

A RESPONSE TO EGALITARIAN VIEW ON WOMEN SUBORDINATION IN MARRIAGE: THE EVANGELICAL CHURCH WINNING ALL PERSPECTIVE

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ABSTRACT

The concept of women's subordination is one of the greatest and leading debates in the Christian circle in the last two centuries on gender issues, particularly among evangelical believers. To add to the heat of the debate is the emergence of the egalitarian evangelicals since the 1970s, who surprisingly take a departure from the traditional complementarian position of the pre-1970s. Both complementarians and egalitarians anchor their views on the nature of the relationship which exists in the Trinity. This has opened the door to a new interpretation of the Holy Scriptures as humanity witnesses changes in the cultures of the world as globalization brings its reality to be bare on the human race. This work has relevance in that much of what earlier writers have contributed on this subject has been in the area of Christian Service and leadership without a critical examination of its workability in a Christian home. Hence, the paper considers the two popular existing views of the complementarians and egalitarians and examines the idea of subordination from the two creation accounts in Genesis and Jesus' and Paul's views on this matter. The author responded to this subject by studying the perspective of one of the major evangelical denominations in Nigeria and beyond, Evangelical Church Winning All (ECWA). The historical and phenomenological methods were used in this research. The historical method was necessary to collect historical data, which formed the basis for the research, while the phenomenological method was used to interpret the historical realities of the time. The exegetical method was also used to determine the correct interpretation of the passage containing the relevant texts. The paper concluded with the view that the Egalitarian Perspective on women's subordination cannot strengthen Christian marriage since there is bound to be a struggle for leadership in a Christian home.

Keywords: Egalitarian, Women, Subordination, Marriage, Evangelical Church Winning All

Introduction:

The debate about the status and position of womanhood, particularly in ecclesiastical parlance, is ancient. The views of scholars on this issue have been divided into two major groups, which are egalitarianism and complementarianism. This matter has spanned through centuries, with the scholars of the Bible not coming to an agreement. The argument is still ongoing in the 21st century. Kunhiyop recognizes this fact when he states thus,

We all need to recognize that discussion on the role of women in ministry is still ongoing. We should not be satisfied with our position on women. We need to study more and continue to listen with both ears to what the spirit is saying.¹

Kunhiyop's assertion further establishes the fact that there is no end to knowledge. We need to continue to study, especially this subject, for the betterment of humanity.

Marriage or home, as will be used interchangeably in this paper, is closely related to the church and, by extension, society. Marriage is a divine institution established by God Himself since the inception of the universe. Hence, it is an important aspect of every human society. Marriage is the greatest institution which has ever existed since it forms the foundation for both the church and society at large.² The church is clearly knitted with the society; every church is a mirror of every family as the family further reveals the type of society. These are concepts which are difficult to sever from one another.

Much of the work which has been done in this field of study is basically in the area of the women's leadership role in the church without significant consideration of its implication on a Christian home. In other words, if the egalitarian position on women were to be taken as ideal, how workable are these principles in a Christian home? Is it possible for two people to be leaders simultaneously at home? Leadership cannot be dodged in any human institution; therefore, if women are believed to be of equal status and role, the way the egalitarians claim it should be in the church, can this principle work at home, which is the small unit of the church? This paper responds to the egalitarians' view, using the Evangelical Church Winning All (ECWA) as a case study. The belief of ECWA on women's subordination in marriage is a departure from the egalitarian view. ECWA's understanding of the nature and role of womanhood both in the home and in the church will be explored; this will hopefully contribute to the knowledge in the ongoing debates.

A Brief History of the Evangelical Church Winning All:

What is today known as the Evangelical Church Winning All went through the metamorphic process in nomenclature. These changes were not ordinary rather they were signs of growth, development and commitment.³ ECWA started as Sudan Interior Mission (SIM). Prior to this time, Mrs. Gowans, the mother of Walter Gowans, one of the three pioneer missionaries of the SIM had a passion for the millions of people who were dying without Christ in Sudan. Sudan is an Arabic word meaning the land of the "Black".

Mrs. Gowans succeeded in transferring her burden to her son, who also caught the vision of evangelizing Sudan. Mrs. Gowans also shared this vision with Mr. Rowland Victor Bingham, who became interested in the vision. Thomas Kent, who was the third person, was also wooed into this project. These missionaries did not all come from the same denomination but had faith in God that they could achieve their goal of evangelizing Sudan. They had no financial support from churches or missionary societies of the time, but they launched out of faith despite that fact. The three missionaries arrived from Badagry on the 4th of December 1893.⁴ When they got to Lagos, they met the superintendent of the Wesleyan mission who told them categorically, "You will never see the Sudan, your children will never see the Sudan, your grand-children may."⁵

As Mr. Gowans proceeded in his journey into the northern part of Nigeria, he faced a lot of challenges; at Zaria, he took ill with dysentery. He was advised to return to Lagos by a party of semi-scientific explorers. However, as he was returning, just 40 miles from Zaria, Mr. Gowans died at Ghirku on the 17th of November 1894. ⁶Mr. Kent also had his own share of the challenges too. He had earlier gone to Lagos for supplies and as he started his return trip to meet Mr. Gowans in Kano when he reached Bida, he took ill and died on the 8th of December, 1894. The news of Mr. Kent's death got to Bingham at Ogbomosho on the 24th of January, 1895 and that of Mr. Gowans on the 7th of February, 1895. This made Bingham to return to England in May 1895. ⁷This was how the first attempt to evangelize Sudan ended without much success.

Mr. Bingham made a second attempt when he went to mobilize more people and support the mission. Unfortunately, at the arrival of Bingham's team, he was stricken by fever. He was advised to return home to seek medical help. Bingham returned in April 1900, leaving his colleagues at Lagos expecting them to launch into Sudan. Instead of doing this, his two companions, Mr. Taylor and Mr. Moline, returned to England on the next ship. ⁸This ended the second phase of the attempt of the SIM to evangelize Sudan.

The third attempt was made and it succeeded in 1901 through Mr. Rowland Victor Bingham, Rev. E Anthony, Mr. Alex W. Banfield, Mr. Albert Taylor and Mr. Charles Robinson. The team left Lokoja on the 15th of March 1902 and travelled up the Niger to Edoji and then to Patigi. They set up a temporary quarter in Edoji while they made arrangements for property and building at Patigi. ⁹

The SIM founded an indigenous Church in 1954 due to the indigenization policy. At the Kagoro conference of January 7-10, 1954, constitutional matters were discussed and the name Evangelical Church of West Africa was adopted. ¹⁰The new constitution was also approved. As the Church continued to grow, it became expedient to change the name to the Evangelical Church Winning All in the year 2000.

From this brief historical narrative, it is crystal clear that the formation of ECWA as a denomination and an organization was birthed on the prayer knees of a woman called Mrs. Gowans. Her vision and passion for Sudan drove her into prayers and sharing this vision with her son, Walter and Latter Bingham and whoever came her way. She gave very strong support to the mission to ensure its success despite the death of her son.

By description, ECWA is evangelical by nature and it has its administrative structure. The General Church Council consists of the ECWA Executive, Chairmen, Secretaries, and delegates of all the ECWA District Church Councils and then Local Church Councils and finally local Church. In all of these hierarchies, the posts are occupied by men alone, not a single woman, even though the number of women seems to be more than the number of men. Women are not ordained in ECWA and so are not allowed to occupy leadership positions in the Church. The only grace given to women is in their fellowship groups which comprise women only.

ECWA Doctrinal Beliefs:

Certain factors determine people's response to issues. People are influenced by their theological presuppositions, ecclesiastical traditions, biblical interpretations, human bias, cultures and ignorance of the realities. In view of this, it is important to consider the doctrinal beliefs of ECWA to understand the reason behind her position on gender issues. ECWA believes in the authority of the scriptures, belief in God, Jesus Christ, Holy Spirit, Angels, Man,

Salvation, Eternal Security, Sanctification, Church, Sacraments, Spiritual Gifts, and Resurrection etc.

Egalitarian View:

This school of thought believes that both men and women were created equal at the beginning. At the creation of both sexes, there was no degree of the quality of essence or substance in terms of the humanity of one sex above the other. In Genesis 1:26-27, they were both created in God's image without a distinction between them. The word translated "man" does not necessarily mean a male but a generic term which means humankind. In view of this, "image" as used in Genesis 1:27 does not refer to a physical likeness since God is spirit.¹¹ Another hint of supporting the above assertion is the equal role given to both man and woman at creation to rule things created by God. This functional equality is seen in the use of the pronoun "them" in Genesis 1: 26 – "Let them rule". The role of exercising the God-given dominion was to be performed by both on equal terms. In Genesis 1:28, they were saddled with the responsibility to procreate. Both must also play this role as the responsibility of procreation cannot be done by a single sex.

The egalitarians substantiated their position by claiming that the Hebrew word "ezer" translated in English as "helper", does not mean subordinate.¹² The egalitarians opine that this word is, on many occasions, used for God where He is seen as a superior, helping man, as Psalm 121 indicates. In a bid to explain this, it is affirmed that the Hebrew dictionary says that "ezer" is predominantly used to refer to the God of Israel. It is used thirteen times to show God's ability to save and to show God as divine protection for Israel.¹³

The New Testament further reveals the equality between man and woman in the teaching and conduct of Jesus Christ. Jesus did not show partiality, particularly in the way He treated the male and female genders. He showed a reasonable balance in handling both genders without favouring one side at the expense of the other. In His ministerial work, He demonstrated the equality between male and female genders as He came to serve both of them. His work of healing, interaction, teaching and revelation was not done in exclusion of women (Matthew 8:14-15; 9:18-26; 15:21-28; Luke 13:19-21; 11:22-28). Jesus showed egalitarianism in the way He handled His teachings. The tools and methods of teaching He used referred to both genders. His teachings' illustrations referred to both male and female genders. He showed equality in His doctrines; he did not show domination of one gender over another and did not teach it as well. The attitude which Jesus displayed towards women, despite the cultural and social norms of the time, revealed that Jesus held women in high esteem as against the practice of that time. For instance, Jesus nullified the prerogative of divorce, and he rejected the idea that only women were responsible for all sexual sins. Jesus showed the value of womanhood by accepting those of them who were written off by society; he had some of them as His followers, commissioned them for the work of evangelism and blessed them with the Holy Spirit.

The egalitarians believe that there was an illegitimate introduction of a hierarchy in the relationship between a man and a woman in the fall. They make references to Genesis 3:16 and explain that the consequence of sin would be that the woman would have a disposition of subservience before the man and the man would have a propensity of supremacy over the woman.¹⁴ Hence, the consequences of sin came to play in the sense that man became domineering and sadly enough, a woman accepted the domineering tendency of man rather than being mutually responsible by submitting to each other as Spirit-filled people. Therefore,

the equality intended by God from the beginning became corrupted by sin through the introduction of a hierarchy between males and females.

The adherents of the egalitarian school of thought make reference to Galatians 3:28 in their argument: "There is no longer Jew or Gentile, Slave or Free, Male and Female. For you are all one in Christ Jesus." (NLT). Other similar passages which are referred to include John 1:12-13; Romans 8:14-17; II Corinthians 5:17. The claim is that God did not discriminate on the basis of gender when He redeemed mankind. The salvation programme of God through Jesus Christ, His son, covers both men and women. God's salvation package is a deliberate reversal and abolition of the distinction into hierarchical classes of men and women as originally intended by God. Therefore, the pre-fall equality between man and woman was restored through the redemption of Jesus Christ.

The position under consideration further corroborates its belief by giving examples of female equality with males. They claim that despite Israel being patriarchal, God gave them female leaders like Miriam in Exodus 15, Huldah in II Kings 22 and Deborah in Judges 4 and 5. Some of the aforementioned women served as prophetesses and judges and occupied other leadership and ministerial roles. Other prominent women in the Bible are Esther, Ruth, Naomi, etc.

They also lay claim to the women who played vital roles in the ministry of Jesus Christ. Contrary to the culture of that time, Jesus endorsed their services and ministry. Women provided financial support (Luke 8:1-3), learned from Him, travelled with Him and were used as examples in His teachings (Luke 10:38-42; 7:36-50; Matthew 15:21-28). Allusions are also made to the role of women who were the first witnesses of Jesus' resurrection. Not only that, the Great Command of Jesus for the Great Commission Matthew 28:18-20 and Acts 1:8 is not gender biased but are meant to be carried out by both males and females. To do this, the Holy Spirit gives gifts to people of both sexes as He wills beginning from the day of Pentecost (Acts 2:17-18), without any form of discrimination (I Corinthians 12: 7-11) and these gifts are expected to be used. The egalitarians make copious allusions to the women who used their leadership and ministerial gifts in the early Church, such as Priscilla and her husband Aquilla, who in Acts 18:26 took Apollos aside to teach him thoroughly the way of God. Others include Phoebe and Junia (though a subject of controversy), cf Rom. 16:1-7.

Egalitarian Understanding of the Trinity:

The members of Trinity are equal in value and authority. The Trinity has existed together from its inception, functions together now and will continue to do so. The Trinity is believed to have played different roles at different times. ¹⁵The Trinity relates with one another with mutual respect and love. They live and work in such a manner that they make vital contributions with no one superior to the other. Each member of the Trinity has a purpose, role and function. They support each other and none of them is the main player; rather, all of them function as help mates to one another. ¹⁶They concluded by saying that since the concept of Trinity forms a human relationship, there should not be any form of discrimination in gender roles as regards services at home, church or society.

Complementarian View:

The complementarian view is another school of thought apart from the egalitarian view. This view holds that God created males and females. God did not only create them; they were created to be equal but at the same time different in some respects. Their equality is seen in

their value and personhood. As stated earlier, they anchor their belief in the concept of the Trinity. This is in line with what Grudem says,

Just as the Father and Son are equal in deity and equal in all their attributes but different in role, so husband and wife are equal in personhood and value but eternally subject to the authority of God the Father, so God has planned those wives be subject to the authority of their husbands.¹⁷

A cursory look at the quotation above reveals that the point of divergence between the complementarians and the egalitarians is in the area of the roles to be played by different sexes. In a simple language, certain roles are opened to a particular gender, while certain roles are forbidden for them to be played. The complementarians believe that while the male must exercise a loving authority over the female, the female has the role of willingly submitting to the leadership of the man. Notwithstanding the equality and full humanity of both sexes, their humanity can only manifest differently in a relationship of complementarity when a female functions in a submissive manner under the leadership and authority of a male.¹⁸ Hence, while the complementarians also uphold that God commissions both sexes to rule His creation, they differ significantly from the egalitarians in their opinion that God did not state how they should together rule the earth on His behalf.¹⁹ At some points, while both schools of thought agree on the consequence of sin on both sexes, the complementarians differ in their understanding of Genesis 3:15, 16. In their opinion, the relationship between male and female will be affected by mutual enmity where the woman will desire to usurp the divine authority given to man by having the desire to rule over man. Consequently, the man will want to assert his rule over the woman in what can be either rightfully-corrective or wrongfully abusive ways. In the same vein, while it is true that the Holy Spirit does not discriminate in the distribution of the spiritual gifts on the basis of gender, a proof of the equality of essence, it does not preclude the possibility that God may prescribe how those gifts will be put to use in the Church.

The complementarians further allude to God's design in Genesis 2 for male and female role differentiation as evidence to support male headship over females. In the order of creation, the man was created before the woman. Paul makes reference to this in his letter to the Corinthians in I Corinthians 11:8 and to Timothy in his address to him in I Timothy 2:13. They also claim that the instruction not to eat the forbidden tree was given to Adam before the creation of Eve and this actually indicated the headship and leadership role given to Adam to instruct and guard his wife to come not to violate the instruction.

However, at the time, the instruction was violated despite the fact that Eve sinned; first, Adam was the one God called into account.

ECWA Women, Leadership and Ministry:

With every administration in ECWA, there is a gradual improvement in the status of women as it affects leadership and ministry. Women fellowship is given a prominent position in all levels of ECWA administration. The fellowship is absolutely run by the Women Fellowship executives, although under the supervision of the Christian Education organizers of each administrative cadre. All the executives of the fellowship are women. They decide what to do with the fellowship money in accordance with the ECWA financial Policy, bylaws and constitution. There is a women fellowship leader at the General Church Council (GCC) level, Districts Church Council (DCC) and Local Church (LC). They organize programmes such as fasting and prayer, Bible Studies, Outreach and evangelism, retreat, fund-raising etc.

The Women Fellowship complements the vision and mission of ECWA through their activities; as part of their ministry, they sponsor missionaries both locally and internationally. They also assist in paying the pastors' salaries in weaker churches. Women in ECWA are given maximum support when it comes to mission. They have developed so many facilities in ECWA, such as buildings which include hostels, guest houses, investments, etc. Women fellowship takes an interest in the teaching ministry of children. The majority of them express

their teaching ministry among the children. They are also permitted to teach Sunday school classes. During their fellowship week of prayers, ECWA allows women to take charge of the entire program of the week. They participate in seminars and other activities of the week without any inhibition.

One of the most outstanding achievements ECWA has recently made is the establishment of a body called ECWA Spiritual Mothers in Ministry (ESMIM). It is a new body established by the ECWA Executives in 2021 during the General Church Council. It is a fellowship group which has its leadership at different levels where they operate as those of their husbands. For example, the president's wife is the president of the fellowship; the secretary's wife holds the post of the secretary, and so on. This is the way it works from the DCC down to the Local Church. The body is meant to complement the work of the Pastors. On the final note, the number of women who are allowed to teach in ECWA Seminaries and Bible colleges is increasing. This is an improvement over the past years. ECWA Executive has done much to improve the status of women in ECWA. These deliberate actions are paying off as the dividends are seen in the increase in the number of converts in our churches. Also, the old church members are becoming more mature in faith due to the contributions of women and their fellowship groups.

Concept of Biblical Marriage:

Christian marriage is supposed to be a biblical marriage. Christian marriage has been defined as the union between a Christian man and a Christian woman in holy matrimony with Christ at the centre.²⁰

What makes a Christian home is Christ, who occupies the centre stage of the house. When both husband and wife live their lives obeying the Bible in their relationship and acknowledge the Lordship of Jesus Christ, then such a home is said to be a Christian home. A Bible-based home is where the marital relationship is ideally between two people of opposite sexes. God, who is the author of family, has created it for some reasons. Such reasons include the desire for unity (Genesis 2:24; Matthew 19:3-6), companionship (Genesis 2:8), procreation (Genesis 1:28; Psalm 127:3-5), love and pleasure (Ecclesiastes 9:9), and to curb fornication and adultery (1 Corinthians 7:1-2).²¹

ECWA believes in the authority and inspiration of the Holy Spirit. This doctrinal belief is in line with the words of Ryrie, who states thus:

The sixty-six books of both Old and New Testament are the inspired Word of God without error in the works of the original writings, the complete revelation of God's will for the salvation of men, and the divine and final authority for all Christian faith and practice.²²

In view of Ryrie's submission as quoted above, ECWA believes all passages which speak on marriage to be true and ideal. The church believes in the divine functional roles of men and women. In Colossians 3:8, wives are instructed to submit to their husbands as it fits in the Lord. The submission here is to be carried out not because women are lesser human beings than men, but it is just a way of willingly allowing their husbands to take the leadership role in the family as a way of obeying the Lord. The wife's submission is not out of inferiority rather out of a hunger to obey God's design for the family.

A wife's submission in everything as instructed by Paul is limited to the husband's legitimate authority in the Lord, as can be seen in Colossians 3:8. According to Danfulani.

She must not do anything which is contrary to God's command. Submission is to be carried out within the limits of God's will; for example, if the husband tells his wife to have extramarital sex in order to get a job or money or admission or success in school, she must absolutely refuse

on the grounds that her submission to her husband is always in relation to the Lord Jesus Christ.²²

Danfulan's opinion shows that Jesus Christ is the ultimate authority and whatever contradicts his decrees must be done away with. God requires absolute obedience and submission. This role of submission is a spiritual one where she is expected to manifest this inner quality in a manner which will be a means of winning over the unsaved husband. Therefore, the command to submit is not without a purpose, as stated by Apostle Peter in his letter in I Peter 3:6. To submit, therefore, is associated with doing God's will, having a willing heart in view of one's relationship with one's husband to obey God. It is a demonstration of love to one's husband and to God, ultimately. It is a practical way of witnessing for Christ. On the other hand, submission is not doing things contrary to God's law. Submission is not equal to slavery or the loss of one's personality. It is at this point that some people get it wrong when they do not have a good grasp of what submission is all about, especially as commanded by the scripture. A housewife who is a member of ECWA responded thus when her husband asked her opinion on the subject of submission:

As a submissive wife, I should be willing to submit to my husband's leadership in the Lord. I will always try to do whatever is possible within my ability and as the Lord supplies. In our family decisions, I should be involved but let him have the final responsibility for decisions reached. We should decide together on how to spend money, where to live, jobs, the size of the family and educational pursuits. I will be obligated to offer to my husband in order to build our marriage (Prov. 14:1). So I will love and encourage him, embrace and support him in whatever he may embark upon. By words and deeds, I demonstrate submission to my husbands. The yardstick of my love toward Christ Jesus is measured by my submission to my husband.²³

From the quotation above, it is obvious that many people, men and women inclusive, have a very thin understanding of what submission is all about. Submission does not mean a wife will not be part of decision-making in the home, but the honour of conceding the final responsibility of decisions reached is given to man. Lack of understanding of this concept is seen among husbands as manifested in gender violence against their wives. It is also visible among housewives who go to extremes by unnecessarily demanding their so-called rights.

Another passage which seems to be controversial between the egalitarians and complementarians is Ephesians 5:22-33. The form of subordination is the type between Jesus Christ and the Church. As stated in the example of an ECWA housewife above, subordination of a Christian wife must be voluntary; she should not be coerced into it; rather, she should be happy doing it because of her love for her husband and Christ Jesus. In Williams Hendrickson's words, the wife performs this role not because she has to do it but as a service to the Lord.²⁴ This reveals how voluntary and freely it is for a woman to do this out of deep love for her husband. When a wife submits, it does not imply that the husband then becomes "Lord" or "Master" over the woman.²⁵ The husband's leadership role is more of divine responsibility on his part and not an undue privilege to him.

Therefore, when either a wife or a husband misuses their positions, it has dire consequences. Both responsibilities of leadership and submission on the part of husbands and wives respectively are service and sacrifice. According to Boles,

In the wife's submission role, it is a position wife willingly chooses to assume; the husband is nowhere authorized to put his wife in subjection. It is a duty the wife owes because her Lord deserves it even if her husband does not. It is also a limited submission paralleling the limited submission Christians give to the delegated authority of government.²⁶

From the above, it can be inferred that not giving adequate attention to the interpretation of submission or subordination and headship has led to all manners of interpretations which are wrong and abusive. The headship of man is not rulership but a responsibility to love.²⁷ The pattern to be followed is the type of love which exists between Christ and his Church. When the concepts of submission and headship are understood in their proper perspective, it will eradicate all forms of an extremity associated with the practice. In the opinion of Danfulani, Paul understands marriage as a union which requires mutual agreement and submission of each partner to each other in their relationship. ²⁸Ibrahim agrees strongly with Danfulani's submission when he states,

The logical conclusion herein is that mutuality relaxes the cultural stranglehold of roles. Husbands and wives are expected to live as partners in this temporal side of life, mutually submitted to one another. When one is competent in one area, the other should submit to guidance by the other in that area.²⁹

The above statement reveals that both husband and wife should be partners in progress and are not meant to struggle for headship or leadership in the home. Without any form of ulterior motives, both of them should work together in unity to fulfil God's mandate.

CONCLUSION:

This paper concludes with an affirmation that scriptures cannot be broken. It is observed that various arguments and positions which have been held across centuries are appealed to in order to satisfy personal egos. If the concepts of biblical subordination and headship are understood, the debates should not drag this long. Hence, in view of the foregoing, we need to acknowledge the fact that no organization can function effectively if it has two heads. This again agrees with the opinion of Bello, who states thus:

No organization can function properly if it has two heads. That is particularly true of home. One of the great hindrances to a happy home today is the false notion that a woman does not have to subject herself to her husband. The modern world seems to give the woman the idea that subjection is an old-fashioned notion that went out with the nineteenth or twentieth centuries. But when subjection goes out of the home, so does happiness.³⁰

Nothing is truer than the statement above. Experience has shown that when a man's role as the head of his family is downplayed, the mother becomes domineering and there will be an increase in juvenile delinquency, rebellion, homosexuality and divorce. ³¹To cap this discussion, we must be reminded that the marital relationship between a Christian husband and a Christian wife should not degenerate into competition, contest and struggle for leadership. We also need to note that family is the basic unit of any Church and society; why should the principle which applies in a Christian home be different from the principle which applies in the Church, which is the conglomerate of various family units? A Christian husband should always know that his divine role is to love and serve his wife by providing godly leadership to his family. He has no right to coerce or demand submission since it is common knowledge of a Christian wife that she is duty-bound to submit to her husband to serve Jesus Christ. In the same vein, a Christian woman is expected to submit out of pure love for her husband. Love should be the hallmark of their relationship since "Love suffers long and is kind, love does not envy; love does not parade itself, is not puffed up, does not behave rudely, does not seek its own, is not provoked, thinks no evil; does not rejoice in iniquity, but rejoices in the truth; bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things" (1 Corinthians 13:4-7).

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The authors declare no conflict of interest

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