

Andrews University

## Digital Commons @ Andrews University

---

Memory, Meaning & Life

Seventh-day Adventist Theological Seminary

---

4-8-2010

### What Did Early Adventist Pioneers Think About Women in Ministry?

Denis Fortin

Andrews University, fortind@andrews.edu

Follow this and additional works at: <https://digitalcommons.andrews.edu/mml>

---

#### Recommended Citation

Fortin, Denis, "What Did Early Adventist Pioneers Think About Women in Ministry?" (2010). *Memory, Meaning & Life*. 14.

<https://digitalcommons.andrews.edu/mml/14>

This Blog Post is brought to you for free and open access by the Seventh-day Adventist Theological Seminary at Digital Commons @ Andrews University. It has been accepted for inclusion in Memory, Meaning & Life by an authorized administrator of Digital Commons @ Andrews University. For more information, please contact [repository@andrews.edu](mailto:repository@andrews.edu).

# Memory, Meaning & Faith

[Main](#)

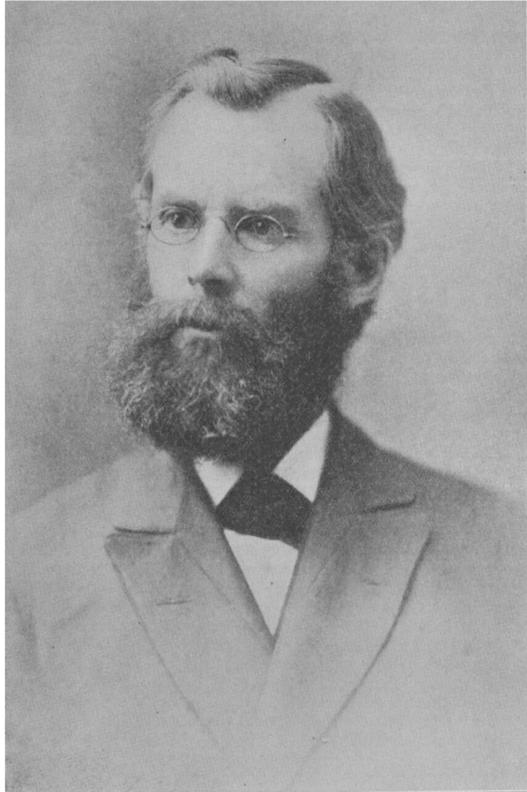
[About](#)

[Archives](#)

April 08, 2010

## What Did Early Adventist Pioneers Think About Women in Ministry?

Click [here](#) to read Denis Fortin's follow-up to this essay, "[\*Was Phoebe A Deacon, A Servant, Or A Minister?\*](#)"



J. N. ANDREWS

President of the General Conference, from May, 1867, to May, 1868; and first missionary to a foreign land, in 1874.

Recently, a leading Adventist pastor in California spoke in opposition to women in pastoral ministry. Such a position is not new in Adventism, particularly in the last three decades or so. But this position is not the long-standing traditional Adventist position regarding the contributions women can make to all aspects of ministry.

Early Adventists understood Paul's prophetic words in [Galatians 3:28](#) that there is "neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free man, there is neither male nor female; for you are all one in Christ" (NKJV) as the seed of many reforms that led to the abolition of social evils like slavery, class distinctions based on birth rights, and gender exclusion in society and church. Early Adventists were thus abolitionists, social democrats and republicans in government.

### Ellen White's Ministry Challenged

Let me illustrate my thought with one anecdote from Ellen White's ministry. In a letter to her husband, James White, written on April 1st, 1880, Ellen White recounted some of the activities she and other colleagues had been involved in recently near Oakland, California. Among many things, she told James the following.

Elder Haskell talked in the afternoon and his labors were well received. I had in the evening, it was stated, the largest congregation that had ever assembled at Arbuckle. The house was full. Many came from five to ten and twelve miles. The Lord gave me special power in speaking. The congregation listened as if spell-bound. Not one left the house although I talked above one hour. Before I commenced talking, Elder Haskell had a bit [piece] of paper that was handed (him) in quoting [a] certain text prohibiting women speaking in public. He took up the matter in a brief manner and very clearly expressed the meaning of the apostles words. I understand it was a Cambelite [sic] who wrote the objection and it had been well circulated [among the audience] before it reached the desk; but Elder Haskell made it all plain before the people.

(Ellen G. White to James White, April 1 [Letter 17a], 1880; Manuscript Releases Vol. Ten, 70)

Ellen White referred to a note from a "Cambelite," that is a member from the Church of Christ of the [Stone-Campbell movement](#), who had written a note quoting a certain text of scripture about women being prohibited from speaking in public. This text was either [1 Corinthians 14:34-35](#) or [1 Timothy 2:12](#). Ellen White also mentioned to James that Elder Haskell responded briefly to this objection he received and very clearly expressed the meaning of the apostles words. And it is obvious from the context that *Ellen White concurred with this explanation*.

After reading this anecdotal event, I found myself curious to know what Stephen Haskell had said to this audience in response

to this note he had received. What was his belief on this subject of women speaking in church or in public, of women doing ministry? What was his explanation that Ellen White agreed with? A little research in the articles published *Review and Herald* and *Signs of the Times* during the few years before this event uncovers some interesting things.



### **Four Articles On Women In Ministry**

Through the 1860s and 1870s, a number of articles appeared in our church publications on this topic of women speaking in church. Having a woman prophet in the church who spoke regularly in church assemblies and in public meetings was bound to raise some questions in regards to these two key texts in the New Testament. Four articles on this subject were published in the two years leading to this anecdote in Ellen White's ministry.

In December 1878, as resident editor of the *Signs of the Times*, Joseph H. Waggoner wrote a short response to a question he had received. To the question "Is it right for women to speak in meeting?" he responded by doing an analysis of the context of "certain texts ... quoted to prove the negative". Waggoner explained that Paul gave these instructions in 1 Corinthians 14 and 1 Timothy 2 regarding women not speaking in church because he cared about proper decorum in the church and that all words spoken in assemblies ought to be done without creating confusion. Furthermore, he referred to many women who held important roles in the New Testament to indicate that for Paul the labors of women were not confined only to some activities. Paul "refers to prayers, and also speaks of certain women who 'labored in the Lord,' [Philippians 4:3] an expression which could only refer to the work of the gospel." Waggoner concluded his comments by *affirming women in*

*ministry*. "We sincerely believe that, according to the Scriptures, women, as a right may, and as a duty ought to, engage in these exercises."

A few days later, in January 1879, J. N. Andrews also published a short article on women speaking in church in the *Review and Herald*. In this article, Andrews seeks to explain the two main texts used to prohibit women from speaking in church. His purpose is to show that a careful study of these texts cannot support this conclusion.

In reference to 1 Corinthians 14:34-35, he explained that Paul's intent was to avoid confusion in the church and to urge women to stop chatting between themselves during the worship service. Hence, "what the apostle says to women in such a church as this, and in such a state of things, is not to be taken as directions to all Christian women in other churches and in other times, when and where such disorders do not exist." In regards to 1 Timothy 2:12, Andrews understands "this text to give Paul's general rule with regard to women as public teachers. But there are some exceptions to this general rule to be drawn even from Paul's writings, and from other scriptures." In fact, the evidence Andrews goes on to give indicates that *this general rule is rather the exception* and that women are free to labor in ministry.

A few months later that same year, Andrews again published a small article on this subject, this time in *Signs of the Times*. In response to an article he had read in another paper which stated that women were not allowed to speak in the early Christian church, he explained that such a position did not concur with the testimony of the New Testament.

The number of women of whom honorable mention is made for their labors in the gospel is not small. Now, in view of these facts, how can any man in this age of Bibles say that the Bible does not notice women, or give them a place in the work of God? The Lord chooses his own workers, and he does not judge as man judges. Man looks at the appearance; God judges the heart, and he never makes mistakes.

(J. N. Andrews, "Women in the Bible," *Signs of the Times*, October 30, 1879, p. 324)

One last article I found published shortly before Ellen White's anecdotal event in California, is an article published by her husband in the *Review and Herald*. While explaining the text in 1 Corinthians 14, James White conceded that Paul may have referred to women participating in church business meetings but he took the firm position that this text did not refer to a

prohibition for women to participate in worship services. Rather “Paul ... places men and women side by side in the position and work of teaching and praying in the church of Christ.” As we have seen in other articles published by his colleagues, White also gave numerous examples of women who ministered for God in the Old and New Testaments to show that there is *no such prohibition for women to labor for the gospel or to speak in church assemblies*.

### **Pioneers: Paul Referred to Particular Situations**

Most of the articles published in that period took the position that what Paul referred to in 1 Corinthians 14 and 1 Timothy 2 had to do with particular situations in the local churches of his time. Paul's counsel regarding these situations was not applicable to all church congregations. Our pioneers understood that what Paul was prohibiting had nothing to do with a general and universal ban on women in ministry.

Most of these articles also referred to many of Paul's female co-workers to state the obvious conclusion that Paul was therefore not speaking against women in ministry. Furthermore, none of these articles used the argument that a woman prophet (i.e. Ellen White) has a special dispensation from God to speak in church—an argument that is repeatedly used today to circumvent the misunderstood prohibition and to argue that women without a prophetic call from God should not be in the pulpit.

*Somehow the history of our interpretation of these passages has been forgotten.* Many seem to have forgotten also that one of our church founders was a woman, that she spoke extensively in congregations, and that she invited other women to join her in all aspects of ministry to win souls for Christ. If this was the position taken by our church founders 130 years ago in an era when women did not have social equality, I believe they would certainly favor women in ministry today and would see no reason to not include women in pastoral and parish ministry.



Denis Fortin is dean and professor of theology at the Seventh-day Adventist Theological Seminary. Prior to coming to Andrews, Fortin served as a pastor in the Quebec Conference of Seventh-day Adventists. He earned a doctorate in theology from the Université Laval, Quebec, in 1995. His dissertation was titled: "Adventism in the Eastern Townships of Quebec: Implantation and Institutionalization in the 19th Century."

#### **Update**

This post is available in Swedish: [Vad menade de första adventisterna om kvinnor i församlingens tjänst?](#)

In his next post, Denis Fortin addresses the question, [Was Phoebe A Deacon, A Servant Or A Minister?](#)

Posted by [Denis Fortin](#) on April 08, 2010 in [Adventist Studies](#), [History of Interpretation](#) | [Permalink](#)

[Save to del.icio.us](#) |

### **Comments**

You can follow this conversation by subscribing to the [comment feed](#) for this post.

Thank you Denis, excellent, as always.

Oh that some of our administrators would be willing to show this level of leadership.

Posted by: [Gary Walter](#) | [April 08, 2010 at 07:49 PM](#)

Thank you for this article about the role of women in ministry, which is a perspective I wish all shared. I think that the article sets up a straw man by referring to a pastor who "spoke in opposition to women in pastoral ministry." This statement, unfortunately completely misunderstands what that pastor spoke. I was in the congregation when he gave his sermon.

His whole sermon was an argument against "ordaining women" as pastors and elders. Your article fails to address that issue. If I understood the sermon correctly, he was not opposed to women serving the Lord in gospel ministry, whatever he meant by the latter. Ellen White spoke in public and worked in gospel ministry with the prophetic gift but she was never ordained.

I am not sold on either side of the issue of ordination arguments. I just ask that if the pastor was indeed against women in gospel ministry, then we should at least quote him so that his intentions are fairly represented. He probably has taken enough flack for presenting his position clearly, but let's not add to it by misrepresenting what his position was. Thanks.

Posted by: [Matt McMearty](#) | [April 08, 2010 at 08:18 PM](#)

I just had another look at the sermon in question. You are indeed correct that while pastor is against ordaining women, he believes that they are capable of teaching, preaching, and being prophets. But he also says that they should do this under the authority of a man. In the examples he gives of what this means he uses the language of delegation. In other words, while women can do the tasks of pastoral ministry, they are not actually pastors, because they can only properly do these tasks under a male pastor's say so.

(A PDF of the sermon is available [here](#). I refer to what is said on the second half of page 19.)

Of course, Ellen White did not minister under her husband's say so, but under the authority of the spiritual gifts she was given. As Dr. Fortin has demonstrated, the early Adventist pioneers did not, in theory, have one standard for Ellen White's prophetic ministry and another for Adventist women pastors (of whom there were a handful at the time).

My study of scripture has led me to conclude that having spiritual gift means having the authority to use it (Rom 12:6-8). If that is the case, women pastors should be recognized as operating on the basis of their calling, not the delegation of their male counterparts.

Posted by: [David Hamstra](#) | [April 08, 2010 at 09:09 PM](#)

Well said David. I think Denis laid a great hermeneutical foundation for further discussion - and decimates some of the favorite "proof texts" used by traditionalists.

Posted by: [Gary Walter](#) | [April 08, 2010 at 09:23 PM](#)

David, I agree with your position that spiritual gifts contain their own authority and calling from the Lord. I am open to and have worked with women elders and pastors. (if only most men could be as faithful as most women seem to be in the same!)

I need a clarification. I quote you above as follows: "As Dr. Fortin has demonstrated, the early Adventist pioneers did not, in theory, have one standard for Ellen White's prophetic ministry and another for Adventist women pastors (of whom there were a handful at the time)." In both cases of EGW's prophetic gift and other women with the pastoral gift in those days, the church leaders did not ordain those women, even though they let them exercise their gifts from God. How is Doug Batchelor's position different from the pioneers' practice? And how is your last statement ("women pastors should be recognized as operating on the basis of their calling, not the delegation of their male counterparts") different or the same as the pioneers and/or Doug's standard or practice? I am confused although I see and agree with your other points.

Posted by: [Matt McMearty](#) | [April 08, 2010 at 09:45 PM](#)

Please clarify the statement that EGW wasn't ordained. I understood she was.

Posted by: [Brad Dahr](#) | [April 08, 2010 at 10:10 PM](#)

Matt,

Good questions. I'm not totally up to speed on all the particular historical questions you've raised, though I'm sure one of our regular contributors could answer them. I had, however, understood that Ellen White did not want to be ordained because she felt the "more than a prophet" role carried more authority than ordination to pastoral ministry implies.

Where I see the practice of the early Adventists differing from what Batchelor is apparently advocating is in the freedom with which women pastors exercise their gifts. Batchelor says they must do it under the authority of a man (from p. 19 to the end of his sermon) because men are the true leaders of the church. He uses the language of delegation, which implies that every female pastor should be directly supervised by a male pastor and receive his permission to perform pastoral tasks.

Ellen White did not work under the direct supervision of a man, and neither, as far as I can tell, did the early Adventist women pastors, who essentially functioned as church planters. As I recall, they were basically out on their own, doing evangelism and founding congregations, which would be in harmony with the empowering argumentation of our pioneers on the role of women in pastoral ministry. But again, my knowledge of that history may need nuance or correction.

Posted by: [David Hamstra](#) | [April 08, 2010 at 10:34 PM](#)

Brad, A point Doug Batchelor made in his sermon was to draw attention to a certificate of gospel ministry but she had crossed out the word "ordained" assuming it is ordination by the Adventist Church. He argues that she was not ordained. I am not sure what her reason was why she crossed that out. I know she is ordained of God. So I was assuming EGW was never ordained by the church either as a prophet or as a minister of the gospel, even though the church recognized and accepted the role of her calling before God. At the

beginning of his sermon he made some kind of statement that licensing or credentialing a woman as a pastor is not much different than the function of ordination. (In my mind they are not the same even though all three forms "recognize" a person's ministry gifts.) If you understood she was ordained, what evidence is there to support such a view? But this whole matter of ordination is getting us off topic of the article.

Posted by: Matt McMearty | [April 08, 2010 at 10:41 PM](#)

David, Thanks for clarifying what you talked about. It helps me see the distinctions and now I must think upon them.

Gary, if your comment assumes Doug Batchelor used 1 Cor 14:34-35 to support women not teaching in gospel ministry, I am almost certain he did not use it to make that argument. Doug argued that women prayed and prophesied in church gatherings in Corinth. I assume your comment is directed at others who are against women in gospel ministry and thus I would agree with your comment. Dennis Fortin's article implied Doug and misrepresented his position even though the article is a good one.

Posted by: Matt McMearty | [April 08, 2010 at 10:55 PM](#)

David, One thought that struck me in your clarification is that women were church planting gospel ministers. I have always been under the conviction that if the Adventist Church had paid wives who worked full time with their husbands in gospel ministry, we would not have this discussion of women's ordination. I am now going to add another element to that conviction. If the Church stuck to ministry as evangelistic church planting and not to settled ministers, we would not be having this discussion because both men and women would be raising up churches. It is easier to win a convert to a new church than it is to bring them into mostly established churches that have closed established relationships among the existing members. When will we ever learn that God's ways are higher than ours?!

Posted by: Matt McMearty | [April 08, 2010 at 11:04 PM](#)

I wonder if we are missing something here. Agreed--we never want to misrepresent a speaker's position. However, the speaker in question opposes ordination on the basis of texts prohibiting women from exercising "authority" over men. If I understand Dr. Fortin's article correctly, when the Campbellite used those same texts to prohibit EGW from speaking "authoritatively" by preaching, Haskell (and other pioneers) dismissed those texts as timeless, trans-local bans against all women ministering in public assembly.

One significant misunderstanding in the mind of the anti-female-ordination speaker referenced is his assumed belief that 2 Tim speaks directly to ordination in the first place. It does not. And the second error, as I see it, is the notion that ordination equals hierarchal "authority" versus a recognition of the Church that the spiritual gift of word-based ministry is present in the life of a believer. In summary, I believe that one implication of Dr. Fortin's research is absolutely correct--the early Adventists could not have agreed with Brother Batchelor in either regard.

Posted by: Leslie Pollard | [April 09, 2010 at 12:26 AM](#)

Let me clarify a few comments.

Regarding Ellen White's credentials. The General Conference brethren gave Ellen White an ordained minister's credential. Of those we still have, only a couple of them have the word "ordained" struck out, but not for the others. Ellen White was not ordained by human hands but believed God had ordained her (Letter 138, 1909). Hence she did not need any other ordination.

The argument that women can serve as pastors only in so far as they are under a male authority is a curious and odd argument. First, all ordained men at the present time work under a hierarchical process that gives them their authorization to fulfill their duties -- we are granted our credentials by a committee. So why the request that women have a special hierarchical supervision when all ordained men are already receiving their authorization to minister from a committee?

Second, 1 Timothy 2:12 is misinterpreted to conclude that all women are to be subjected to all men. That's a misinterpretation of the text and story from Genesis 3. God's decision in Gen 3:16 that Even would be ruled by Adam refers to family / husband and wife relationships. This part of the curse following the fall is not to be applied to all male female relationships. The best contextual interpretation of Paul's words in 1 Timothy 2 understands that Paul refers to this relationship.

As I point out in the article, early Adventists did not understand that Paul's words applied to all churches after Paul's time. His words were applicable only to a particular context. Many women were Paul's co-workers and labored with him in the gospel (Philippians 4:3).

Posted by: Denis Fortin | [April 09, 2010 at 08:18 AM](#)

Denis,

Do you know if the other early Adventist women pastors received ordination credentials as well? It seems to me there would have been no other kind to give at the time.

At any rate, it seems to me that the terminology of ordination is itself problematic. If we use the word to create an elite order of ministers in the church, that tends toward the very clericalism of Catholicism that the Protestant priesthood of all believers principle militates against. So I think the issue you have focused on in this article, the role of women pastors within priesthood of all believers, is really more fundamental than ordination. If we have a proper understanding of this role, the terminology can then be adjusted accordingly.

Matt,

I think you are generally correct on the pastors' wives issue. And speaking of church planting Adventist women pastors, check out the second half of this article: <http://news.adventist.org/2009/05/adventist-presidents.html>

Posted by: [David Hamstra](#) | [April 09, 2010 at 11:40 AM](#)

David, I agree that a genuine conversation should be about the ministry of women in our church and that is the main purpose of this article. In the New Testament and in the early Adventist church women were involved in ministry. Ellen White asked that the spouses of pastors be also remunerated because they were involved in ministry (Ms 43a, 1898; and RH, July 9, 1895).

Another conversation should be about the meaning of ordination. I don't think we have done a thorough theology of ordination and thus we find ourselves with a practice of ordination that is hierarchical that has connotation of a sacrament. Furthermore, our ceremonies of ordination for men have a connotation of apostolic succession because only other ordained men are asked to come to lay hands on the person being ordained. There's an indication in Acts 13:3 that when Barnabas and Paul were commissioned to their missionary ministry, the whole community layed hand on them.

I see the laying on of hands in the NT as a commissioning of people for a work of ministry (the group of Seven in Acts 6, and Barnabas and Paul in Acts 13). The gifts these people had were recognized by the church and they were thus given the commission to do their ministry. It is in that spirit and with that understanding that I believe Ellen White also thought it would be appropriate to lay hands on medical missionary workers (Evangelism 546). Ordination is viewed by Ellen White as an ordinance and not a sacrament, as the ceremony of ordination does not confer on the individual any new grace or virtue, but is rather an acknowledgment by the church of one's designation to a ministry (AA 161-162).

The Lord invites and calls women to be active in ministry and there is value and meaning in dedicating them to this ministry.

Posted by: [Denis Fortin](#) | [April 09, 2010 at 12:37 PM](#)

I am glad to see the development of this dialogue into the meaning of ordination and how it is used as an authoritative instrument by the church. I would recommend we heed the words of Gamaliel, "So in the present case, I say to you, stay away from these men and let them alone, for if this plan or action is of men, it will be overthrown; but if it is of God, you will not be able to overthrow them; or else you may even be found fighting against God."

Although Gamaliel was advocating avoidance I would apply his latter statement to our opposition to the ordaining of women. If ordination is the authority of the church to dispense the right to fulfill ministerial duties and if that presumed authority is used to withhold such dispensation to women who have been ordained by God then we will find ourselves in opposition to God. If however, like brother Fortin states, that ordination is an ordinance and not a sacrament then it is our acknowledgment that God has ordained. The present use of ordination presumes far too much authority than any man truly possesses. For if man possesses the authority to ordain or withhold ordination, the will of God is in the mind of man, not in the Mind of Christ.

Posted by: [David de la Vega](#) | [April 09, 2010 at 07:04 PM](#)

Richard Davidson, professor of Old Testament Interpretation and Chair of the Old Testament Department at the Adventist Theological seminary has just published his views of the biblical reasons for ordaining women as pastors:

[http://spectrummagazine.org/blog/2010/04/09/bible\\_supports\\_ordinationcommissioning\\_women\\_pastors\\_and\\_local\\_church\\_elders](http://spectrummagazine.org/blog/2010/04/09/bible_supports_ordinationcommissioning_women_pastors_and_local_church_elders)

Dr. Fortin's essay above is based on the introduction he gave to Dr. Davidson's presentation of his views at a special meeting at our seminary.

Posted by: [David Hamstra](#) | [April 09, 2010 at 09:52 PM](#)

I am pleased that the clarification needed on Doug Batchelor's actual position has brought into focus quite a number of issues that have somewhat a symbiotic relationship to each other on both sides of this issue. The relationship between the Adventist historical shift toward a settled ministry, the unconscious use of ordination as a vehicle of hierarchical authority rather than as a vehicle of the community of believers' authority, and the assertion of male authority over all women should be a symbiosis that should be scrutinized more and give us all a moment of pause.

Correspondingly, a church-planting based ministry, laying on of hands by the community of believers, and the recognition of God's

spiritual gifts in all persons regardless of gender should be a symbiosis that should also be used to scrutinize symbiotic agendas opposite to a male-female sexuality dichotomy.

I want to thank all who have made the latest clarifications without vitriolic commentary. All of the responses have helped me crystallize some of my own thoughts. So many wonderfully expressed ideas here.

Posted by: [Matt McMearty](#) | [April 10, 2010 at 03:37 AM](#)

David, Thanks for the links. The China story is heart warming in so many respects, especially the role of women in gospel church planting ministry.

Posted by: [Matt McMearty](#) | [April 10, 2010 at 03:48 AM](#)

Matt,

I'm so glad we could be of help, and thank you for provoking us to further clarity with your excellent questions and felicitous spirit.

Posted by: [David Hamstra](#) | [April 10, 2010 at 06:13 AM](#)

There are about four separate issues that need to be addressed here. One is the issue of the work of ministry and the proclamation of the gospel. There is no limit on who can do the work of ministry or proclaim the gospel. The spiritual gift of prophecy in the NT includes the proclamation of the gospel. A second issue is the call to the prophetic office. The initiative in the call is God's, and there are no limitations given in Scripture. A third issue is ordination for ministry, which may take place by divine initiative or by the initiative of the church. However, there are no limits given in scripture on ordination. A fourth issue is spiritual headship. This is the only issue in which gender plays a role, as seen in texts like 1 Cor 11:3 and Eph 5:22-33. Other passages that seem to deal with this issue of male-female roles, like 1 Cor 14:33-38; 1 Tim 2:11-15, and 1 Pet 3:1-6, as well as 1 Cor 11:4-16, cite OT precedent, especially the order of creation and the experience of the Fall as rationales for why such practice should take place in the Christian church. This issue is separate from the other issues and should not be confused when discussing the role of men and women in the church. The other issues are not gender specific. Most people get them confused, and it complicates the discussion.

Posted by: [Edwin Reynolds](#) | [April 11, 2010 at 08:59 PM](#)

Excellent article and good job David H. and all on this website.

warm regards from Scotland,

Posted by: [Johnny Ramirez-Jorge](#) | [April 12, 2010 at 07:53 AM](#)

I have always felt it was wrong to ordain a woman as a minister, or an elder.

I believe a woman can teach, speak, be a Bible worker, and yes, we have women Prophets in the Bible, and we have Ellen White. I believe only men should be ordained. I am a woman. And every time I hear about this subject coming up, or being voted on by our church, I am troubled in my spirit. Deeply troubled. I feel God does not put his blessings on ordaining a woman as a minister. Women can labor as a Bible worker, or Sabbath School teacher, but up behind that pulpit, man is the spiritual leader. Don't you see that all this upset, and discord is not pleasing to God? We are in the last days for sure, and we don't need this division. I am sorry if women are upset over this, but they do not need to be equal with men on this point. That is a worldly desire to me, like a right to vote, or work. Like a march or protest. This will always cause the church to be divided. We need to be worried about souls, not women's rights. Jesus is coming, and we have enough conflict going on in the world. America is divided, and here we are having upset over ordaining women. Let them teach Sabbath School, be Bible workers. Teach health classes, take part up front in Sabbath School. But they don't need to be ordained as Ministers, or Elders. Man is the head of the household, and the church. I know some women are head of their households, but they are still women..... This is just a perspective from a woman. And this really troubles me to have this conflict, and to have Adventist have conflict over Doug Batchlor's sermon. He is a great Pastor, and I believe he is right. Let's move on, and win souls. Ladies, I'm sorry, but we should not be ordained. There's plenty for us to do in the church, let's not be dividing the church over this issue.

Linda Atkins.

Posted by: [Linda Atkins](#) | [April 17, 2010 at 12:40 AM](#)

Thank you for this article, Dr. Fortin! It clearly documents that the opposition to women in ministry is ultimately against our history and heritage as Seventh-day Adventists. My faith tells me that eventually we will get past this sidetrip even if it is not on the agenda at the GC Sessions this summer.

Posted by: [Monte Sahlin](#) | [April 17, 2010 at 12:52 PM](#)

Linda, the problem is that this is limiting the work of women who feel called of God in this area. When the early church started work among the Gentiles there were many who felt the way Paul was doing things was wrong. Should the church have stopped what God had called him to do because some felt his work was wrong and it was dividing the church? I rather expect when we started having men of

minority background it was an adjustment for some. But with so many people to reach why should we hamstring a large part of our workforce? Friend, read what the gentlemen have posted here. Look at the work being done in China. Let us set aside our feelings and look at what our scholars (men, by the way) are telling us. I am not asking you to do this yourself (unless God has convicted you that you should) but to accept the possibility others of us are called of God to things you are not. Just as you felt a woman's perspective would be helpful here, I feel a woman's perspective is helpful in leadership situations. In fact if we had more local women elders, maybe women would come to us for counsel instead of men and reduce the potential for trouble between counselor and counselee. This is not about Doug Batchlor. This is about the world church that needs to enlist everyone it can to finish the work. I ask that our church not throw away the gifts God has sent us because they are sent in the vessels of women. I have been knocking around this church for 60 years. I would love to see my grandchildren raised in heaven. Maybe if we would unleash the rest of our work force we could go home.

Posted by: [DeeDee Bindernagel](#) | [April 18, 2010 at 12:51 AM](#)

1.) It's been my understanding that in our church's early development there was no ordination; it was regarded negatively because of its practice in other denominations. Ordination began only after the movement grew large enough that it needed official approval of who was preaching & what was being preached in the name of the church. I'd appreciate if those of you versed in our church's history would address whether this is true.

2.) Please also help me understand why whenever the curse of sin is invoked, theologically the effect of the cross is not also invoked. E.g., why are some aspects of the curse considered prescriptive for us to maintain--such as submission/headship--while we accept the blessing of analgesia for the pain of childbirth & the blessings that protect most 1st world men from eating by the sweat of their brows.

Posted by: [carmen seibold](#) | [April 24, 2010 at 11:02 AM](#)

## Verify your Comment

### Previewing your Comment

Posted by: |

This is only a preview. Your comment has not yet been posted.



Your comment could not be posted. Error type:

Your comment has been posted. [Post another comment](#)

The letters and numbers you entered did not match the image. Please try again.

As a final step before posting your comment, enter the letters and numbers you see in the image below. This prevents automated programs from posting comments.

Having trouble reading this image? [View an alternate.](#)



[Contact](#)

[Archives](#)

[Feeds](#)

Powered by [TypePad](#)

Copyright © 2010 Andrews University