

Susan T. Foh. *Women & The Word of God*. Phillipsburg: Presbyterian and Reformed Publishing Company, 1979.

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Many Biblical feminists see irreconcilable contradictions in the Bible's teaching on women. Standing against this position, the author reaffirms the inerrancy of Scripture, which can be "relied upon and believed in every detail." Susan T. Foh is a graduate of Wellesley College (B.A. in English) and of Westminster Theological Seminary (M.A.). She has contributed articles and book reviews to various journals and the chapter "Abortion and Women's Lib" to the book *Thou Shalt Not Kill: The Christian Case Against Abortion*, edited by Richard L. Ganz.

Summary

Foh's primary purpose of this book is to exhibit that the only difference between male and female is biological, in reference to biblical roles in the home. Foh also maintains that while there are biological differences, there is no indication of biblical roles being assigned to mankind based on masculine or feminine traits. She goes on to suggest that our culture's definition of what is masculine and what is feminine could be one's own rustic idea. "Who is to say that what our culture defines as masculine or feminine is ultimately or metaphysically masculine or feminine? Perhaps it only proves that our culture's conception of what is masculine and what is feminine is provincial" (176).

She seeks to convince the reader that God's original plan was not that man (male and female) were given certain roles based on gender. Her objective is to suggest that due to the fall of man the roles in the home are based on the judgment passed down

to male and female.

Critical Evaluation

In the beginning, Foh does not do an advantageous job of clearly stating her primary purpose for this book. She does however state that there are distinctions between biblical and Christian feminists.

Foh begins her book by implying that her biblical view of women in the Bible is that of a complementarian position. She does not use the word complementarian in so many words but gives the views of women feminists and their contrast about what the Bible says about womanhood. She spends the first two chapters laying foundation for our belief and interpretation of the Bible. In chapters three and four of the book the author addresses what the Old and New Testament says about women. It is in the concluding chapters Foh begins to unveil her true position on her view of Biblical Womanhood.

The reader does not agree that the position that the author takes is that of God's original plan. "In Genesis 3, the woman is punished in terms of child-bearing and the man in terms of labor. Genesis 3 is judgment and does not state what should be; it cannot be considered justification for division of labor on the basis of sex. We can wonder why God divides the punishments, the results of sin, as he does; but an answer is not forthcoming. Possibly, the present state of affairs, the division of labor on the basis of sex, stems from the judgments; that is, perhaps because the woman suffers in the area of childbearing, that area has become her main identity; and because the man suffers particularly in labor, that area has become his chief identity. The consequences of sin (Gen. 3:15-19) may produce and contribute to these stereotypical roles of men and

women” (188).

Foh does a good job of laying the foundation of what we believe and interpret about the Bible. The reader does agree with Foh and what she states she believes about the Bible. The Bible is God-breathed and infallible. The author also states that the Bible can be trusted.

Conclusion

Women and The Word of God, was overall a well written book, although the reader did not agree with some of the views of the author. Foh was not forthcoming about her true position of women. She did conclude that while women are not to teach or lead over men in the church, they can share equal roles in the home. This is not a biblical view of God’s original plan. The reader maintains that God has not changed his original plan and the author maintains that the views of today are based on the judgment passed down due to the fall of man.

