst, *Seven Principles for Every Woman*, 173.

<sup>120</sup> John Maxwell, “The Art of Communication is the Language of Leadership,” John Maxwell Blog, March 11, 2015.

<sup>121</sup> Carolyn Moore, *When Women Lead*, 127.

A third aspect of communication also comes from John Maxwell. He says, “If you can’t write your message in a sentence, you can’t say it in an hour.”<sup>122</sup> Women are known to have many more words than men. In “The Female Brain,” published in 2006, Louann Brizendine, M.D. claimed that women say about 20,000 words a day, while men say about 7,000.”<sup>123</sup> That means that, coupled with the fact that women first process through emotions, a female leader can potentially create difficult and tangled circumstances. This disastrous scenario is revealed in what is translated on the other end, and, also, it is a waste of precious time for all involved. James Peterson wrote a powerful book on the art of listening for great communication. He asks, “Will we let our insecurities drive us toward winning and control, or will we risk trying to hear and understand each other so that we can act together for mutual good?”<sup>124</sup> James 1:19-20 reads, “Know this, my beloved brothers: let every person be quick to hear, slow to speak, slow to anger: for the anger of man does not produce the righteousness of God.”

Beyond having great communication skills, the female worship leader must demonstrate a great skillset musically. Innate talent is a gift God has packaged in a person from birth. The honing of the talent into skill is a matter of stewardship. Psalm 33: 3 says, “Sing to him a new song; play skillfully on the strings, with loud shouts.” I Samuel 16:16 reads, “Let our lord now command your servants who are before you to seek out a man who is skillful in playing the lyre, and when the harmful spirit from God is upon you, he will play it, and you will be well.” Playing, singing, or any form of the Fine Arts requires skill so that the observer or the one being

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<sup>122</sup> John Maxwell, “The Art of Communication is the Language of Leadership,” John Maxwell Blog, March 11, 2015.

<sup>123</sup> Louann Brizendine, “The Female Brain,” *Psychology Today*, October 10, 2019.

<sup>124</sup> James C. Petersen, *Why Don't We Listen Better: Communicating in Relationships* (Portland: Petersen Publications, 2015), 55.

led is not distracted in a negative way. It is not about the glory of the artist; the skill should exalt the message that is intended through the art.

The work, time, money, and effort to become skilled can be enormous. David Manner writes, “Practice is repeated performance or systematic exercise for the purpose of acquiring skill or proficiency. It is learning through repetition.”<sup>125</sup> The good news is that God has designed what others would call “work,” a wonderful passion to those who are excited to use their gift. The danger is having such innate talent that practice seems unnecessary. Eventually that mindset becomes a hazard. Ecclesiastes 9:10a states, “Whatever your hand finds to do, do it with all your might.”

In leading a team, the worship leader must have a good working knowledge of all instruments and vocal training to adequately enhance and mentor others. If a leader can acquire this training at an institution that also teaches biblical principles, so much the better. Understanding what one is doing theologically and philosophically makes the practical methodology come together as God intended. An amazing insight is given by David Manner for this focus. He writes, “We tend to compare or contrast God’s artistry based on our own musical history, practical experiences, and preferences. Limiting art to what we know and like assumes God only likes what we know.”<sup>126</sup> The female worship leader must be a life-long learner.

In today’s realm of technology, the worship leader must have knowledge and a workable skillset to navigate all that is available to enhance the worship atmosphere. There are those who are experts, but the leader must know how to communicate the technical needs and desires for services each week. Carolyn Moore writes, “In other words, knowledge is power, while naivete

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<sup>125</sup> David W. Manner, *Better Sundays Begin on Monday: 52 Exercises for Evaluating Weekly Worship* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 2020), 103.

<sup>126</sup> David W. Manner, *Better Sundays Begin on Monday*, 82.

is dangerous. The idea that good intentions, a good heart, a love for people, and faith in Jesus will invariably lead to ministry success is not just naïve but dangerous.”<sup>127</sup>

This is precisely why women in leadership need to pursue growth in areas of weakness or lack of knowledge. Ignoring the aspects that are not easy to learn or apply is no excuse for a woman who is called to lead. It is much more complicated in the 21<sup>st</sup> century than it was in the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Page and Gray have this advice in their book on worship: “We must frame our worship services within the context of the culture we hope to reach... the developing field of ethnodoxology focuses on understanding how different cultures worship God and influences impacting those approaches.”<sup>128</sup> This takes training and skill.

Along with the aspect of personal honing of skill for leadership, there is the need for knowing how to properly deal with others. The first prerequisite for a leader is to remember that those being led are not cogs in a wheel for one’s own personal agenda or even the worship agenda. They are God’s children whom a leader has been given responsibility to nurture spiritually, emotionally, physically, and artistically. Philippians 2:4 says, “Let each of you look not only to his own interests, but also to the interests of others.” In having someone’s best interest at heart, one must start by helping another find the God-given, instead of the possible self-given passion they have for ministry. Every individual under the leader needs to know their identity in Christ, and their gifting that God endowed them with both in talent and spiritual gifts. Being in the wrong position trying to do what is not of God makes everyone miserable.

This ability to teach, lead, and manage is best done through being a living example and not just words. Dawn Cochran shares the following in her doctoral thesis paper: “It is important for

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<sup>127</sup> Carolyn Moore, *When Women Lead*, 138.

<sup>128</sup> Frank S. Page, and L. Lavon Gray, *Hungry for Worship: Challenges and Solutions for Today’s Church* (Birmingham: New Hope Publishers, 2014), 103.

the worship leader to understand the concept of modeling when serving in a leadership role.”<sup>129</sup> This requires the humility to encourage the talents and gifts to be maximized of each member. The level of excellence and work ethic of the leader should be evident. The desire and ability to acknowledge mistakes and taking steps of action to fix problems is imperative, and listening to others’ ideas and knowledge goes a long way in the unity of a team. Making boundaries to take time to rest and keeping priorities must be lived out in plain sight. Julie Bassett writes, “By finding the balance that works for you, both your work and home lives will benefit, as you give proper attention to them both, while maintaining strict boundaries.”<sup>130</sup>

A final thought to delegation and management may be found in a wonderful quote by Eileen Elias. Her words encompass the highest qualities of leadership. She writes, “Strengths such as high emotional intelligence, empathy, democratic leadership style, sincerity, and ability to make decisions under critical circumstances benefit the organization.”<sup>131</sup>

The summation of tremendous worship leadership is to model a life of praise. Myles Munroe offers this admonition: “Perhaps our churches are devoid of God’s power because we want to start with music, but God wants us to start with thanksgiving... Thanksgiving must come from our own grateful heart and be expressed by our own willing lips.”<sup>132</sup> One needs to turn once again to Scripture for the primary inspiration of great leadership. We find that being a model or representative of Christ is emphasized in the qualities of a mature Christian. Titus 2:7 reads, “Show yourself in all respects to be a model of good works, and in your teaching integrity,

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<sup>129</sup> Dawn H. Cochran, “The Qualities of the Worship Leader Perceived to Engage Others to Serve in Worship Ministry,” Doctoral Thesis at Liberty University, Lynchburg, VA 2020 <https://digitalcommons.liberty.edu>

<sup>130</sup> Julie Bassett, “Find the Right Work/Life Balance,” *Psychology and You* Third Ed. 2020, 99.

<sup>131</sup> Eileen Elias, “Lessons Learned from Women in Leadership Positions,” *Work*, 2018. <https://www.nvbi.nim.nih.gov>

<sup>132</sup> Myles Munroe, *Rediscovering Kingdom Worship*, 136.



dignity.” Praise and worship are modeling a lifestyle of the Spirit’s filling of peace and joy. This is Jesus’ desire and design for the believer. John 15:11 says, “These things have I spoken to you, that my joy may be in you, and that your joy may be full.”

The core concepts which have been considered are looking at the female worship leader as firstly, a gender very distinct from a male. The second core concept shows the unique attributes and manifestations of the role God designed for a woman to fulfill. Study of these concepts have shown the results of deviation from God’s design both from the Word of God and, also, the evidence in secular society.

These core concepts have then explored employing the female’s uniqueness for biblical and effective leadership of worship in the church. Leadership is a huge responsibility with specific characteristics imperative for this “calling”. It is further challenged by virtue of being a woman and the many priorities that must be in order before leading others. These core concepts will continue to guide the exploration of methods, research findings, and the conclusion portions of this thesis.

## Chapter Three: Methods

### Introduction

There has been much controversy over the years about women's roles within church ministry. Most denominations and non-denominational churches have come to terms with their individual views and dogmatically stand by them. This is illustrated by viewing the most recent conventions of these various denominations, (such as the southern Baptist Convention), and reading the conclusions set forth for forward guidelines in reference to woman in ministry.<sup>133</sup> The issue of woman in the pulpit, along with other items of controversy have recently split the United Methodists into two more distinctive groups.<sup>134</sup> Whether a woman can be used in leading church worship is not the question or focus to be rehearsed in this thesis. Determining that because this degree's training, for both men and women, is in church worship and pastoral counseling, it is now a matter of knowing how to execute that training as a woman. The purpose of this research is to determine the biblical characteristics of a feminine and godly worship leader and in what manner these characteristics should be manifested. A woman needs to have specific biblical and practical guidance that is different from a man in many respects, even though each may occupy the same classroom or ultimate position within the local church.

Not only is a woman different from a man in physical and emotional makeup, but there are also different personas of women from congregants to confront. Church staff members may also have issues in dealing with a female leader sitting next to them as a peer or as an authority figure. Even if the congregants and/or men she is in subjection to have delegated her this position, gaining the trust and respect of those she leads needs to be done within the design God has

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<sup>133</sup> Liam Adams, "Southern Baptists to vote on measure ensuring ban on women pastors at annual meeting," *USA Today*, June 13, 2023.

<sup>134</sup> Peter Weber, "The breakup of the United Methodist Church," *The Week* January 5, 2023.

created for a woman. Observation has shown that many women in leadership have compromised God's design to secure that solidarity. Sana Farhan writes extensively on this problem and says the following:

“Firstly, throughout history, many societal norms and expectations have defined leadership in masculine terms. Traits such as assertiveness, decisiveness, and confidence have been traditionally associated with effective leadership. Women who aspire to leadership positions often feel the pressure to conform to these expectations in order to be taken seriously and gain respect in male-dominated fields. Secondly, women in leadership roles face unique challenges and biases. They may encounter gender-based discrimination, stereotypes, and prejudices that hinder their progress.”<sup>135</sup>

This compromise has also been seen in outer dress as well as demeanor. Shellie Larabell says, “Indeed, ever since women began entering the white-collared, ascendant -oriented workplace in record numbers back in the 1970's, there has been a series of books advising them how to dress. Not a few people reading this blog will remember the navy suits worn with little bow ties by women hoping to eschew femininity for feminism.”<sup>136</sup>

A visual look at styles and recognizing them on church platforms may be found in an article by Cassandra Sethi. One may readily see the masculine rather than feminine designs being encouraged. She outlines the examples, the secular women who model them, and calls these styles “great executive fashion for women.”<sup>137</sup>

The passion and intent of this study is to show the correct biblical design and how to manifest it as a strong leader within church worship as a female. Many readers would gain valuable growth in conducting their own personal investigation of the specific subject. The

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<sup>135</sup> Sana Farhan, “Why do many women leaders behave like men,” *Quora*, July 30, 2023.

<sup>136</sup> Shellie Karabell, “Dressing Like a Leader: Style Tips for Women in the Spotlight,” *Forbes*, January, 16, 2016.

<sup>137</sup> Casandra Sethi, “The Easy Guide to Great Executive Fashion for Women (with photos),” *Next Level Warehouse*, September 25, 2021.

following pages propose a logical and professional mode of investigation and method to render solid and verifiable conclusions.

### **Design**

Research design has several different approaches. These are quantitative, qualitative, or a mixture of both methods. The quantitative design relies heavily upon survey research and documentation of collected data from experiments previously conducted. Because this thesis was chosen in the realization of a gap in literature and teaching materials, the method of qualitative research was more appropriate. According to Creswell and Creswell, this type of path also matched itself to a more appropriate writing style of the subject matter and its conclusion.<sup>138</sup> They write, “Qualitative approaches allow room to be innovative... They allow more creative literary-style writing.”<sup>139</sup>

This method may be further broken down into the following as stated by the same authors: “Constructivist worldview, ethnographic design, and observation of behavior.”<sup>140</sup> Each of these areas have been considered through the lens of three main thought-driven research. The first of these is the historic changes made of precedence in the leadership of women within the church. The second area is the study within the realization of today’s churches being much more diverse in ethnicity and cultural norms than in the past. The third area is the observation of the negative approaches blending within secular and Christian communities that contrast with biblical standards and principles set forth therein.

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<sup>138</sup> John W. Creswell, and J. David Creswell, *Research Design, Fifth Edition* (Thousand Oaks: SAGE Publications, Inc., 2018), 20.

<sup>139</sup> *Ibid.*, 20.

<sup>140</sup> *Ibid.*, 17.

To answer the proposed research questions via the outlined research method and approach, the materials examined include theological expositions of biblical passages. The Bible is quoted as the authoritative Word of God. Commentators of different viewpoints and interpretations of these biblical passages are studied and compared. Graduate papers from academia are used for themes that refer to women in leadership of church worship. Also in church worship, historical church literature outlining precedence and changes on the subject are studied and analyzed in consideration of present philosophies and current modes of operation of women leading church worship. Recent and relevant writings or talks shared by Christian authors, as well as perspectives of non-believers are studied for gaining information on where and how the biblical principles are adhered to or ignored. Recent and relevant sociological and psychological literature are sought out for data as to the effect upon the women and their relationship to others who carry important leadership roles. This then is used in comparison to how the women leading church worship relates to their families and friends within the church. Employing visual examples both in pictures and archived videos are also resourced for analysis. These visual aids are direct revelations of the effect upon other humans based upon one's dress, demeanor, and body language.

### **Questions and Hypotheses**

Research questions that have been answered in this study are as follows:

RQ1: What are the biblical principles that should be upheld by female worship leaders according to their God-given gender design?

H1: The biblical principles that should be upheld by female worship leaders according to their God-given gender design include submission to God and male headship, aspiration to distinct/modest feminine beauty inwardly and outwardly while also being a loving

nurturer to her children, and, also, those around her.

RQ2: What are the manifested characteristics of female worship leaders who uphold biblical principles according to their God-given gender design?

H2: The manifested characteristics of female worship leaders who uphold biblical principles according to their God-given gender design are observable in their attitude/demeanor, dress/speech, elevated skills of leadership versus control, and the ability to navigate the unique challenges a female may face in church worship leadership.

### **Procedure**

Organizing the study into two main sections is the first course of action. The first main area of study of the thesis is focused upon the woman in her role as a female in contrast to the role of a male as set forth by the design of God. The second area of study is the specific role of a woman as a church worship leader. The questions and hypotheses given determine the type of research to be done, which in this case has been determined to be qualitative.

Step two in procedure is the gathering of scholarly materials that would be pertinent to the subjects at hand. This is broken down by consulting biblical passages as the foundation of truth and research. All other materials will be sorted in concentration of subject by using different author's writings of the points to be considered. These gleanings are from books, commentaries, magazines, journal articles, blogs, offerings of universities and other foundations of learning, fellow graduates' theses papers and dissertations, videos, statistical graphs, and photos posted on websites. It is important to gather from many types of thought groups or angles of interpretation of the subjects

discussed. Both Christian and secular findings and opinions give a well-rounded base for building the case given in one's conclusions.

Step three would be to construct an outline based upon the notes taken from scholarly findings. Organizing the flow of information in logical sequence is essential to drawing correct conclusions in the finality of the study. While writing many subheadings will manifest to add to the larger headings. Each paragraph should lead smoothly into the next with logical reasoning and connectivity. Adding to the bibliography as quotes are cited is strongly suggested to avoid problematic documentation in the concluding pages.

Finally, consult both a reader and an editor for professional analysis of the research and documentation of the thesis. These professionals are also valuable to correct any technical flaws of grammar or Turabian rules of writing. Adding and/or subtracting thoughts or data from the study is normal in being precise and thorough for the benefit of the reader and the strength of the conclusions being presented.

## Chapter Four: Research Findings

### Introduction

Developing a specific list of feminine characteristics for the biblical woman leading worship uses comparison and contrast of biblical principles vs Secular Humanism and, specifically, Gender Ideology. A discussion of the challenges that women in leadership face in remaining true to characteristics embodying and exemplifying biblical principles and practical answers for employing the practice of said characteristics are included.

The underlying ideologies, philosophies, and pedagogical implications which have been revealed by studying women in church worship leadership give Christians a definite cause for examining themselves and the practices within their local congregation. Each person must examine if the women in leadership are lining up with biblical characteristics clearly written for guidance. In discussing identifiable qualities of contemporary worship, Lester Ruth and Swee Hong Lim write, "... a commitment to adapt worship to match contemporary people."<sup>141</sup> Herein is where the adaptation of a nature or philosophy that adopts unbiblical characteristics of the contemporary people being led, may creep into the characteristics of the women who are leading. The philosophy of the worldly culture which stands in opposition to biblical principles is pressing from many sides.

Paul starts the book of Galatians with the frustration that the purity and simplicity of the Gospel had been contaminated with works of the Law (Old Testament demands) being mixed with grace (Christ's provision in the New Testament) in Gal 1:6-10. In the same manner, this thesis is the continued need to examine the purity of being separate from the world (John 17:14-

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<sup>141</sup> Glenn Packiam, *Worship, and the World to Come: Exploring Christian Hope in Contemporary Worship*, 26.



16) while being relevant and relatable within it. Romans 12:2 says. “Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewal of your mind, that by testing you may discern what is the will of God, what is good and acceptable and perfect.” Discerning this verse must keep in mind the command of Jesus given in Matthew 5:16. Jesus said, “In the same way, let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father who is in heaven.” The desire and principle is for every believer to show who God really is in his perfectness and wholeness.

Women leading worship in public gatherings have an opportunity to exemplify this desire of purity like none other. They can be winsome and relevant while contrasting the philosophies and practices of the world who oppose God. Their femininity, inner strength, beauty, giftings, dignity, and confidence are the result of an identity anchored in Christ. Carolyn Moore wrote an entire chapter on this point and says, “This life is not a mountain to climb but a canvas waiting to be painted. I am a cocreator with Christ in my life and vocation.”<sup>142</sup> Ladies of this caliper may affect entire generations by living out the inner desire every human craves. They can show that they know who they are, why they are here on this earth, and how to carry out their destiny in the power of the Holy Spirit. Stephen Miller writes, “Worship Leaders, we are artists who have been given these talents so that we might make Him known. We have been given the gifts of art and song and creativity so that we might, in new, beautiful, and inventive ways, display the supremacy of God to the watching world through the church.”<sup>143</sup> Packaging that gifting within the contrast of femininity against the blurring of gender only makes God’s message that much stronger.

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<sup>142</sup> Carolyn Moore, *When Women Lead*, 108.

<sup>143</sup> Stephen Miller, *Worship Leaders*, 114.

From the time of Christ there are continuing shifts of ideas and practices of the female's role within the church. Church history reveals the arguments and divisions caused by these discussions.<sup>144</sup> People truly are like sheep who follow in droves the ideas of a leader they deem worthy to follow. It falls upon the responsibility of a leader to designate the difference between an opinion or preference and "Thus saith the Lord". Myles Munroe addresses the problem very succinctly saying, "It is too easy to take one verse and build an entire doctrine upon it. This often has been the case historically as the church has looked at the question of women and leadership."<sup>145</sup>

This quote from Munroe gives the clear-cut evidence of the importance a woman "plays" in the purposes of God. The enemy (Satan) has continually sought to disrupt and destroy the unity of the believers in any way possible (John 10:10). He is deceitful, cunning, and constantly offering counterfeits to the will which God has put forth. This is readily seen in the temptation of Christ in the wilderness (Matthew 4:1-11). Humans have always had the tendency to honor their traditions and habits more than the principles and true priorities for the church as declared by the Word of God. Current imbalances both within the church and in society cause uprisings that have fueled dueling sides of opposition. Each side ends up spending much energy to make the Bible fit their own argument. Walter Liefeld writes, "The horizon of the modern reader is different, of course, but the question here is whether proponents of one side or another have shaded their hermeneutics to adapt to their own culture."<sup>146</sup>

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<sup>144</sup> "Christianity-Schism: division over substantial matters," Encyclopedia Britannica. Accessed March 27, 2024. <https://www.britannica.com>

<sup>145</sup> Myles Munroe, *Understanding the Purpose, and Power of Woman*, 181.

<sup>146</sup> Walter L, Liefeld, *The NIV Application Commentary*, 108.

The conducting and findings of this study have sought to examine the Word of God and the supporting evidence to its principles. These in turn should dictate God's principles and proper manifestations of those principles in everyday living. These principles gathered as research findings should guide a female believer in any period of history and transcend the norms or popular trends of a current era.

### **Discussion of Thesis' First Question and Hypothesis**

The question asks the following: What are the biblical principles that should be upheld by female worship leaders according to their God-given gender design? Biblical principles are instructions from the Word of God which give guidance to daily living in any time and culture. Principles differ from Bible doctrine in that doctrine is specific tenants and dogma that are necessary for the salvation of mankind.<sup>147</sup> These doctrines consist of the trinity of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, the deity of Christ, salvation through him and him alone, the shedding of blood for the remission of sins, the resurrection of Christ from the dead, belief through faith rather than works, the Holy Spirit's work in the believer, the imminent return of Christ, and the hope of eternal life after the demise of the present physical body. These are found written in the Nicene Creed.<sup>148</sup> Peter Townsend writes, "A doctrine may contain principles, or assume them; but a principle does not in itself contain a doctrine."<sup>149</sup>

Biblical principles also differ from preferences and priorities of opinion. Preferences are a personal leaning toward sensory preferences and modes of operation within the principles. Unity always focuses on gathering around the celebration of biblical doctrines. Divisions occur because

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<sup>147</sup> Peter Townsend, "What is the Difference between a Principle and Doctrine," *Quora* April 27, 2020.

<sup>148</sup> David Hollingsworth, "How Would You Describe the Nicene Creed in Christianity," *Quora* June 25, 2017.

<sup>149</sup> Peter Townsend, "What is the Difference between a Principle and Doctrine," *Quora* April 27, 2020.

of the demand to unify around the focus on certain principles lived out a particular way or the preferences of the leadership becoming imbalanced in importance and put into doctrinal status. Scott Mason writes, “Where we as Christians get it wrong is when we try to make our own preferences into doctrines, and doctrines into preferences. We mistake and confuse the two.”<sup>150</sup>

These differences are vital to understand as one considers biblical principles to guide women in worship leadership. Larry Coy, a friend of Jerry Falwell Sr. with archived writings at Liberty University, and a personal mentor of this writer says the following: “You cannot be fulfilling a biblical principle while simultaneously violating another biblical principle and then say you are being led of the Holy Spirit.” God’s principles work hand in hand in wholeness, balance, and to glorify himself.

### **God Designed Women Differently from Men**

Females are formed differently from males from the time of conception forward. The reproductive organs are one of the first and the biggest discrepancies to notice.<sup>151</sup> A woman carrying a child may now find out the gender or sex of the child from a lab technician doing an ultrasound. While the rest of the body may look similar in the stages of in- uterus development, the genitalia is distinctly different. Szadvori and associates write, “Sex refers to the biological differences between males and females. Two distinct sexes- males and females are determined by sex chromosomes and genes that form certain gonads, internal and external genitalia, and physiological hormones.”<sup>152</sup>

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<sup>150</sup> Scott Mason, “Personal Preference vs Bible Doctrine,” *Wix*, May 27, 2020.

<sup>151</sup> Ivan Szadvori, Daniela Ostatnikova, and Jaroslava B. Durdiakova, “Sex differences matter: Males and females are equal but not the same,” *Physiology & Behavior* Vol 259, February 1, 2023.

<sup>152</sup> *Ibid.*

Not only are the genitalia designed differently for conception to occur, but it is also the female's body, exclusively, which possesses a womb to carry the child as it develops for nine months before birth. The mammary glands of a female are also designed very differently from a male enabling the female to nurse and give initial supply of nourishment to the newborn. The structure of the bones, muscles, and tissue of a female differ from a male providing the unique support necessary for that child-bearing ability. In an extensive article on the differences of the genders, Amirali Banani writes, "The anatomical differences between males and females are significant and encompass a range of physical features and structures. These differences are the result of variations in hormonal levels, genetics, and developmental processes." He goes on to detail the physiological differences as well.<sup>153</sup>

Men are also built differently to physically handle hard manual labor, physically protect their home, family, and community, and to be physically attractive to the female eye in contrast to her own feminine frame. There are examples in modern society to support these truths. Along with the NFL, other major sports leagues have men's teams who only compete with other men's teams.<sup>154</sup> Women are not built to compete with men physically. During war time the United States has instituted a draft for men, not for women. The ACLU (American Civil Liberties Union) reported, "But the Supreme Court upheld the law in *Rostker v. Goldberg*. The Supreme Court reasoned that Congress could choose to require only men to register since the draft was aimed at replacing combat troops..."<sup>155</sup> Women may be found to flock to the magazines racks to

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<sup>153</sup> Amirali Banani, "The Differences Between Male & Female Bodies in Humans," West Point Grey Academy July 13, 2023. <https://www.linkedin.com>

<sup>154</sup> JC Reeser, "Gender identity and sport is the playing field level," *National Institute of Health*, Sports Med 2005. <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov>

<sup>155</sup> "National Coalition for Men, et al/v./Selective Service System, et al.," ACLU, January 8, 2021. <https://www.aclu.org>

see the most recent issue of “World’s Sexiest Man” when it is published. This chosen man has consistently been of a manly physique and dressed in manly clothes.<sup>156</sup> Aside from the recent writers pushing the Gay Agenda, many fictional romance novels and Hollywood movies have borne these same emphases. Pamela Britton writes, “For the most part, editors want an alpha male. That’s why Harlequin publishes so many books with cowboys on the cover.... you’ll have a harder time getting an editor to bite if he’s less than, well, manly.”<sup>157</sup>

Women are also designed differently from men emotionally. In a comprehensive study of this phenomenon, scientists reported this in their introduction statement: “There is a biological basis in the known behavioral sex differences as morphometric studies have shown brain difference between males and females in several regions important for emotional response: such regions do correspond to the same areas which, during early development, include the highest concentration of sexual hormone receptors.”<sup>158</sup> Myles Munroe expounds on the subject and writes an entire chapter of explanation in one his books. He says, “These differences were designed to be complimentary and not divisive... primarily, she is feeling; he is thinking.”<sup>159</sup>

These differences in the design of men and women physically and emotionally are for the purpose of the difference in roles that God created for each. Because of imbalance or the abuse of power- driven males rather than leadership-driven males, women have arisen to further the problem with trying to reverse the roles or go at least 50/50 functionally in a relationship. Women are expecting men to take over domestic duties in direct proportion to the time and

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<sup>156</sup> Zoey Lyttle, “Every (Mc) Dreamy Photo from Patrick Dempsey’s Sexiest Man Alive Cover Shoot,” *People* November 10, 2023.

<sup>157</sup> Pamela Britton, “What are the must-have attributes for the male love interest in a woman’s romance novel,” *Quora* May 11, 2013.

<sup>158</sup> Marta Bianchin, and Alessandro Angrilli, “Gender differences in emotional responses: A psychophysiological study,” *Physiology & Behavior Vol 105* February 28, 2012, 925-932.

<sup>159</sup> Myles Munroe, *Understanding the Purpose, and Power of Woman*, 143-149.

money they make outside of the home. In the conclusion of a study Javier Cerrato writes, “This can result in increased tension between the partners due to the transfer of stress from work to family by men and their lesser involvement in household chores, which would generate an increase in marital conflict and, therefore, an increase of conflict in the family especially in women due to unequal distribution of household chores.”<sup>160</sup>

A Christian author that has written extensively about the female role is Michelle McClain-Walters. She writes, “Satan has put a great divide in male- female relationships in the kingdom, and sin has distorted the relationship between man and woman at every level.”<sup>161</sup> Another consideration for future study is the conflict between spouses caused by a woman’s imbalanced work priority over the family. Christian women need to consider the following thoughts: Women may sometimes give more respect and attention to being the helpmate of their boss or coworker than that of their own husband.; If a woman is consumed with her career as her top priority, then it needs to be questioned why she would marry and have children in the first place. This neglect or putting others behind a job is not fair to them. These are pertinent considerations for a Christian woman to ponder as statistics show that disastrous marriages are lower, yet still prevalent in the church as compared to outside the church. A Texas law firm writes in a recent article this fact: “It is often assumed that Christian marriages are resilient and unlikely to end in divorce, yet recent studies have revealed that the percentage of Christian marriages that end in

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<sup>160</sup> Javier Cerrato, “Gender Inequality in Household Chores and Work- Family Conflict,” *Frontiers* August 3, 2018.

<sup>161</sup> Michelle McClain -Walters, *The Esther Anointing*, 117.

divorce is surprisingly high.”<sup>162</sup> The body of Christ must ask the “why” question. The above questions are only one avenue to explore.

Many women have contributed amazing things in science, medicine, the arts, engineering, the armed services, and governmental law. God gave these abilities, and each woman must prayerfully commit to God’s design as she fulfills his calling in her life. The role of leading worship is just as high a call as any other accomplishment mentioned previously. It is a huge responsibility and role to fill. In this vein Michael Walters writes, “If the church’s worship is not bringing its people into a deeper experience with God, the kind of experience that spills over into the rest of their lives, then the church is failing at the very center of its calling.”<sup>163</sup> If God has put a woman in this position than he will enable her to follow his priorities and be filled with his power to lead well for his glory. God also promises his supernatural provision and care of the women who *must* work for various reasons (Psalm 68:5).

Various Bible scholars were used in this study from different denominations and time periods. These scholars’ writings were consistent in reporting that both Peter and Paul addressed women’s behavior in the local gathering because of a pendulum swing of behavior with their newly found freedom in Christ. In example, Lea and Griffin write, “The women in Ephesus had neglected home responsibilities and had selfishly tried to claw their way to a position of dominance in the local church,”<sup>164</sup> For the sake of testimony and God’s purpose in roles, Paul, especially, had to spell it out to the churches in detail for that time. The principle of loving leadership for the males and then females respectfully following these men is the message, and

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<sup>162</sup> Longworth Law Firm, P.C., “Christian Divorce Rates 2024,” Accessed January 9, 2024. <https://www.myhoustondivorce.lawyer.com>

<sup>163</sup> Michael Walters, *Can’t Wait for Sunday*, 198.

<sup>164</sup> Thomas D. Lea, and Hayne P. Griffin, Jr., *The New American Commentary Vol 34* (Nashville: B&H Publishing Group, 1992, 103.



not the exact details that pertained to that time and culture. Lea and Griffin go on to say, “Paul was not suggesting that the woman is incompetent to occupy the role of pastor/teacher. His concern related to the effect of the woman’s position would have on marriages in the church and on the value of the mothering role.”<sup>165</sup>

The Bible makes it clear that women are designed to be primarily domestic. Along with this they are commissioned to use their talents and spiritual gifts within that framework and along with work in the ministry. There is no law or biblical guideline that says women cannot work outside of the home. However, women working for wages outside of the home cannot be doing so at the expense of relationship with the husband or children, the upkeep of the home, or the hospitality of serving others (Titus 2:1-5). Women should use their gifts and aspirations to the fullest within biblical priorities (Proverbs 31).

A man’s biblical role is to provide, protect, love, and lead (I Timothy 5:8). Widowed or unmarried women who find themselves alone are sometimes challenged to use their gifts and talents in ministry when survival in finances becomes the focus. Biblically, they should look to the church body for help and not just turn to government supply. (I Timothy 5:3-16; James 1:27). The local church needs to teach and adhere to this to help women fulfill their biblical calling.

### **Women in Submission**

In all the materials gathered to study, Paul Ellis seems to have the best biblical understanding and teaching on submission. He has the following to say on this topic:

“When we think of submission, we tend to think of the strong dominating the weak. We picture wrestling holds and being beaten into submission. We think of kings ruling over subjects, and husbands lording it over wives. This is the sort of submission that Aristotle wrote

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<sup>165</sup> Thomas D. Lea, and Hayne P. Griffin, Jr., *The New American Commentary Vol 34* (Nashville: B&H Publishing Group, 1992), 100.

about, but it is not what Paul was talking about in Ephesians 5. Biblical submission stems from love, not power. It is not forced on us from above, it is something we offer to another. Its choosing to surrender because we want to, not because we have to. We yield to the other because we love and respect them. Indeed, submission is the essence of love. It is saying, ‘Because I love you, I choose to put you first.’<sup>166</sup>

The first step of submission is to God. Christ gave us this example as he walked earth in human form. Myle Munroe writes, “Even though Jesus is equal to God, He submitted Himself to the Father and to the Father’s plan (Philippians 2:6-8).”<sup>167</sup> Verses from Paul’s writings give great instruction about this submission. I Corinthians 6:19-20 says, “Or do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit within you, whom you have from God? You are not your own, for you were bought with a price. So, glorify God in your body.” Another passage that Paul wrote is in Galatians 2:20. It reads, “I have been crucified with Christ and I no longer live, but Christ lives in me. The life I now live in the body, I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me.” In his letter to the Ephesians Paul writes in Chapter 6 vs 6, “not by the way of eye-service, as people-pleasers, but as bondservants of Christ, doing the will of God from the heart.” James sums up the thoughts of Paul and writes in James 4:7, “Submit yourselves therefore to God, Resist the devil, and he will flee from you.”

The second step of submission is in reference to the persons of the family unit. The passage of Scripture found in Ephesians asks children first to obey parents if they are a part of their parents’ household. As an adult, the wife submits to the husband as being commissioned the head of the household by God. The man is in direct submission to God as Christ is the head of

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<sup>166</sup> Paul Ellis, *The Silent Queen: Why the Church Needs Women to Find Their Voice* (Beach Haven, New Zealand, Kings Press, 2020), 136.

<sup>167</sup> Myles Munroe, *Woman*, 88.

the Bride of Christ. The plan of God unfolds so beautifully in Ephesians Chapter 5. It is truly a circle of love as Ellis wrote about.

Other passages about women giving submission to men are found in I Peter 3, Colossians 3, I Timothy 2, I Corinthians 11,14, Titus 2. These are all based upon the passages in Genesis that outline God's creation and purpose of men and women. Sharon Jaynes concludes the study of these passages with this thought: "Yes, God had special plans for woman, but being the leader of the home wasn't one of them. He is a God of order, and two heads always has been considered a deformity."<sup>168</sup>

The third area of submission is to be obeying those who have been given authorized rule over a people. This authority may be governmental or in the church. Romans 13:1-7 is primarily speaking to governmental authority. The first verse of this passage reads "Let every person be subject to the governing authorities. For there is not authority except from God, and those that exist have been instituted by God." Hebrews 13:17 speaks directly about leadership in the church. This verse says, "Obey your leaders and submit to them, for they are keeping watch over your souls, as those who will have to give an account. Let them do this with joy and not with groaning, for that would be of no advantage to you."

A very important aspect for a woman not to be "side-lined" from her destiny is to recognize God's desire of arena in which her giftings are to minister. Because submission is so important in the correct context and biblical connotation, women must have great discernment of what or to whom submission is warranted as well as to what and where it is not. Most adult women, (unless in a culture of which parents choose the groom,) have choices of whom they will grant the privilege of taking the role of authority over them in both marriage and church

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<sup>168</sup> Sharon Jaynes, and Lysa Terkeurst, *Seven Principles for Every Woman*, 61.

attendance. Submission should not be in the context of giving a man or men authority over oneself that are not of the Lord's will and direction. Satan desires to keep the Christian from fulfilling the destiny God designed for them. Therefore, it is imperative for the sake of being in position to fulfill the biblical characteristics and manifestations of a woman's God-given role to discuss a pitfall to avoid.

I Peter 5:8 states, "Be sober minded; be watchful. Your adversary the devil prowls around like a roaring lion, seeking someone to devour." Satan has positioned men sitting on every Christian university campus and in every wonderful church across America who are imposters and counterfeits. They are controllers, manipulators, predators, users, and abusive narcissists who prey on innocent women. These women are not just the compliant and insecure type. These are brilliant, independent, and gifted women who simply want to follow a male in the biblical sense of submission and leadership. The church is a typical place to hide, especially when the church has a warped, unbiblical, and/or legalistic understanding of leadership and submission.

Diane Langberg has written an entire book on the subject and has been an instrument of eye-opening change and healing to so many. She writes, "Abuse of power is a cancer in the body of Christ... We are doing great damage to countless vulnerable people and to God's church because people destroyed by abuse perpetuated by the powerful cannot use the fullness of their God-given gifts to bless his body."<sup>169</sup> The biblical antidote is to prayerfully allow the Holy Spirit, amid great council (Proverbs 11:14) to determine what authority a woman will choose to follow. He must be a man or administration given wholly to God as his Lord and Master, consistently manifesting the fruit of the Spirit as listed in Galatians 5 and leading you in sacrificial love as

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<sup>169</sup> Diane Langberg, *Redeeming Power: Understanding Authority and Abuse in the Church* (Grand Rapids: Brazos Press, 2020), 93.

Christ loves the church. These attributes sound very much like the qualifications of men that are mentioned in I Timothy 3 and Titus 1. Langberg also says, “Others have never known protection and safety and have never learned how to make wise choices regarding their vulnerability.”<sup>170</sup>

God wants women to be wise and discerning in such life-altering choices.

### **A Woman’s Beauty**

The beauty of a woman is first found in her heart. The Bible has several passages that speak to this. One finds in I Peter 3:4 the following: “But let your adorning be the hidden person of the heart with the imperishable beauty of a gentle and quiet spirit, which in God’s sight is very precious.” The Old Testament also teaches this truth. Proverbs 30:30 says, “Charm is deceitful, and beauty is vain, but a woman who fears the Lord is to be praised.” I Samuel is a poignant reminder that the heart is God’s first concern of beauty and wholeness. Verse 7 of I Samuel 16 reads, “But the Lord said to Samuel, ‘Do not look at his appearance or at the height of his stature, because I have rejected him; for God sees not as man sees, for man looks at the outward appearance, but the Lord looks at the heart.’”

This beauty is accomplished by a woman getting her identity and proper self-love in Christ. This contrasts with looking for approval of others based on outward looks, status, or accomplishments. The fear of rejection and the striving to gain approval on the horizontal rather than the vertical is a torturous prison. Each godly woman needs to walk free from such deceitful abuse. Psalm 139 is an excellent chapter of the Bible for women to memorize in this regard. Verses 13-14 are especially life changing. They read, “For you formed my inward parts; you knitted me together in my mother’s womb. I praise you, for I am fearfully and wonderfully

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<sup>170</sup> Diane Langberg, *Redeeming Power: Understanding Authority and Abuse in the Church* (Grand Rapids: Brazos Press, 2020), 26.

made. Wonderful are your works; my soul knows it very well.” Leslie Ludy writes, “Personally, I never saw stunning feminine beauty until I encountered women who were completely unaware of self and completely consumed with their precious King.”<sup>171</sup>

With this foundation a woman may embrace her talents and giftings truly as gifts from God to be invested for his kingdom. Whaley writes, “God wants to call you into action. God has uniquely gifted you and He wants you to use your gifts and skill for his purposes of advancing His Kingdom.”<sup>172</sup> A woman whose identity is in Christ becomes so aware of his purposes in her life. This awareness and anchoring of his calling on her life enables her to walk in God-confidence instead of working up some self-confidence. Knowing one’s own talents and spiritual giftings should be so obvious. However, they may easily be clouded by a search without prayer or without “looking unto the Jesus the author and finisher of our faith” (Hebrews 12:2). Admiring a talent or gifting of another does not mean that God has given you the same. Too many women are trying to be somebody they are not for very erroneous motivations.

Comparisons, faulty assessments, jealous competition, and seeking to gain greater prominence among others must go to the wayside when anchored in Christ. II Corinthians 10:12 reads, “Not that we dare to classify or compare ourselves with some of those who are commending themselves; but when they measure themselves by one another and compare themselves with one another, they are without understanding.” Carolyn Moore sums up this tragedy by saying, “In my research on women who lead, I discovered that in addition to women who might feel uncertain about their competencies, there are others whose sense of ‘self’ or

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<sup>171</sup> Leslie Ludy, *Set-Apart Femininity*, 48.

<sup>172</sup> Vernon M. Whaley, *Exalt His Name*, 16.

calling deeply impacted their confidence as ministry leaders.”<sup>173</sup> Women who are purposed in Christ have no need to question or compare by looking to others.

Being solidified in one’s identity and purpose in Christ gives freedom for a heart to be beautiful in reaching out to others. One may find this principle in action in I John 3:18. This verse says, “Let each of you look not only to his own interests, but also to the interests of others.” Another passage speaks to this principle as well. Galatians 5:13 says, “For you were called to freedom, brothers. Only do not use your freedom as an opportunity for the flesh, but through love serve one another.” For the woman there is a specific verse in I Timothy 5:10 that shows what God desires. Paul writes, “...and having a reputation for good works: if she has brought up children, has shown hospitality, has washed the feet of the saints, has cared for the afflicted, and has devoted herself to every good work.” In discussing the passage of I Timothy 2, Paul Ellis addresses the situation of hierarchy, whether it be in the home or as a leader in the church. He writes, “This is why Paul reminds us to serve one another in the love of Christ. The only remedy for unhealthy hierarchy is to put others first.”<sup>174</sup>

The outward appearance needs to reflect the beauty that lies within a Godly woman’s heart. This outward appearance is to honor God in his design of her femininity. The apparel and makeup a woman wears communicates who she is. An interesting secular article points out this fact. Juh Singh, a Chinese and ayurvedic medicine specialist, founder of the Juhi Ash Wellness Center in New York City was quoted as saying, “Your appearance is a reflection of what’s going on inside.”<sup>175</sup> Juh Singh was not just referring to physiological terms but also in the dress

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<sup>173</sup> Carolyn Moore, *When Women Lead*, 101.

<sup>174</sup> Paul Ellis, *The Silent Queen*, 110.

<sup>175</sup> Gabby Shackna, “Empowering from Within,” *Marie Claire* - Power Issue, 2022, 96.

of an individual. He writes, “The outward appearance begins with taking proper care of the body and, also, adorning it appropriately.”<sup>176</sup>

In ascertaining the principle of femininity, the dress, hair, and makeup of a woman must contrast with the manly clothing and other features of a male. In desiring to be stylish and contemporary many worship leaders have fallen prey to the agenda of leading designers and what they have put forth. Many, if not most, are seeking to blur the lines of gender. On August 19, 2015, *The New York Times* offered an article entitled, “In Fashion, Gender Lines are Blurring.”<sup>177</sup>

In 2015 and a few years afterwards, the skinny jeans were popular for men. This was an effort to feminize the males. Lulza do Prada Lima writes, “The gender-neutral and minimal style of the social movement Beatniks created a perfect stage for skinny jeans. The piece was worn mostly by men, becoming synonymous with rock n’ roll and the ‘bad boy’ culture.”<sup>178</sup> Many worship leaders were wearing this style in an effort to look current. It is interesting to note that most male athletes did not concur with wearing the style. In an article on why men should not wear the skinny jeans, the article says, “The reality is most guys don’t have the right body type for skinny jeans.”<sup>179</sup> Currently, the traditional jeans for men are now appearing on the female models.<sup>180</sup> Hopefully women worship leaders will be wiser in discernment of style agendas coming from major clothing design firms. The old saying goes, “a picture is worth a thousand

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<sup>176</sup> Gabby Shackna, “Empowering from Within,” *Marie Claire* - Power Issue, 2022, 96.

<sup>177</sup> NYT, “In Fashion, Gender Lines Are Blurring,” *New York Times*, August 19, 2015.

<sup>178</sup> Lulza do Prada Lima, “Before Gen Z Cancels Them for Good, here is the History of Skinny Jeans,” *Medium*, March 18, 2021.

<sup>179</sup> *Real Men Real Style*, “Skinny Jeans for Men- 3 Reason Why Men Should Not Wear Tight Pants,” *Real Men Real Style*, October 2, 2023.

<sup>180</sup> Alexander Marain, “Here’s the Only Denim Trend You Need to Know About in 2024,” *Vogue*, January 4, 2024.



words.” A recent photo of Billie Eilish on the Red Carpet illustrates the opposite of a feminine look a biblical Christian woman would seek to manifest. Understanding the lyrics of Billie’s songs, the fact that she is a known Lesbian, and is in rebellion to anything of God’s standards, readily explains her choice of attire.<sup>181</sup> As early as the book of Deuteronomy God addresses his desire and command on the matter of dress for men and women. Deuteronomy 22:5 says, “A woman shall not wear a man’s garment, nor shall a man put on a woman’s cloak, for whoever does these things is an abomination to the Lord your God.”

Pictures of the latest styles on the Red Carpet also address another issue for Christian women. The newest trend is to look as naked as possible.<sup>182</sup> The biblical principle in God’s Word for Christian women is modesty. I Timothy 2: 9 says explicitly, “Likewise also that women should adorn themselves in respectable apparel, with modesty and self-control...” Of this passage Lea and Griffin write, “To dress ‘modestly’ demands that the women dress tastefully and not provocatively. The term ‘dress’ describes the outward deportment of the women as expressed in the clothes they wear.”<sup>183</sup>

### **Discussion of Thesis’ Second Question and Hypothesis**

The second question of this study is as follows: What are the manifested characteristics of female worship leaders who uphold biblical principles according to their God-given gender design? The discussion will begin with addressing the outer adornment that is seen by others.

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<sup>181</sup> Mehera Bonner, “Billie Eilish Hits the 2024 Golden Globes with Cute Glasses and Red Hair in Celebration of Her ‘Barbie’ Nom,” *Cosmopolitan*, January 7, 2024.

<sup>182</sup> Robyn Merrett, and Christina Baez, “The Best Nearly Naked Looks of All Time: Rebecca Hall, Kendall Jenner and More,” *Us Magazine*, January 4, 2024.

<sup>183</sup> Thomas D. Lea, and Hayne P. Griffin, Jr., *The New American Commentary*, 96.

### **Feminine and Modest Clothing**

Putting aside politics or discussion of spiritual conditions, the U.K. has historically strictly adhered to modest standards in their dress codes. Ffion Haf, Harriet Johnston, and Dinah Van Tulleken reported this: “Plunging neckline? Revealing see-through panels/ It a Royal ‘no’ to that! How the Princess of Wales has her catwalk clothing specially tailored to add a note of modesty to the glamorous designs.”<sup>184</sup> Princess Kate is stylish and relevant and yet modest in appearance. Female Christian worship leaders need to take notice of this showing the obvious power of clothing in a leading position.

As Princess Kate models modesty, another celebrity models femininity. Taylor Swift who is entirely secular, sometimes immodest, and not biblical in most of her philosophies. However, she has chosen to champion her sexuality and femininity in a very pronounced way even if she supports the agenda of the Gay community. Stephen Daw writes, “Swift makes it clear who this song is for, as she sings, ‘Cause shade never made anybody less gay.”<sup>185</sup> If one will study all the photos made public, one may readily observe that Taylor is usually in a dress or a skirt. This percentage is overwhelming in dress or skirt vs a pant outfit. If she wears pants, they are tailored and outfitted in a very feminine cut and design.<sup>186</sup> If a person who does not claim Christ as Savior can understand the communication of dress style, then one must question a Christian woman who ignores this communication yet seems to want to follow biblical principles. It is more important than ever before for godly women to want to look feminine and modest when worldly structure pushes against God’s design and desire.

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<sup>184</sup> Ffion Haf, Harriet Johnston, and Dinah Van Tulleken, “Princess Kate,” *Daily Mail*, June 2023.

<sup>185</sup> Stephen Daw, “Why Taylor Swift’s open support of the LGBTQ community should be celebrated,” *Billboard*, June 14, 2019.

<sup>186</sup> Hanna Wickes, “She never goes out of style! Taylor Swift’s 2023 Going Out Looks: See Photos,” *J-14*, December 14, 2023. <https://www.j-14.com>

### **The Woman's Hair**

Part of the outward adorning is a woman's hair. I Corinthians 11:15 reads, "But if a woman has long hair, it is her glory? For her hair is given to her for a covering." In an article about Sinead O'Connor Will Millar writes, "In her memoir, she wrote that she was working on her first album in London and had been told by a male music executive she should grow her (buzzed but not shorn) hair long and start to dress more like a girl. The next day she sent to a barbershop and had it all shaved off."<sup>187</sup>

Many times, the rebellion is not a direct rejection of God. It is a reaction on the horizontal from abuse. This is an important essential factor for reading books that disparage New Testament writings on women. There is a reaction instead of a proper response to their abuse. Sinead was no exception. In her memoir she went on to describe abusive experiences, and writes, "I didn't want to be raped or molested, I didn't want to dress like a girl, I didn't want to be pretty. Other girls beat you up if you were pretty too."<sup>188</sup> Satan's tactics to attack God's design come from many directions. Female leaders must evaluate the real root of issues and not violate God's design out of reaction.

The Bible makes is clear that wearing a haircut known as a man's cut goes against biblical principle. The headshots of these models with such haircuts make it difficult to distinguish gender.<sup>189</sup> Another popular trend is coloring a woman's hair a neon color. A very interesting article by a girl in and out of mental wards said this about unnatural hair color: "I absolutely do think bright colors and manic episodes go hand in hand. Not saying that's every single person

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<sup>187</sup> Will Millar, "Sinead O'Connor: The devastating and dark story behind the Irish singer's shaved head," *Edinburgh News*, July 27, 2023.

<sup>188</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>189</sup> Ruth Bell. "11 models who are embracing the buzz cut," *Pinterest*, 2016.

out here but from myself being a mental hospital loads of times the manic and bubbly personality leads to them being attracted to the more bright and not natural colors ....to be in your face.”<sup>190</sup>

The biblical principle to manifest here is avoiding bringing unwarranted attention to oneself. Women looking like men or using extreme colors and styles get noticed, but this does not focus the attention on giving God glory. I Corinthians 10:31 says, “So, whether you eat or drink, or whatever you do, do all to the glory of God.” Women leading worship and pastors leading these women must consider why these hair trends are permitted across church platforms around the world. Stephen Miller writes, “Everywhere we go, we are living representatives of the living God. Every place we go is His.”<sup>191</sup> Contemporary or faddish hair styles do not always conform to biblical standards so clearly expressed.

A hair trend in some Christian circles is never to cut the hair. This extreme in another way may appear as just as much of a detraction from the loveliness of God as fad trends. Long hair past the waist that desperately needs a trim can easily look and seem ridiculous on adult women. It is especially unattractive when it is stringy, with different shades of grey, and haggard looking. Many of these women opt to piling it on their heads as a style back in the 1800’s. The stares garnered by these women are not in a positive way but in questioning of such unattractiveness. If uncut hair is a personal conviction, then a woman needs to be as clean and neat as possible without the hair or style of it bringing a negative attachment to the cause of Christ. The motive of these personal preferences and convictions are great but must be carried out in a way that would

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<sup>190</sup> Abby Janovic, “When a person chooses to dye their hair a bright color, is it a sign of mental illness,” *Quora*, August 9, 2019.

<sup>191</sup> Stephen Miller, *Worship Leaders*, 120.

not create a negative testimony. Romans 14:16-23 is a guide each woman worship leader needs to study. Verse 16 states, “So do not let what you regard as good be spoken of as evil.”

Women leading worship should err on the conservative side rather than be a stumbling block to others in how she communicates with her outward adorning. I Corinthians 8:9 says, “But take care that this right of yours does not somehow become a stumbling block to the weak.” A woman can be chic and elegant without being viewed as either trendy, in an unbiblical manner, or dowdy and dull with lack of style. Leslie Ludy writes, “But when we come to Jesus, we exchange our desires to be noticed and appreciated for the desire that He and He alone would shine gloriously through our beings.”<sup>192</sup>

### **Carriage, Verbiage, and Makeup**

Another note about outward appearance must be directed towards a woman’s carriage, verbiage, and makeup. These all communicate loudly to those around her. Holly Holden blogs this: “The way we carry ourselves relays grace with our poise and carriage.”<sup>193</sup> A woman in worship leadership need not be unnatural or unfeminine in any of these aspects. Another author has great advice about this discussion. Phil Halfmann writes, “For example, confidence and elegance is always exhibited in the way a poised woman walks, talks, and conducts herself. Her mannerisms are fluid and gentle yet strong and purposeful.”<sup>194</sup>

Gaining respect is a matter pertaining to one’s character. It is being an example of biblical principles of appearance, leadership, and God’s love pouring from a woman’s person to those around her. Proverbs 31:25 reads, “She is clothed with dignity; she can laugh at the days to

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<sup>192</sup> Leslie Ludy, *Set-Apart Femininity*, 48.

<sup>193</sup> Holly Holden, “Exude Confidence with Your Carriage,” *Mummy’s Monday Manners*, November 9, 2020.

<sup>194</sup> Phil Halfmann, “The Beauty of Poised Elegance in a Woman,” *Prestige Magazine*, October 6, 2021.

come.” Leigh Ann Thomas writes about this verse and explains an example of just the opposite happening in today’s culture. She says the following:

“What used to be an unsettling undercurrent in our world, is now shouted from every platform and accepted as the standard for womanhood. Hollywood and pop culture continues the mantra: Beauty is in the eye of the latest trend, designer, or cover girl. Women are smart, sassy, and can do anything a man can do, only much better. To succeed, we must dominate every area of our lives, and sweep aside anything that might come between us and our ambitions.”<sup>195</sup>

As Halfmann pointed out, a woman with true strength and dignity does not have the hard facial look of that of the models in magazines. Another author explains the hardness seen on these models. Gary Summers writes, “They are not supposed to smile, show teeth or any aspect of their personality because as humans the first thing we try to connect to the person in front of us is through his or her expressions. Our focus becomes their face... instead of the clothes.”<sup>196</sup> In contrast, a biblical woman’s facial expression would desire to be soft and full of genuine smiles. The Bible speaks that one may express the heart by the look of the eyes. Proverbs 21:4 says, “Haughty eyes and a proud heart, the lamp of the wicked, are sin.”

The quote from Gary Summers clarifies that it all culminates with a woman’s face. A woman’s face is a book to read. Two female actresses from the secular world exhibit very extreme contrasts in the use of facial makeup. Lady Gaga wears an exorbitant and very obtrusive amount of makeup.<sup>197</sup> The other extreme is called the “naked face” exemplified by Pamela

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<sup>195</sup> Leigh Ann Thomas, “What Does Proverbs 31:25 ‘She is Clothed in Strength and Dignity’ Mean for Us Today,” *Christianity*, September 2023.

<sup>196</sup> Gary Summers, “Why do high fashion models pose with unhappy facial expressions,” *Quora*, June 10, 2013.

<sup>197</sup> Kara Nesvig, “Literally, how did Lady Gaga manage to get all her makeup off in the middle of the Oscars,” *Allure*, March 13, 2023.

Anderson.<sup>198</sup> These two extremes do not properly manifest the beauty of Christ and speak of his perfection. They, once again, bring unwarranted attention to the woman and not the glow of who she is and who she represents. There is no biblical principle against enhancement unless it makes one look manly, self-centered, or unnatural. Great caution and consideration in prayer must be prioritized before grabbing the latest and greatest tools marketed for looking better or younger. Looking dowdy and unkempt bring the same undo attention to a person and away from Christ.

One may also find this godly woman and leader walking and sitting tall, speaking softly when talking, spending most communication time in listening, and looking her most healthy, fit, and beautiful self. These are the practical manifestations that support advice from Ashley Wize. She writes, “The most beautiful version of yourself is the one that radiates wellness and positivity from within, aligning with the philosophy that when you take care of your body and mind, it reflects in how you present yourself to the world.”<sup>199</sup> Nature shows God’s perfection, and women need to exemplify his finest creation – a woman. We also have the realization of Christ dwelling inside of the Christian. I Corinthians 6:19-20 reads, “Or do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit within you whom you have from God? You are not your own, for you were bought with a price. So, glorify God in your body.” I Corinthians 10:31 says, “So, whether you eat or drink, or whatever you do, do all to the glory of God.”

### **Physical Health**

Taking care of one’s body also means that the food eaten must be for the best nutrition possible, chosen with one’s blood type in mind, and as natural as possible. Stephanie Watson writes, “... the foods you eat react chemically with your blood type. If you follow a diet designed

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<sup>198</sup> Ingrid Vasquez, “Pamela Anderson made another makeup-free appearance on 2023 Fashion Awards Red Carpet,” *People*, December 5, 2023.

<sup>199</sup> Ashley Wize, “The Authenticity of the No Makeup Revolution,” *Brainz Magazine*, November 6, 2023.

for your blood type, your body will digest food more efficiently, lose weight, have more energy, and help prevent disease.”<sup>200</sup> Food eaten out of gluttony or emotional soothing is not God’s desire. Books and articles abound for someone desiring to be strong and healthy. Putting aside rare health issues that cause weight problems, being overweight or anorexic skinny from neglect brings, once again, that unwarranted attention to the self. These extremes of weight may cause restricted behavior, unattractive appearance, or sometimes odor, and do not shine God’s perfection of beauty. There is no difference between a worship leader making light of their smoking habit and a worship leader making light of their unhealthy weight. These are character or emotional issues that can be dealt with and eradicated with counsel and God’s grace and strength. Christian students with earned doctoral degrees from Cedarville University have written on health and nutrition. They say, “Thus, while the body is distinct from the soul, one cannot minimize the importance of either nor relegate the essence of our humanity in some way that divides one aspect from the other in terms of their intertwined reality.”<sup>201</sup>

### **Strength and Dignity**

It is stated in I Peter 3:1-6 that a gentle and quiet spirit is of great worth in God’s sight. A loud or demanding tone of voice is not attractive or the way of leadership for a Christian woman in worship. Christin Ditchfield writes, “Our influence has expanded in churches, our communities, our culture, and around the world! And the way we wield that influence most often is with our words.”<sup>202</sup> Defensiveness, ownership, or “know it all” attitudes are the downfalls of gaining respect. The better alternative is revealed by another author who is not necessarily

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<sup>200</sup> Stephanie Watson, “The Blood Type Diet,” *WebMD*, August 15, 2022. <https://www.erbmd.com>

<sup>201</sup> David Peterson, Jeremy Kimble, and Trent Rogers, “A Christian Guide to Body Stewardship, Diet, and Exercise,” Cedarville University Publication, 2021, 3. <https://www.publications.cedarville.edu>

<sup>202</sup> Christin Ditchfield, “Women Have a Way with Words,” *Crossway*, June 6, 2019,



writing from a Christian standpoint. Katelyn Redfoot writes, “Having quiet confidence yields a greater degree of power because it’s true confidence or genuine confidence in action and means someone feels comfortable in their own skin. They don’t need to prove anything to anybody or feel the need to be the center of attention.”<sup>203</sup> The Bible solidifies these themes. James 1:19 says, “Know this, my beloved brothers; let every person be quick to hear, slow to speak, slow to anger.” Proverbs 17:28 says, “Even a fool who keeps silent is considered wise; when he closes his lips, he is deemed intelligent.”

Sitting and standing in physical positions of power or masculinity do not bring the proper respect for one’s leadership either. Both the verbiage and carriage of a woman in a worship leadership position need not try to be domineering if wanting to exude God’s leadership qualities. David Wygant writes, “Life is about energy and there is a balance to it all. Two masculine energies can’t coexist in the same space for very long.”<sup>204</sup> Domineering women from any aspect are seemingly exploiting their insecurities. They are afraid men and women will not respect and follow them if they do not seem as strong as others in the room. An editor for a psychology magazine writes, “Instead of relying on coercion or force, the prestige route to status and leadership relies on intelligence and expertise.”<sup>205</sup>

Priorities of modesty and femininity, in all ways, with care and good stewardship of one’s *temple* will solicit respect. The godly woman with biblical strength and dignity will be a powerful influencer in her home, church, and community. She will point the observer to the image of Christ and his marvelous design in creation. Proverbs 31: 28-29 read, “Her children rise

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<sup>203</sup> Katelyn Redfoot, “The Power and Wisdom of Having Quiet Confidence,” *Vibrant Life*, May 25, 2020.

<sup>204</sup> David Wygant, “Why Masculine Women are Always Alone,” David Wygant Blog, March 4, 2013.

<sup>205</sup> Psychology Compass, “Leadership Development via Dominance and Prestige,” *Psychology Compass*, May 10, 2022.

up and call her blessed; her husband also, and he praises her: Many women have done excellently, but you surpass them all.”

### **Genuine Relationship with God**

These outer qualities can only exist because of a genuine intimate relationship with the Lord. She understands and accepts, personally, the Gospel message from John 3:16 which says, “For God so loved the world, that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life.” She recognizes the difference with this and other false religions because of the message in John 14:6 which says, “Jesus said to him, ‘I am the way, and the truth, and the life. No one comes to the father except through me.’” She wholeheartedly agrees with Galatians 2:20 and recognizes this on a deeper level each day. This passage reads, “I have been crucified with Christ. It is no longer I who live, but Christ who lives in me. And the life I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me.” She rests in the promise given in I John 1:9 which reads, “If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.” She understands the significance of baptism and is glad to testify through this manner according to the example in Acts 2:41. This verse says, “So those who received his word were baptized, and there were added that day about three thousand souls.” She also understands the significance of taking communion and obeys Jesus in remembering him this way on a regular basis. Luke 22:18-20 gives the picture of this ordinance and the command of Jesus at his last supper before being betrayed.

The vibrant female leader of worship clearly makes every part of her a life an act of worship. She spends time alone in the Word, in prayer, and in the quietness of the presence of God, while emptying herself and being filled with the Holy Spirit. This is the priority of her day

and on an everyday basis. Psalm 46:10 reads, “Be still, and know that I am God. I will be exalted among the nations; I will be exalted in the earth!” This woman understands John 15:5 and especially its last phrase which says, “for apart from me you can do nothing.” She leans on the truth in John 3:23-24 in her personal worship and then carries it over into worship in the gathering. These verses read, “But the hour is coming, and is now here, when the true worshippers will worship the Father in spirit and truth, for the Father is seeking such people to worship him. God is spirit, and those who worship him must worship in spirit and truth.” This worshipper knows she must be filled with the Spirit to worship in this manner. Ephesians 5:18 says, “And do not get drunk with wine, for that is debauchery, but be filled with the Spirit.” This brings to her to also remember the words to Zerubbabel in Zechariah 4:6 which say, “Not by might, nor by power, but by my Spirit, says the Lord of hosts.”

It is by allowing the Holy Spirit to fill and direct a woman that she manifests the fruit of the Spirit. It cannot be manufactured. It is the outflow of his presence and power. Galatians 5:22-23 read, “But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control; against such things there is no law.” These attributes must be so present in the life of a woman before she can think about leading others in worship. Leadership, with its own principles, practices, and privileges is secondary to her inner foundation in Christ. The listed qualities of fruit spell out that foundation in him, which then flows to those around her.

In a book by Christian author Bob Kauflin, he writes, “Jesus said the greatest commandment is this: ‘You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.’ While it’s simplistic to say that worship is love, it’s a fact that what we love most will determine what we genuinely worship.”<sup>206</sup> I John 4:19 says, “We love because

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<sup>206</sup> Bob Kauflin, *Worship Matters*, 25.

he first loved us.” Grasping the love of God for each as an individual, gives the woman her identity in Christ. This love cannot be fully understood with mere human intellect but is revealed by the Spirit. This truth is so lacking in many Christian women and regularly causes identity crisis. When a woman is anchored in God’s love and keeps focused on the vertical relationship, the need to gain identity elsewhere fades away. Manifesting this anchor is primary for the female worship leader. This enables her to love others properly.

Emotional stability is very necessary for one’s own health and testimony to others. Joy and peace are different entities and, yet, very much intertwined. Grace and freedom in Christ eradicate condemnation and the need for striving. The replacements for these negative burdens are joy and peace of resting in this salvation through faith (Romans 8). They are the armored vehicle that transports one through adverse circumstances. Isaiah 26: 3 says, “You keep him in perfect peace whose mind is stayed on you, because he trusts in you.” David speaks of this relationship in the book of Psalms. Psalm 16:11 says, “You make known to me the path of life; in your presence there is fullness of joy; at your right hand are pleasures forevermore.” One may find in the Book of John Jesus speaking about abiding in him and his desire for our joy to be full. These things were all in the same conversation. John 15:11 says, “These things I have spoken to you, that my joy may be in you, and that your joy may be full.” Verse five of the same chapter is themed on abiding in Christ. John 16: 24 states, “Until now you have asked nothing in my name. Ask, and you will receive, that your joy may be full.” A godly female leader does not have to wear a plastic smile when on the platform or maneuver through rehearsed gestures of praise. Joy and peace may have freedom to flow naturally from her inner being.

Emotional stability extends to interactions with others. This stability would recognize that patience and kindness also go hand in hand. As a leader, one can find that the people being led

can falter, make mistakes, be exasperating and/or stubborn, and sometimes immature. Whether it is their attitude or a lack in their execution of art form, a team member can easily try the patience and kindness of a leader. One only need think of the patience and kindness God has shown to oneself and his Spirit will give the heart and power to deal rightly with others for his glory. Ephesians 4:32 says, “Be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, as God in Christ forgave you.” I Corinthians 13:4-7 has this exhortation: “Love is patient and kind; love does not envy or boast; it is not arrogant or rude. It does not insist on its own way; it is not irritable or resentful; it does not rejoice at wrongdoing but rejoices with the truth. Love bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things.” A female worship leader does not fear being perceived as weak when she follows this admonition. She knows it will be God’s blessing and solicit the respect of those who are under her care. Boundaries and proper discipline may be rendered within the confines of patience and kindness.

In continuing to follow the list given in Ephesians 5, one may now consider goodness and faithfulness. These virtues speak about leaders that can be counted upon. These kind of leaders are good for their word and faithful to their promises. This leader’s attitudes and actions reflect the goodness and faithfulness of God. I Samuel 12:24 reads, “Only fear the Lord and serve him faithfully with all your heart. For consider what great things he has done for you.” They model the correct way of attitude and behavior to others. M.G. Easton writes, “Goodness in man is not a mere passive quality, but the deliberate preference of right to wrong, the firm and persistent resistance of all moral evil, and the choosing and following of all moral good.”<sup>207</sup> These attributes are not to impress others. They are manifestations of the Spirit in fruit of worship unto the Lord.

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<sup>207</sup> M.G. Easton, *Easton’s Bible Dictionary Third Edition*, (Edinburgh, Scotland: Thomas Nelson, 1897). “Entry for Goodness”.

Gentleness and self-control need to be applied to the self before a female worship leader can apply these attributes toward others. Because of the sensitive and driven personalities of many artistic female leaders, they may tend to be perfectionists and easily be unfairly harsh on themselves. Trying to meet unrealistic and self-imposed expectations or the harsh self-criticism of a mistake is not being gentle. Both female and male artistic individuals are usually highly sensitive people. They need to be approached with gentleness to resolve any issue. Self-control is doing the right thing when the human tendency, in opposition to the Spirit's nature, would direct a different way. It is easy to want to lash out at self or others. It is easy to indulge in unhealthy foods for self-gratification to the detriment of one's body. It is easier to let the mind or eyes go to places that distract and give selfish pleasure rather than running to the Lord for fulfillment and comfort.

The remedy for this dilemma is found in having the mind renewed according to Hebrews 12: 1-2. It is vital for a woman in worship leadership to apply and teach this truth. Renewal is a by-product of the work of God and not behavior modification from the individual. Self-discipline and self-control are two different things, that should not be confused. Self-discipline is the effort of an individual. It is legalism. On the other hand, self-control is the effortless outcome of one filled with the Holy Spirit. Galatians 5:16-17 say, "But I say, walk by the Spirit, and you will not gratify the desires of the flesh. For the desires of the flesh are against the Spirit, and the desires of the Spirit are against the flesh, for these are opposed to each other, to keep you from doing the things you want to do." Leadership and meaningful worship will go awry if this is not adhered to in a profound and consistent manner.

## Stewardship in Leadership

Building upon the foundation of a walk in Christ and empowered by the Spirit gives the ability to correctly steward the gifts, talents, and leadership privileges of leading in worship. The general attributes of great leadership are no different between males and females. Those will be considered. However, there are also specific attributes of leadership a female must possess to overcome some unique challenges only a female will encounter. Biblical principle shows that men are to be the primary leaders or headship in the home and church. A woman who is designated, assigned, and delegated a leadership role must confidently communicate that calling. She must also communicate the evidence of submission to her authorities while doing so.

John C. Maxwell is an author and speaker on leadership principles. The list of contents in one of his books are the culmination of all he has taught. There are 21 chapters which are considered for all types of leaders of either gender. Maxwell calls these “The 21 Irrefutable Laws of Leadership.”<sup>208</sup> They are worthy of an in-depth study and analysis of one’s own level of incorporating these principles of leadership. Being in worship leadership is not just about music knowledge. Collecting and studying books on leadership such as this are a must for effectiveness in leading. Learning how to both listen and effectively communicate are among the essential tools for incorporating meaningful worship in the entire church body. They are considerations that should stay in regular review for each person called to leadership in any capacity. These principles are with the assumption that the leader has been so designated because of capability both in skill and training. The need for these “laws” are to help leaders realize that talent and

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<sup>208</sup> John C. Maxwell, *The 21 Irrefutable Laws of Leadership* (New York: Harper Collins, 2007), page of Contents.

skill are not enough. They are only the first step. From this point, leadership considerations will now focus specifically on female worship leadership qualities to be manifested.

A female worship leader has the inner knowing and conviction that she has been called of God and not by herself to this responsibility. The church leadership, and her husband recognize this call and fully support the woman taking the position. She has a healthy awareness of dependency upon God and that her giftings are of him and for him. She is fully submitted to God's authority and the men whom God has appointed to "cover" or, in other words, be accountable for her before the Lord (I Thes 5:12-13; I Cor 11:1-16; I Peter 5:5).

In taking on the responsibility and privilege of worship leading, the woman remains true to biblical priorities. These priorities are in order of God's priorities for a woman. They consist of her walk in Christ, the relationship with her husband and children, the taking care of her own body and home for a good testimony and reaching out to aide others in need both financially or in the practicality of goods and kindness. Titus 2 is an important passage for women to study that outlines these priorities and admonitions. Finally, she uses her gifts and talents to serve the purpose of God in his church body.

Keeping these priorities necessitates that this woman be organized and detailed in tasks at hand. Sharon Jaynes writes, "Even though the word 'organization' conjures up warm and fuzzy feeling about as much as the word 'budget', it's key to creating a warm and loving environment for your family and friends."<sup>209</sup> The godly woman is prayerful about how to use her time and what to delegate to others who can be of help. She has an honorable work ethic and a "can do" attitude. Proverbs 31 is a shining example of this woman. The entire chapter would benefit ladies who decide to memorize and meditate upon it. The verse that may best summarize the necessity

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<sup>209</sup> Sharon Jaynes and Lisa Terkeurst, *Seven Life Principles for Every Woman*, 150.



of priorities is written by Paul in the letter to the church of Ephesus. Ephesians 5:15-16 say, “Look carefully then how you walk, not as unwise, but as wise, making the best use of the time, because the days are evil.”

Being anxious or stirred up emotionally should not be a habit for a godly woman in worship leadership. Thankfulness and gratitude need to block every occasion for worry or fear. She looks at every problem as an opportunity. She champions Bible passages on these subjects. I Peter 5:7 says, “Casting all your anxieties on him, because he cares for you.” Another passage in Philippians 4:6-8 reads, “Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God, and the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus. Finally, brothers, whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is just, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is commendable, if there is any excellence, if there is anything worthy of praise, think about these things.” This type of worship in everyday life is where “the rubber meets the road”. This enables authentic worship in song, dance, giving, and the Word in the assembly of God’s people. Modeling this to the female’s worship team perpetuates the leading of authentic worship from the entire platform.

A woman at rest will cause and dictate the same rest to her surroundings. She brings the God-confidence and purpose to all those she leads. She easily and succinctly lays out the theology, philosophy, vision, and goals to those on her team with strength and excitement. She communicates expectations, boundaries, areas of flexibility, and measurable goals to evaluate in a fixed time of the future. She mentors her team spiritually, emotionally, and physically in

developing the heart and growth of skill in the arts to meet these goals.<sup>210</sup> These are the positive qualities of a leader in opposition to some kinds of leadership that sometimes invades the church. McIntosh and Rima listed three negative types as the compulsive, narcissistic, paranoid, codependent, or passive-aggressive leaders.<sup>211</sup> These appear when an individual is not filled with the Holy Spirit or needs inner healing.

Perhaps the female worship leader's greatest attribute is the ability to "field" the unique challenges that come by virtue of her gender. Both men and other women will sometimes be more hesitant to follow simply because the leader is a female. Carolyn Moore writes, "It is difficult to form your identity as a leader when you are constantly trying to figure out how to live into the authority given to you while people around you are questioning your place."<sup>212</sup> Establishing the obvious submission to the delegated sources of authority over the female worship leader is very helpful. It is also necessary that she asks her male authorities to communicate publicly their support for and "covering" of this female leader.

Jealousy, envy, and strife are quick killers of the Spirit's work among a worship team. Not only may her authority be questioned, but if she is a feminine woman with youth and beauty, this may somehow trigger doubt to her capability and skill. She may be labeled as one who earned the position from favor not ability. Monika K. Suma, as reporting results of a scientific study says, "The measure of masculine traits was identified as the only predictor of alpha female status as per the multiple regression model."<sup>213</sup> Contrary to this, God's truth reveals that women

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<sup>210</sup> Gary L. McIntosh, and Samuel D. Rima, *Overcoming the Dark Side of Leadership: How to become an effective leader by confronting potential failures* (Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 2007).

<sup>211</sup> *Ibid.*, 9.

<sup>212</sup> Carolyn Moore, *When Women Lead*, 31.

<sup>213</sup> Monika K. Suma, "Masculinity, Femininity, and Leadership: Taking a closer look at the alpha female," National Library of Medicine, April 12, 2019. <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov>

can be both brilliant and beautiful in one body. However, many times this must be proven. An article detailing another scientific study on this problem came out from Natalie Maher. She writes, “In a 2017 experiment, Drydakis (et al) tested the theory that masculine qualities are more highly valued in the workplace by submitting graduate job applications across a range of sectors, all with the same academic qualifications and experience, but peppered half with skills of masculine traits and hobbies (competitiveness, hiking), and half with feminine (Empathy, jewelry making) ...People’s abilities are judged based on their gender.”<sup>214</sup>

As a leader the biblical woman must first learn how to be the eagle who flies above instead of vying for pecking order among the birds in the chicken coop. John Bevere writes, “So many people measure their lives and ministries by what others do and say. You don’t want to measure yourself by the wrong standard.”<sup>215</sup> A godly female leader need not quickly retreat and apologize, nor be obstinate and haughty. She recognizes the problem, goes to prayer, and then decides the course of action. John Bevere also says, “Maybe Timothy (referring to II Timothy 2) was like so many others today who love God but avoid confrontation. Fear of confrontation makes you easy prey for intimidation.”<sup>216</sup> Sometimes ignoring an insult or putdown is the best way to go. If persistence contaminates a whole group, then it must be addressed to the whole group. Bringing a challenger to the table of an entire group is usually a very effective tool in discovering truth, motives, and steps of resolve.

A woman’s leadership for these times is imperative to be bathed in strength and dignity of God’s love. Ephesians 4:15 reads, “Rather, speaking the truth in love, we are to grow up in every

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<sup>214</sup> Natalie Maher, “Why should women have to ‘act like men’ to get ahead in design,” *D Week*, March 7, 2019.

<sup>215</sup> John Bevere, *Breaking Intimidation*, 119

<sup>216</sup> *Ibid.*, 29.

way into him who is the head, into Christ.” If there is a place of need for her to apologize or own up to a mistake, she must hurriedly reveal this and make things right with her team. Being flexible, being a good listener, taking suggestions, and humbly confessing wrong choices models correct living and correct leading. Meekness is not weakness. It is power, capability, and confidence wrapped in the confines of a humble heart and gift totally controlled by the Holy Spirit.

Personal growth must be modeled by this female in her skill level and in her personal growth as a yielded Christian. It is her expertise that gives great credence to her position as a woman. It is not the demanding tactics or manipulations of the flesh to secure others’ loyalty. She must have a working knowledge of all the instruments and be able to effectively communicate/demonstrate the desired execution of that harmony part.

Music is only one aspect of the Fine Arts. Understanding the beauty of liturgical dance and, also, the use of dramatic scenes or writings of literature should be something she is well versed in. Knowing how to incorporate the art of paintings, floral arrangements, and sculpture is an asset to worship. Lysa Terkeurst makes the following observation: “Most women love to bring beauty to their surroundings. I’ve heard it said that we are most like the Creator when we are Creating.”<sup>217</sup>

Connecting effectively with the members of the worship team is imperative. She must communicate in the technical crew’s language in accomplishing the desired atmosphere for the worship set/liturgy. Those men and women will be much more accepting of being led when they are appreciated and speak the same terminology. It behooves a leader to read, take classes, and get “hands-on” training in the more technical areas of the music ministry. A leader is a teacher.

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<sup>217</sup> Sharon Jaynes, and Lysa Terkeurst, *Seven Life Principles for Every Woman*, 144.

A teacher must be a life-long learner. This ensures better communication and relationships.

Wayne Jacobsen and Clay Jacobsen write, “Entering a room and not demanding what we want but being ready to help others get what they need is the essence of genuine church life.”<sup>218</sup>

Giving much grace and exercising patience with others while diligently praying for the matter is the only solution. Others’ issues and immaturities or lack of knowledge cannot be a deterrent to obedience to God. Forgiving past hurt and dispelling fear ingrained by erroneous teaching must happen at the foot of the cross. John Bevere writes, “Like Nehemiah, true warriors in Christ press through the mountains, confident that nothing is impossible to those who believe (Matthew 17:20). In contrast, those traveling the path of ease go around their mountains to avoid confrontation.”<sup>219</sup>

Fear can also grip a woman’s heart to deter her from obedience to God’s leading. The Esther of the Bible is an example of the heart a female worship leader must also possess in the face of fear. Esther took bold steps of risk to stay in obedience to her call for “such a time as this” (Esther 4:14). This occurred and was enabled after much prayer and fasting. In fearful happenings around the globe the church is ripe for a great harvest of souls that is spoken of in John 4:35. The remnant who are true to God’s doctrines and biblical principles with no compromise have opportunity to unite for a new Great Awakening. God intends for all his children, who all have been gifted by him, to participate in that amazing privilege.

Finally, Michelle McClain-Walters gives those in leadership the following encouragement: “Influence is the power to change or affect someone or something; the power to cause changes

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<sup>218</sup> Wayne Jacobsen, and Clay Jacobsen, *Authentic Relationships: Discover the lost art of “one anothering”* (Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 2003), 53.

<sup>219</sup> John Bevere, *Breaking Intimidation* (Lake Mary: Charisma House, 2006), 182.

without directly forcing them to happen.”<sup>220</sup> Music and other forms of corporate worship are the most powerful ways of touching a heart with God’s truth and the abundant life. It is the greatest privilege and responsibility on earth to lead such worship. Each female worship leader is to be God’s voice, hands, and feet, and shepherd the sheep by his power and grace.

This study has provided key elements of leadership qualities and characteristics manifested in the role of a female worship leader. These elements included biblical gender qualities, music skill, a biblical theology of worship, communication skills, organizational skills, resolving conflict, an attitude of being a life-long learner, and the ultimate ability to keep priorities of the home and her personal intimate fellowship with God as foundational.

Each godly female worship leader desires to hear these words at the culmination of earthly life: “Well done, good and faithful servant. You have been faithful over a little; I will set you over much. Enter into the joy of your master” (Matthew 25:23).

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<sup>220</sup> Michelle McClain-Walters, *The Esther Anointing*, 129.

## Chapter 5: Conclusion

### Summary

The purpose of this research paper was to examine the issue of discerning God's desire of characteristics for women in worship leadership through the lens of the Bible as the authoritative Word of God. It employed a qualitative study which also considered relevant literature from Christian exposition, secular sociology, psychology, and archived visuals.

The data of this study determines this conclusion: God intended something much different in philosophy and practice in the body of Christ than what is currently trending for the complimentary genders in ministry. The first disparaging discrepancy is the disunity caused in the church because of the disagreements among leadership of both denominational and non-denominational churches about the place of women in ministry. God never intended there to be factions of any type in his body of believers. Philippians 2:2 states, "Complete my joy by being of the same mind, having the same love, being in full accord and of one mind."

It is first determined in this thesis that one must look at the unifying factor of oneness in the doctrines of the Gospel. It is the proclamation that provides salvation through Christ. It is the message that Jesus and the apostles proclaimed with full abandonment of their entire being and life. Discord happens when there are factions caused by adding to or taking from the purity of this Gospel. Craig Truglia writes, "Today in this article, my aim is to show that the Scriptures teach against us approaching church as consumers. Above even doctrinal purity is the absolute necessity to avoid divisions over disputable matters."<sup>221</sup> I Corinthians 1:10-13 says, "I appeal to you, brothers, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that all of you agree, and that there be no

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<sup>221</sup> Craig Truglia, "The Wickedness of Schisms Proven from the Scriptures Alone," *Orthodox Christian Theology*, March 7, 2017.

divisions among you, but that you be united in the same mind and the same judgement. For it has been reported to me by Chloe's people that there is quarreling among you, my brothers. What I mean is that each of you says, 'I follow Paul,' or 'I follow Apollos,' or 'I follow Cephas,' or 'I follow Christ.' Is Christ divided? Was Paul crucified for you? Or were you baptized in the name of Paul?"

Today's divisions are no different. In the consumer mentality that Truglia refers to, believers are choosing churches of men they follow in accordance with that leader's style and preferences as if those things were doctrinal concerns. The greatest divisions began during the 1900's after the Great Awakening of the late 1800's.<sup>222</sup> In studying the history of denominational formations and the splitting into various variety of such due to conflicting interpretations of Scripture, there appeared to be two outstanding themes of disagreement.<sup>223</sup> Sadly, at the root of many were either the understanding of the filling of the Holy Spirit or the place of women in ministry. Instead of leadership coming together to pray and discuss the preferences, many of the leadership stubbornly parted ways and created all the different denominations still existing among the body of Christ in the present. Having preferences is not wrong but dividing fellowship with others because of differences of interpretation and practice is not biblical. The doctrines of the Gospel and the principles found in the Word are the blueprints for Christian living in the body of Christ. II Timothy 2:15 says, "Do your best to present yourself to God as one approved, a worker who has no need to be ashamed, rightly handling the word of truth." The very ones dividing fellowship supposedly based on biblical principles are violating biblical principle in their divisiveness.

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<sup>222</sup> "Conservatives and Evangelical Forms of Protestantism," *Encyclopedia Britannica* 15<sup>th</sup> edition (Chicago: Encyclopedia Britannica, Inc., 2010.)

<sup>223</sup> *Ibid.*



Handling the Word with integrity and rightly dividing it means a study of biblical principles in the context of the entire Word, God's focused and foundational gospel doctrines found consistent throughout Scripture, and the example of the words and actions of Christ. This study has determined the conclusion that women in worship ministry are to be using all that God has endowed them with in giftings and talents. In the first letter to the Corinthians the apostle Paul gives a discussion on the different giftings that God has dispersed upon people for the work of the ministry. He uses the words "all" and "each" in speaking to the church and never gives a distinction to a certain gender to the exclusion of the other. The concern of this thesis, therefore, is to discover the biblical principles of characteristics of a female worship leader and how God intends for her to manifest them.

The meaning and conclusion of these findings fit and are the result of the literature reviewed in chapter two of this thesis. Collecting materials from all types of viewpoints and segments of human study, the various writings were compared against the standard of God's Word. The scholars who expounded on biblical passages used impartial work of the Hebrew and Greek languages. These scholars were of varied denominational backgrounds and who compared context and Scripture from all parts of the Bible to provide context and consistency of interpretation.

It is interesting to note that the scholars were in close agreement on matters of women in ministry roles. The writings of Christian laymen, on the other hand, had great variation on the subject. Listening to the tone of the writings shows that their importation of their experiences and motivations gave impetus for their communication on the matter. Abuse, distortion, imbalance, selfishness, and personal preferences, due to insecurities in various forms and causes, has caused some women to become active in reaction. It is important to separate the meaning of reaction vs

response. The nature of their reactions was to be combative to the unbiblical attitudes and manner of judgement against them, instead of responding with God's path to rectifying the wrong within the church. Other women just resolved to stay hidden and pursue the path of being secondary and subservient with inequality being justified by tradition. Still, other men and women wrote with true desire for God's equality while distinguishing the difference in roles as set forth in Scripture.

### **Significance**

The most important results of this study are twofold. First, it reveals the need for obeying God's command and desire for the body of Christ to dwell in unity around the doctrines of the Gospel, and not be riddled with factions and divisions. Jesus said in John 17:21, "That they may all be one, just as you, Father, are in me, and I in you, that they also may be in us, so that the world may believe that you have sent me." The purpose of this unity, according to Jesus, was to be a testimony to the world. Jesus also said this in John 13:35: "By this all people will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another."

It is not surprising that the enemy (Satan) would desire to interrupt unity and give the unsaved world the distinct idea that the most unloving and dysfunctional people on the planet are Christians. The impact of reversing that disunity originates Christians back to the desire of Christ and would potentially witness a true revival and new Great Awakening as many are praying for. In listening to many present and famous leaders through various forms of media, it would seem to be a common theme to hear them talk as if revival can only happen if people will do things their way and through their local church, denomination, or mode of witness. The renewal of the 1970's was a small taste of unity of believers simply loving the Christ who saved them and demonstrating love toward one another. With each movement of God, there seems to follow the

competition of leaders to gain members and cause divisions by looking for loyalty to them and their preferences.

Secondly, the results of this study show that there needs to be a fresh revelation, obedience to, and visible return to biblical principles. These principles are centered on the doctrines of the Gospel lived out in practicality. These principles are as follows: the understanding the of unity of Christ's church, the understanding, teaching, and living out of distinct gender roles, and understanding the specific characteristics of manifesting those gender roles within the leadership of worship; specifically, in this case, that of a female.

These findings relate so closely and tie into the controversial writings on the subject by others who are also concerned with maintaining biblical truth. It is current and very much a "hot" topic among Christians today. Much of the other research and literature written on the nature of women leading in any role in the church setting is very much a defensive stance on their current preference and practice. Scripture is used to support their view rather than making Scripture primary and personal preference secondary. With Scripture and doctrines of the Gospel being primary, there should be a conclusion of study that results in concurring attitudes of the biblical principle of unification of the body of Christ. A one-world church idea, originating with the World Council of Churches, was combatted because it was trying to ignore the doctrines of the Gospel.<sup>224</sup> Paul had strong words for those who brought contamination to the doctrines that Jesus and the early disciples taught. He said, "But even if we or an angel from heaven should preach to you a gospel contrary to the one we preached to you, let him be accursed" (Galatians 1:8). That is completely different from a one-world church who in purity of doctrine rally around Christ and let go of their preferences. The clear admonitions of these verses give the desire of God to

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<sup>224</sup> "List of Major Meetings: 1969-2001," World Council of Churches, February 1, 2001.

unite around the truth of the gospel and not the preferences of men. It would bring the conclusion of the matter back to the purity of Scripture. Not only should a Christian be asking “What would Jesus do,” but also, “What would Jesus say on the matter?” Leadership can make Christianity so complicated with all their views and preferences, while Jesus made the understanding so clear and simple. That unwanted complexity with its divisions and strife is exactly why the Holy Spirit had Paul write the letters one finds in the New Testament. Bringing the *principles* instead of the *specifics* of Paul’s teachings to a modern context is of utmost importance.

### **Limitations**

There are some unavoidable factors that limit the results of this study. The first obvious factor is that neither Jesus nor Paul is here in human form to elaborate how to apply Scripture passages on women in ministry in the current century. This puts the burden on every scholar of the Word to prayerfully seek the Holy Spirit’s guidance, wisdom, and understanding. John 16:13-15 promises this: “When the Spirit of truth comes, he will guide you into all the truth, for he will not speak on his own authority, but whatever he hears he will speak, and he will declare to you the things that are to come. He will glorify me, for he will take what is mine and declare it to you. All that the Father has is mine; therefore, I said that he will take what is mine and declare it to you.” Hebrews 13:8 says, “Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and today and forever.” II Timothy 2:15 reads, “Do your best to present yourself to God as one approved, a worker who has no need to be ashamed, rightly handling the word of truth.” These verses exhort the Christian to study the Word with an open heart apart from personal bias and look to the guidance and wisdom of the Holy Spirit to give interpretation to one’s life and practice.

It is difficult, if not impossible, to find solid and written statements of characteristics of women leading worship that differentiate from those of men. The best research possible was

interviewing pastors of various churches and denominations who gave vague guidelines that pertained to all staff members in general. These were about their commitment to Christ, to the local church, and asking each to use proper deportment in serving in their position. Those were the answers from those who even allowed women to be a leader at all. In the interviews conducted, the pastors who had a woman leading worship said they had her in this position simply because she was the most musically qualified within their congregation. The pastors of these various denominations interviewed all said there were no specific guidelines installed for the female gender in the position. The pastors only sighted guidelines of their affiliation as to women being a teaching/preaching pastor. It is because of this gap in literature and spoken teachings that this thesis was passionately chosen.

Although women in ministry is a current topic and source of controversy in some denominations, those who are frustrated with leaving women on the sidelines are writing and speaking as victims or defensively interpreting Scripture differently. There may be a legitimate place for that, especially amongst leaders, - however, women must also realize that Esther did things for great change in God's way, which is to appeal to those in charge. Esther did not rally her women affiliates to a shouting and marching on the palace steps with bullhorns, and picket signs. Esther 4:16 says, "Go, gather all the Jews to be found in Susa, and hold a fast on my behalf, and do not eat or drink for three days, night or day. I and my young women will also fast as you do. Then I will go to the king, though it is against the law, and if I perish, I perish." Sadly, material of positive solutions with positive and instructional tone for gifted women in the church arena is not being written, or at least encouraged if there is any already in existence. Women are being trained in many Christian universities to be excellent theologians, counselors, musicians, and leaders. However, they may face tremendous obstacles once they have graduated

and desire to use these giftings within the local church. These obstacles cloud the ability to focus on the specific biblical principles and characteristics of a woman worship leader that honors God.

### **Recommendations**

The first recommendation would be directed to the Christian universities across the country and abroad. If not already instituted, it would be so advantageous for women to have a course designed specifically for females desiring and called to minister in local churches as a worship leader. It would follow the biblical principle previously discussed in Titus Chapter 2 of keeping God's priorities in the home. This course would include material that would cover matters of inner and outward beauty. It would be important for this course to also cover leadership skills and especially navigating the challenges she may face because of her gender. This application would then have a basis to be taught in Christian high schools as well.

A second recommendation would be considered for the pastors of local churches. Each pastor and the elders should have an in-depth study of biblical principles of women's roles in the church. That should culminate with a specific document of convictions and guidelines for a woman being put in the role of a worship leader. Skill is a necessity, but each church should recognize and discern whether there is a calling of God on this woman. Proper training should accompany the music skill as to theology, philosophy, and leadership expertise. She should also have experienced specific training as mentioned in the previous paragraph of characteristics of a woman worship leader. A loving accountability system should be in place that begins with and includes her husband if she is married.

Another recommendation would then be focused on training men to take the rightful place of loving leadership in the home and church. Each position goes hand in hand. Men should

understand what that looks like in the contrast to today's society and the imbalance of legalistic and domineering attitudes. There are ministries that are targeting men to come back to the place and role the Bible decrees for them.<sup>225</sup> Men need to stand up once again and get back to proclaiming truth to one another. In so doing, men also need to realize the role and place of the female God has given to come alongside him.

A final recommendation would be for larger coalitions of Christian origin to make this issue and training a priority to take into large gatherings of pastors and leaders. Providing written, audio, and visual training should be made available for churches to use in training the entire staff of utilizing the giftings of women in church worship. A broader appreciation training and communication of theology and philosophy of a woman in ministry should be available for parishioners.

### **Conclusion**

Over the last century history reveals the growing and non-ending controversy in the body of Christ as to a woman's role in the church. The differing opinions have caused divisions between believers, their respective denominations, and even among friends and family members. As recent as 2023, the Southern Baptist Convention removed some churches from membership due to their stance on women being in a pulpit or in a leading capacity.<sup>226</sup>

While this thesis does not investigate the legitimacy of one side or the other, the controversy has raised a more specific question. This question is asking what the biblical principles and consequential manifestations of those principles should be in a female worship

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<sup>225</sup> "Men's Advance 2024 Speaker Lineup Focuses on Affirming Biblical Definitions of Manhood," *EIN Presswire/ Newsmatics*, February 12, 2024.

<sup>226</sup> "The Southern Baptist Convention ousts 5 woman-led churches," *NPR*, May 2, 2023.

leader's life. There is a very apparent gap in literature or audio and visual teachings on this specific matter.

God's Word makes it clear that women were given the same giftings, talents, and call to spread the Gospel. The differences in gender have been pointed out in Scripture and the desires of God to allow those differences to complement one another. These differences of role manifest in the physical and emotional make-up of a man vs a woman's being. God ordained the man to provide, protect, love, and lead a woman. Women are to support men with love, respect, and submission to a vision God gives them as a couple. This is enabled primarily by her ability to bear and nurture children and run the affairs of the home. The providing and the protecting of the family by the man may take on modern and current positions, but the biblical principles remain the same.

It seems the largest gap and misunderstanding come in the realm of men delegating opportunities to the women to use their giftings and talents to their fullest extent in every area of life. The New Testament church had several individuals within the gatherings that would give words of teaching, exhorting, or encouragement. The women were asked in these congregations to stay silent simply for the elimination of these women improperly taking over the whole service. Women have been clinically proven to have more words than men in a day's time. The churches were in homes which is also the place of the woman's domain. Specifically for this culture, women taking over the men in reaction to finding their new freedom in Christ would have been a bad testimony to unbelievers and cause a result God never intended. Women are equal with men but not designed or burdened with the *ultimate* responsibility to be the head of the family or the church. The apostle Paul was simply giving instruction to maintain this biblical principle.



This study has given reason to believe the unifying factor for churches on this matter is falling upon the men to provide godly and loving leadership to honor God and the female. When true leaders are absent, it seems that those who simply want to control always appear to take over. The remedy of the current crisis is men taking the role of headship without improperly lording over a woman. In their God-given role, men should give her the opportunity and support to become all God intended. This is where the word “delegation” comes in. As a godly leader this man also has his identity anchored in Christ. This enables him to applaud and utilize the woman’s talents to supply what is needed in the given place of ministry and the home. The lack of such biblical headship of a man in the home and local assembly leads to the obvious issues that Christian counselors are facing in the church today.

Christian women have revolted and while their stories of abuse are real, many of their solutions are combative trying to undo the role man’s leadership, in order, to gain their place and voice. In swinging the pendulum, they are missing the point and blessing of God’s design. God provided many pictures of strong, capable, and conquering women in the Bible. He gives a very specific picture and outline in Proverbs Chapter 31 for every woman.

A woman does not need to be bullish, manly, bossy, revengeful, or stubborn to gain respect or the use of her capabilities in the body of Christ. The answer lies in a man regaining the role God intended for him. This biblical man will champion the woman. The greatest effort a woman can put forth is an appeal to God, offer fervent prayer for the men, and by being an example of a woman manifesting God’s biblical design and characteristics. I Peter 3:1 reads, “Likewise, wives, be subject to your own husbands, so that even if some do not obey the word, they may be won without a word by the conduct of their wives when they see your respectful and pure conduct.”

This qualitative study has considered biblical characteristics of a godly woman in worship leadership. Secondly, it has addressed how those biblical characteristics would be specifically manifested in family and church roles, personal character, outward attire, grooming, demeanor, priorities, and employment of leadership prerequisites. The contrast and comparisons to the philosophy and practices of worldly leadership that do not uphold the truth of God's Word has been made. It has provided insights and recommendations that have been a gap in Christian literature and practice.

The conclusion has led to considering the need for both genders and leadership of Christian institutions of all kinds, to be knowledgeable and skilled in the Word on these matters. There stands a need for the body of Christ to regain unity instead of division over the role of women leadership in the local church. There also stands the need for a local assembly of believers to be united on the ministry of women and men working together for the sake of the kingdom. Finally, the focus of this study was for the benefit of every woman, specifically, to be at peace and in conviction of God's purpose for her life in biblical characteristics and manifestations of those characteristics.

There is a lost world who desperately needs to see and experience God's wholeness in action. Contrasting the home and church to the ungodly ways of the world should give unbelievers reason to be hungry for the gospel. Being a woman of biblical example in all ways has this potential. Each woman in worship leadership should be the light of Christ shining so brightly in the darkness. "Charm is deceitful, and beauty is vain, but a woman who fears the Lord is to be praised. Give her of the fruit of her hands, and let her works praise her in the gates" (Proverbs 31:30-31).

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