

influences could have made an impact on the attitudes and practices of the Corinthian Christians should not be dismissed.

The phenomenon of "speaking in tongues" in 1 Cor 14, may in fact be a modification of the occurrence in Mark and Acts. That "no one understands" (v.2) does not necessarily prove that the problem is with the hearer and not the speaker, as Hasel suggests (126-129). If, as Hasel contends, this gift was bestowed upon believers in order to enable them to proclaim miraculously the Good News in unlearned foreign languages, then why does Paul minimize this gift as compared to the gift of prophecy?

Hasel's observation of the same terms in both Acts and 1 Cor 14 does not warrant the conclusion that the manifestation of the gift of tongues in 1 Cor 14 and Acts 2 is identical, because the phenomenon in 1 Cor appears to be uniquely different from that in the rest of the New Testament.

The serious student of the modern phenomenon of glossolalia will find in this book a wealth of pertinent source material for further research. He will also gain meaningful insights as to the universality of modern glossolalia, for it is the author's contention that both Christians and non-Christians use the same language. Unfortunately, the reader will encounter some distractions caused by numerous typos, misspellings and literary inaccuracies.

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Kroeger, Richard Clark, and Catherine Clark Kroeger. *I Suffer Not a Woman: Rethinking 1 Timothy 2:11-15 in Light of Ancient Evidence*. Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1992. 253 pp. \$12.95.

During the last few decades 1 Timothy 2:11-15 has become a battleground on which traditionalists and feminists have struggled. Several extreme positions have been taken, with variations in between. First is the literalist view that woman, on account of the order of creation and her part in the Fall, is forever forbidden to teach or exercise authority and is limited to domestic duties such as child-rearing (e.g., *Pulpit Commentary*). At the opposite pole are the radical feminists who believe the Bible was produced by a patristic, sexist church to keep women in a subordinate position (e.g., Elizabeth Fiorenza, Rosemary Reuther).

Between these extremes are several moderating views held by what might be called "biblical feminists." Both groups recognize two strands of thought in Scripture, some empowering women and some restricting them. Both try to harmonize the two positions, with a concern for truth. One restricts authoritative teaching, headship of the churches, and ordination to men (e.g., Patrick Hurley, Wayne Grudem, and Samuele Bacchiocchi). The other

believes in the full participation of women in all ministries of the church, based upon the gifts given them by the Holy Spirit (e.g., Paul Jewett, Aida Spencer, and Patricia Gundry). Richard and Catherine Kroeger belong to the latter group.

Richard Kroeger speaks as a Presbyterian minister with broad theological training. Catherine approaches the problem as a classicist with a doctorate on the role of women in ancient religion. She has done extensive study of the religion practised in Ephesus to determine the beliefs that called forth the restrictions placed upon women by Paul in Timothy.

From 1 Timothy, the Kroegers identify the following problems: False teachers were promulgating doctrines of demons (4:1) and godless myths (v. 7). Women were especially deceived and active in propagating the false doctrines (5:11-12) because of the high position given to females. From the cultural background, they show that Ephesus, with its worship of Artemis, stood as a bastion of feminine supremacy in religion. Gnostic beliefs also exalted women. The creation story was turned upside down to say that the creator god (Ialdabaoth) had made the material world, imprisoned humanity in it, and had blocked access to the higher knowledge of the Supreme Spirit Being. The serpent and Eve were benefactors of the human race because they gave Adam access to the higher world through the tree of knowledge. Gnostics believed in many intermediaries including feminine mediators. Women were thus regarded as essential to communicate hidden knowledge.

To women who aspired to mediate a higher form of religion than found in Scripture, Paul says, in v. 11, "Let a woman learn in silence with all submission." Women were to be well taught in the Word. The phrase *silence and submission* is a Near-Eastern formula implying willingness to heed and obey instruction. This contrasts with the foolish women who are "ever learning and never able to arrive at a knowledge of the truth" (2 Tim 3:6-7).

The Kroegers retranslate verse 12 to say, "I do not allow a woman to teach that she is the author of man" (191). They offer the following supports for their translation:

1. In every other usage of *teach* in 1 Timothy, the *content* of the teaching is indicated (1:3-4; 4:11; 6:2). The second infinitive, *authentein*, may describe the content of the teaching that is prohibited.

2. The verb *authentein*, usually translated *exercise authority*, is used only once in the NT, and its meaning is debated. The Kroegers' extensive study shows that it can also mean to be the perpetrator or author of something.

3. It was a common Gnostic heresy that woman was the originator of man. Gnostic myths ("godless myths," 1 Tim 4:7) variously stated that Eve was the mother of Yahweh, that she was a virgin who gave birth, that Eve pre-existed Adam, that Adam was created from Eve, and that Eve breathed life into Adam.

The Gnostics had turned the Genesis story upside down. In v. 13 Paul reaffirms the truth: In no way did Eve give life to Adam.

V. 14 counteracts the "doctrines of demons" that were circulated in Ephesus. Gnostic tractates stated that since Eve breathed breath into Adam, she was the spiritual principle that rested in Adam to enlighten him. Adam was deceived into believing that he was created first and that God, not the woman or the serpent, was the source of his spirituality. The Gnostics maintained that the beneficent serpent, through the instrumentality of Eve, undid the deceit perpetrated on Adam, bringing visions of a spiritual world far higher than the material one provided him by Ialdabaoth (Yahweh) (123). In this context, the words of Paul stand out with new clarity: Adam was not deceived, but the woman was. The woman was not a benefactress but a sinner. Eve did not bring gnosis but transgression. Vv. 13 and 14 of our text, then, are not intended to explain why women are prohibited from teaching. They are intended to refute the Gnostic heresy which glorifies Eve as the author of man and the benefactress of the race (117).

V. 15, "Nevertheless she shall be saved through the childbearing if they continue in faith and love and holiness and good sense," can best be understood in the context of Gnostic heresies. While Gnostics exalted the feminine principle as divine, many denigrated actual womanhood, sexuality, and childbearing. Gnostics regarded the human body as the prison-house of the spirit which escapes from it at death. Each human body contained particles of spirit which must be released and allowed to unite with the Spirit above. Procreating children scattered the divine particles still further and entombed human spirits in the flesh. Some Gnostic texts indicated that a woman, in order to be saved, must renounce sexuality, or even become a male (173). Because of this belief, Gnostics forbade marriage (1 Tim 4:3) and childbearing. Paul, by contrast, calls upon women of childbearing age to marry and have children (5:14). The Kroegers suggest that v. 15 should be understood as a refutation of the Gnostic ideas against childbearing. Women bearing children *can* be saved, provided, of course, that they have faith and love. In this statement Paul affirms the feminine function of childbearing.

The Kroegers have shed immense light upon this difficult passage by setting it against the background of the heresies that were doubtless plaguing the congregation in Ephesus. Seen in this light, the passage no longer constitutes a universal prohibition of women from the gospel ministry, grounded in the status of woman in creation and the Fall. Instead, it is a refutation of Gnostic error.

So—"Suffer the Women . . . and forbid them not!"