

My Response to the Response of Six Anglican Leaders to the ACNA Statement on Holy Orders

The following is my response to the [Response to Holy Orders Task Force Report – Six Anglican Leaders Reflect on ACNA Statement](#), which I will refer to in what follows as the *Response*.



I begin by noting that there is nothing new introduced in the *Response*, but also that the *Response* contains a significant anomaly. The *Response* consists of arguments that have been used against women's ordinations for the last several decades. However, the *Response* also combines (without acknowledgment or clarification) the two very different arguments against women's ordination used by Protestant Evangelicals (Complementarians) and Sacramental Catholics (Liturgical symbolism). The *Response* presumes that the arguments can be combined, but it is questionable whether they are even compatible. (If one takes seriously Complementarian disinterest in sacramental concerns and Catholic rejections of Complementarian positions, the two approaches cancel each other out.)

The first half of the *Response* assumes the position defended

by Evangelical opponents of women's ordinations known as "Complementarians," a group whose beginnings are no earlier than the 1970s and 1980s. Complementarianism is a view associated primarily with Baptist Calvinists Wayne Grudem and John Piper. Throughout, the *Response* simply repeats arguments used over and over again by Grudem and Piper. Unfortunately, the writers of the *Response* seem either unaware of or choose not to address the serious weaknesses in Complementarian arguments that have been pointed out repeatedly. The *Response* does not acknowledge that Complementarianism represents a uniquely Protestant approach. Complementarianism is primarily concerned with masculine authority: women cannot be ordained because they cannot speak publicly in a worship setting, cannot teach men, and cannot exercise authority over men. The Catholic argument against women's ordination is a completely different argument connected to sacramental symbolism, and both modern Roman Catholics and the Orthodox have rejected complementarian arguments concerning authority. For Catholics, women can do all of the things complementarianism forbids: they can preach, they can teach, they can exercise authority over men; they just cannot celebrate the Eucharist. This point is crucial because it makes clear that the first half of the *Response* represents a one-sided Protestant approach that is at odds with the Catholic position.

On Complementarianism, see my essay "[Concerning Women's Ordination: Hierarchy and Hermeneutics.](#)"

If the first half of the *Response* one-sidedly echoes Complementarianism, it is also unfortunate that throughout the *Response* quotes only from the ESV translation of the Bible, an intentionally Complementarian translation that at times misleadingly translates passages to force complementarian readings. That the authors do not acknowledge the differences between the ESV and other translations is unfortunate.

The *Response* presents what it calls "clear biblical testimonies to a male-only presbyterate." Unfortunately, the

passages to which it refers are anything but “clear” on that issue.

The *Response* begins with the two key proof texts to which Complementarians regularly appeal because they restrict women from speaking or teaching.

1) *1 Cor. 14:33-35*.

The *Response* quotes the English translation of the ESV and claims that “this is not simply a local rule because [the text says] “As in all the churches of the saints . . .”

Unfortunately, the *Response* does not mention two significant textual problems.

First, a considerable number of biblical scholars make the case that this passage is an interpolation, not written by Paul at all. The Western mss. tradition places the passage after v. 40, while no non-Western mss. does so. The options are either that, at some unknown period, a copyist removed the passage from Paul’s original position and moved it elsewhere (for no apparent logical reason), or, alternatively, the passage was not in Paul’s original mss., but was inserted in the margin by a copyist. Later copyists inserted it into the text, but in different locations. It is easier to explain the origin as a gloss than to assume that a scribe later moved the passage from where Paul originally put it.

Second, assuming for argument’s sake that Paul did write the text, there was no punctuation when Paul wrote 1 Corinthians. Linguistically, it makes more sense to place the phrase “as in all the churches of the saints” with the preceding sentence, as in the KJV and the NIV: “For God is not the author of confusion, but of peace, as in all churches of the saints.” The ESV creates an unnecessary redundancy. If Paul had already written, “as in all the churches,” why did he then need to write that “women should keep silent *in the churches*”? On the other hand, making the point that God is the author of peace,

not of confusion “as in all the churches,” just makes sense. Paul is complaining throughout 1 Corinthians about disruptive worship practices. His statement about women is addressing another such disruptive practice. In being disruptive, the Corinthians are violating a practice of orderly worship that is normative in *all the churches*.

More important, the *Response* fails to address the question of what kind of speech Paul was prohibiting in 1 Cor. 14:33 ff. Everyone in the debate agrees that Paul was not advocating an absolute prohibition of women speaking because Paul allows women to prophesy in 1 Cor. 11, and even complementarians admit this. The context indicates that Paul is prohibiting some kind of disruptive speaking of women in a particular context in the Corinthian church, not all speaking. The issue of disagreement concerns what kind of speaking that was. Nothing in the context indicates that Paul was addressing a question concerning women holding church office or exercising authority. He is demanding that certain women (not all women) exercise some kind of silence in a particular worship setting (not everywhere and not at all times). There is nothing in the context that suggests that this is a universal prohibition against all women speaking in church under all circumstances.

See my essay, “[Concerning Women’s Ordination: Speaking and Teaching.](#)”

2) *1 Tim. 2:11-14*

Here again, the *Response* simply follows the Complementarian argument by claiming that “Paul argues from creation – before the Fall and not after.” They then state that “male authority in the Church derives not from a fallen order but from the creation order.”

Again, the writers fail to acknowledge that this passage is beset with a number of interpretive difficulties. First, they presume that Paul is providing a warrant and not an example.

That is, because Adam was formed first, therefore, women should not teach or exercise authority.

The *Response* necessarily assumes that the crucial word “because” (*gar*) is being used as a warrant in the sense of cause rather than a warrant in the sense of example. *Gar* can be used as a warrant, but it can also be a simple conjunction or used as an example. Elsewhere Paul always uses Adam and Eve as typological examples (2 Corinthians 11:3-4). That would seem to be what he is doing here: “Eve was deceived; do not be deceived as Eve was.”

Moreover, numerous scholars point out that Paul’s use of *epitrepō* should be translated “I am not permitting,” not “I do not permit.” Thus, Paul is referring to a present prohibition, not a permanent one.

Once more, the ESV misleadingly translates (*authentēin*) as the neutral “to exercise authority over.” However, biblical scholars point out that the word has a stronger and primarily negative connotation. As NT scholar Ben Witherington notes, “I conclude that the author means that women are not permitted to ‘rule over,’ master,’ or ‘play the despot’ over men.”

A more careful reading indicates that Paul’s admonition addressed a specific historical situation, that he was concerned about the danger of particular women who were being deceived, that he referred to Eve not as a warrant against women teaching rooted in creation, but as a typological example of someone who had been deceived, and that he was in this context currently prohibiting women from teaching until they had been adequately informed – “Let them learn in quietness and full submission” (i.e., to what they were being taught; there is no reference to a submission to a person), and that women should not “usurp authority” or “play the despot” over men.

Again, see my essay, [“Concerning Women’s Ordination: Speaking](#)

and Teaching.”

3) “Headship”

Further evidence that the *Response* is dependent on Complementarianism is indicated in the use of the word “headship” to describe their position. This is a term first introduced into the discussion by George W. Knight, III, *The Role Relationship of Men and Women: New Testament Teaching* (Philipsburg, NJ: P&R Publishing, 1977, 1985), after which it became a regular way for Complementarians to describe their position.

1 Cor. 11:7-16

The response misleadingly quotes the ESV translation of v. 10 – “That is why a wife ought to have a symbol of authority on her head . . .” This is one of the ESV’s most egregious mistranslations. The words “symbol of” do not occur in the original Greek. The NIV correctly translates the passage “It is for this reason that a woman ought to have authority over her own head, because of the angels.” That is, the authority referred to in the passage is not that of the man over the woman, but the woman’s own authority. This is the only reference to “authority” in the passage, and the ESV translation makes the passage say the opposite of what is actually in the text.

The point of the passage is not that the “man” is the “head of the family,” as the *Response* says later, but that man and woman are equally dependent on one another. The woman came from man in creation (the original Genesis story), but now all men come from women (through childbirth). So the woman (in the original creation account of Genesis) is made “from man” (1 Cor. 11:8), but all men are now born “from woman” (1 Cor. 11:12). The passage is not about male authority over women at all – again, the only reference to authority in the passage is to the woman’s own authority – but to mutuality between man

and woman.

See my essay: "[Concerning Women's Ordination: Women in Worship and 'Headship.'](#)"

4) *Gen. 2*

The *Response* states that "God commanded the man and not the woman . . . suggesting that the man is head of the family."

This misses several key points in the exegesis of Genesis 2. First, God does not command the "man," but the "human being," *ha adam*, the generic Hebrew word for "human." It is not until v. 23 that sexuality is introduced into the passage when the man (*is*) recognizes the woman (*issa*) as one like himself. Up until this point there is nothing in the Hebrew text to indicate that *ha'adam* is a male. At no point in the passage is there any evidence for male authority over the woman. The man does not command the woman; nor does she obey him. It is only after the fall that the woman is told that "your husband will rule over you" (Gen. 3:16).

In this context, the *Response* states that as Adam names the animals, so "God brought Adam to Eve to give her a name." However, in the original Hebrew, it is clear that while *ha'adam* names the animals, he does not *name* the woman. The Hebrew formula for "naming" is absent. The man does not *name* the woman, but greets her with a cry of recognition: "This is woman (*issa*) because she was taken from man (*is*)." That the only difference between the man and the woman is the feminine ending makes clear that the man and woman are fundamentally the same. It is only after the fall into sin that the naming formula appears in reference to the woman when she is "named" Eve – the "mother of all living" (Gen. 3:20).

The *Response* states that the man "takes the lead in marriage" because he leaves his father. Rather, that the man leaves his father and mother and "holds fast to" (clings to) his wife confirms the reading of the rest of the passage that the woman

was created to satisfy the man's need for companionship. On a hierarchical reading, the *woman* would rather leave her parents to cling to her husband. The passage makes clear that it is the man who needs the woman; she is the "helper" who relieves his loneliness. There is no hierarchy here, and certainly no authority of the man over the woman, at least not until the fall into sin.

See my essay "[Concerning Women's Ordination: Beginning with Genesis.](#)"

5) *Ephesians 5*

The *Response* regularly uses the words "head" and "headship" in the sense of "authority over" as in the "headship of the husband in the nuclear family" and "male headship in the family." There is no reference to nor acknowledgment of the several decades' controversy concerning the meaning of the metaphor *kephalē* (translated "head") in Paul's theology. Granted, the metaphor does mean "authority" in modern English, but the current scholarly consensus is that it almost certainly did not mean that for the apostle Paul. Paul is the first in the ancient world to use the metaphor of "head" to describe the relationship between husband and wife, and what he means by the metaphor can only be discerned by his own context. He nowhere uses the language of authority (*exousia*) to describe the relationship between husband and wife in *Ephesians 5*, but rather uses "head" language to speak of the husband's love and nourishment for his wife. Nowhere in *Ephesians 5* is the man told to command his wife, nor the wife to obey the husband.

[Grudem tries to argue from Greek parallels that *kephalē* always means "authority over." Unfortunately, almost all of his references are chronologically later than the NT, and all are examples of a one-to-many military leadership. This misses the significance of the uniqueness of Paul's use of the metaphor within the context of marriage, and that Paul

certainly did not understand Christian marriage along the lines of a general's rule over his many soldiers. In addition, as other NT scholars point out, there are numerous instances of the use of the Greek *kephalē* as a metaphor where it cannot possibly mean "authority over."]

The *Response* cites the misleading ESV translation of Eph. 5:22: "Wives, submit to your own husbands, as to the Lord." However, there is no imperative "submit" in the original Greek. Rather, in v. 21, Paul uses a participial form to call for a mutual submission of all Christians to one another. The command in v. 22 is not a specific command for the wife to submit to her husband, but for the wife to engage in the same kind of submission to her husband that all Christians are expected to give to each other (and, accordingly, that her husband is expected to give to her). Similarly, the husband is commanded to "love his wife" in v. 25, but this, again, is simply an echo of the command given to all Christians in 5:2 to "walk in love as Christ loved us."

There is nothing in Paul's use of the metaphor *kephalē* in Ephesians 5 nor of the mutual submission demanded of all Christians in the same chapter to imply a hierarchy of authority between men and women, either in the home or in the church.

See my essay ["Concerning Women's Ordination: Mutual Submission."](#)

The passage refers to other passages, but these are discussed at length in my essay.

6) The Pastoral Epistles

The *Response* refers to the Pastoral Epistles concerning "instructions for the Church's bishops/overseers and deacons."

The *Response* incorrectly affirms that "all of the articles and pronouns designating the elders are masculine." Although

English translations of 1 Tim. 3 and Titus 1 regularly provide masculine pronouns, there are no masculine pronouns whatsoever in the original Greek text. Moreover, Paul uses the Greek word *tis* (anyone) to describe the overseer: "Whoever [*tis*] aspires to [the office of] overseer/bishop desires a good work." Moreover, the requirements Paul lists are not a "job description," but moral requirements. Paul lists the exact same requirements for the office of elder that he later lists for various women's roles in the church.

Throughout the rest of the NT, references to those who hold church office are always in the plural, and not a single presbyter or overseer/ bishop is mentioned by name. Masculine pronouns are used in Acts 20 to refer to the Ephesian elders, but this is a matter of grammatical gender, not physical sex. (In NT Greek, any plural group that includes even a single male is referred to using masculine nouns and pronouns.) The *Response* acknowledges this, but states that "contexts strongly imply that Luke did not intend women to be included among the elders." However, the only context to which the *Response* refers for justification is Jesus' choice of male apostles. This misses the typological significance of Jesus' choice of twelve male Jewish apostles, as well as key differences between the offices of *presbyter* and apostle. The elders in Ephesus were Gentile (not Jewish), presumably more in number than twelve, and were not eyewitnesses of Jesus' resurrection. While the Ephesian elders might well have been all male, there is absolutely nothing in the passage itself to establish this one way or another.

The *Response* states "There is not one female priest or elder in either the Old or New Testament." However, because no elder (*presbyter*) or overseer/bishop (*episkopos*) is mentioned by name in the NT, we could as easily state that "There is not one male priest or elder in the New Testament." The only office holder in the NT who is mentioned specifically by name is the deacon Phoebe (Rom. 16:1). (The OT situation is

irrelevant because we are discussing NT office, not OT priesthood.)

The *Response* claims that Phoebe was a *diakonos* or servant, and also that “Scripture . . . limits the diaconate to men” (appealing to 1 Tim. 3:8, 12). Context makes clear that *diakonos* refers to an office, not a “servant.” Paul uses the exact same terminology referring to Phoebe that he uses in reference to other deacons (Phil. 1:1, 1 Tim. 3:8,12) and he uses the masculine *diakonos*, not the feminine. It is also surprising that the *Response* claims that 1 Tim. 3:8, 12 “limits the diaconate to men,” while ignoring the reference to “women” in verse 11, which context makes clear almost certainly refers to female deacons. Again, the ESV translation of “their wives” is misleading. The Greek simply says “women” and the “likewise” (*ōsautōs*) indicates that these women have the same relationship to the office of deacon as do the men. They are not “wives” of deacons, but women deacons.

See my essays [“Concerning Women’s Ordination: Women’s Ministry in the New Testament \(Office\)”](#) and [“Concerning Women’s Ordination: Women’s Ministry in the New Testament \(Bishops, Presbyters, Deacons\) or a Presbytera is not a ‘Priestess’ \(Part 2\).”](#)

7) Junia the Apostle (*Rom. 16:7*)

The *Response* suggests that “Junia” might well be the male “Junias,” but also quotes the unfortunate ESV translation “well known to the apostles.” It also suggests that “apostle” could mean “messenger.” No, no, and no.

Translators have gone back and forth over whether “Junia” was the male “Junias” (if she was an apostle) or “well known to the apostles” (if she was Junia). In recent decades, overwhelming historical research has made clear that Junia is a female name. There is no evidence for a single “Junias” in ancient literature, and so even complementarians (like the

ESV) have had to acknowledge a female Junia. The ESV translation is unfortunately based on an essay by Burer and Wallace in *New Testament Studies* 47 (2001), arguing for the new translation “known to the apostles.” However, three independent definitive studies by Bauckham, Epp, and Belleville establish that Burer and Wallace’s essay used faulty methodology, including seriously mistranslating their primary reference source. Moreover, church fathers such as Chrysostom, who were native speakers of Greek, understood the passage to mean that Junia was a woman (not a man), and an apostle (not “known to the apostles”). Junia was a woman, she was herself an apostle (not known to the apostles), and she held the office of “apostle” (not merely a messenger).

See my essay [“Concerning Women’s Ordination: Women’s Ministry in the New Testament \(Office\).”](#)

8) The *Response* defends a recent argument used by Complementarians concerning the Trinity. Against the argument of the ACNA Task Force that the Complementarian claim of subordination within the Trinity is likely “heretical,” the *Response* affirms the historic position that the Trinity consists of three persons with one equal being. They also claim that the Son is eternally begotten, while the Spirit proceeds. They also deny that the Son sent the Father or that the Spirit sent the Son. The *Response* defends its position by referring to 1 Cor. 11:3– “The head of Christ is God.”

It is not clear here whether the *Response* really understands the Complementarian position. The key distinction is that between an economic subordination and an eternal subordination of the Father to the Son. Certainly the entire Catholic tradition affirms that the Son is subordinate to the Father in terms of his economic mission. Moreover, the risen Christ sends the Spirit, but again, we’re talking about economic mission. Again, 1 Cor. 11:3 refers to the economy of salvation – it is not that the eternal Father is the head of the pre-existent Son, but that God (the Father) is the head of Christ

(the incarnate Son).

To the contrary, the Complementarian position is that there is an eternal subordination of the Son to the Father so that the eternal pre-incarnate Son eternally obeys the Father, and the Father eternally commands the Son. This is not the historic position of the Catholic Church, and it is likely heretical. The historic patristic position (as found in figures such as Athanasius and Cyril of Alexandria) is that the incarnate Son is subordinate to the Father insofar as he is human (i.e., within the economy of salvation), not that the eternally proceeding Son is subordinate to the Father in the divine nature (i.e., within the immanent Trinity). The complementarian position is an innovation, and, at the least, implies that within the divine nature, the Father and the Son have two distinct wills. However, the historic doctrine is that the triune God is three persons, but one nature, and that will is assigned to nature, not person. If the Complementarian position is not heretical, it is at least incoherent. If the Triune God has only one will, the Father cannot eternally command the Son. If the eternal Father eternally commands the eternal Son, then there must be two distinct wills in the Trinity, and thus two Gods. If not Arianism, it is hard to see how this is not tritheism.

See my essay [“Concerning Women’s Ordination: Women in Worship and ‘Headship.’”](#)

While the first half of the *Response* relies on Protestant complementarian arguments, the second half shifts (without acknowledgment) to Catholic sacramental objections. There is no hint of recognition that these approaches are not only different, but mutually at odds.

Arguments from Masculine Symbolism

The *Response* states that Jesus “could have appointed a woman as one of the Twelve, but he did not. To ordain a woman to

headship in the Church, representing Christ at the Eucharist, suggests not only that Christ was wrong to choose only male apostles but also that God was wrong to have chosen His Son to become a man and not a woman." Two claims are made here:

1) Jesus "could have appointed a woman" as an apostle. This misses the symbolic and typological symbolism of Jesus having chosen twelve Jewish male apostles. Typologically, the church is the new Israel and Jesus' twelve apostles correspond to the original twelve *sons* (not daughters) of Jacob who were the ancestors of Israel's twelve tribes. For reasons of typology, Jesus could not have "appointed a woman" to this role, but neither could he have appointed a man who was a Buddhist or a man who was Swedish. In terms of typological symbolism, masculinity has the exact same significance for apostleship as the number twelve and Jewishness. Moreover, the role of the twelve is unique. Not only did the twelve represent the (Jewish) twelve tribes of Israel. They were also companions of Jesus and eyewitnesses of his resurrection. After the NT period, church office holders may be successors of the apostles, but they are not apostles. That there were twelve male Jewish apostles no more requires that subsequent Church office holders should be male than they would be required to be twelve in number, Jewish, companions to the earthly Jesus, or eyewitnesses of his resurrection.

2) The function of the ordained minister is to "represent Christ at the Eucharist." This is a modern and indeed a Roman Catholic claim. It does not appear before Pope Paul VI's encyclical *Inter Insigniores*, after which it was embraced by Orthodox and Anglo-Catholics as well.

This is not only a modern argument, but is contrary to the historic Orthodox (and Patristic) understanding of ordination. The historic position is not that the minister represents Christ (acts *in persona Christi*), but that he represents the church, i.e., the female Bride of Christ (acts *in persona Ecclesiae*). Orthodox clergy such as Bishop Kallistos Ware have

pointed out that *Inter Insignories* is contrary to the historic Eastern Orthodox understanding; Roman Catholic liturgical theologians like Edward Kilmartin have pointed out that *Inter Insigniores* conflicts with the structure of the eucharistic prayer. In leading the eucharistic prayer, the priest is not an actor playing the role of Jesus Christ, but the leader of the liturgical celebration who is praying on behalf of the church (the bride of Christ). The eucharistic prayer begins and ends with the words “we” and “us.” Not only can a woman pray these words, but given that the presider prays on behalf of the church (the symbolically feminine bride of Christ), it might be more appropriate for a woman to do so.

Of course, there is a sense in which the Scriptures indicate that those who hold apostolic office resemble Christ – through self-abnegation (pointing away from the self to Christ) and through imitating Christ in suffering. Those holding church office represent Christ as “jars of clay” or “earthen vessels” who acknowledge that “this all-surpassing power is from God and not from us,” and “always carry around in our body the death of Jesus, so that the life of Jesus may also be revealed in our body” (2 Cor. 4:7-11). There is nothing gender specific about this way of “resembling Christ,” however. It is expected of all Christians (Phil. 2:1-11).

See my essays [“Concerning Women’s Ordination: Women’s Ordination and the Priesthood of Christ \(Biblical and Patristic Background\)”](#) and [“Concerning Women’s Ordination: Women’s Ordination and the Priesthood of Christ \(in persona Christi\).”](#)

3) The *Response* notes correctly that God is portrayed in Scripture using male pronouns, that Father, Son, and Holy Spirit are described using male language, that the Bible never refers to God as “mother” – to which the correct response is “yes.” There are, however, reasons for this male imagery that do not have anything to do with the issue of ordained ministry. Only if one presumes that ordained clergy are

representations of a male deity rather than representatives or spokespersons is this masculine imagery relevant to the question of orders. The anti-iconic nature of Israel's religion points against any notion that male office holders represent a male god.

The *Response* argues that the male Adam, not the female Eve, represents the human race, referring to Rom. 5. This argument misses the way in which typology functions in Paul's writings. Paul could certainly use female typological symbols (Gal. 4). However, historically, Jesus was a male – he could not have been both male and female. Accordingly, it makes sense to refer to Jesus as the “second Adam” and not the “second Eve.” However, it is also significant that in making the Adam/Christ parallel, the apostle Paul uses the Greek word *anthropos* (human being) rather than the Greek word *aner* (male human being) to refer to both Jesus and Adam. If what was significant about Jesus and Adam was their masculinity, Paul could have made this clear by using the Greek word for *male* human being (*aner*). He did not.

For the above, see my essays [“Concerning Women's Ordination: The Argument From Symbolism Part 1 \(God, Christ, Apostles\)”](#) and [“Concerning Women's Ordination: The Argument From Symbolism \(Part 2: Transcendence, Immanence and Sexual Typology\).”](#)

4) The *Response* concludes with a discussion of a distinction between a “Petrine” charism and a “Marian” charism that is derived from the theology of Roman Catholic theologian Hans Urs von Balthasar (not acknowledged). The distinction is based on a theory of a symbolic typology of the sexes, which modern Roman Catholic theology has rejected. Sara Butler, author of what might be the best modern summary of the Roman Catholic argument against women's ordination is clear: “Undoubtedly, how one construes the difference between the sexes, and how much importance one accords to this difference, enters into speculation as to why the Lord chose men and not women. But it

is imperative to grasp that this is not at the root of the magisterium's judgment. The complementarity of the sexes does not appear among the 'fundamental reasons' given for the Church's tradition." [Sara Butler, *The Catholic Priesthood and Women: A Guide to the Teaching of the Church* (Mundelin, IL: Hillenbrand Books, 2007), 47.] The modern Roman Catholic argument against women's ordination is based entirely on grounds of liturgical symbolism, not on a typology of the sexes.

At the same time, it is important to note a consistent theme in the differences between the "Petrine" and "Marian" charisms. The ministries associated with the Petrine charism mentioned in the *Response* all consist of the kinds of activities in which men would normally have engaged in pre-industrial societies: training, teaching, administering discipline, supervising. The ministries associated with the Marian charism are just the kinds of activities in which women normally would have engaged in pre-industrial societies: Women nurture adults and children. They witness to neighbors. They exercise hospitality. What makes these charisms distinctive is that they are necessarily tied to divisions of labor present in all pre-industrial societies. In pre-industrial societies, the activities of women are necessarily domestic and largely home-bound because of the need for large families; because women give birth to children and breast-feed, their activities necessarily take place near the home because they have to be able to take care of and watch over small children. In contrast, because men are not biologically tied to children in this manner, they (and they alone) are the ones whose tasks can largely take place outside the home: they are the politicians, the civic leaders, the soldiers, the sailors, the merchants, the builders.

The rise of industrial culture has changed these phenomena irrevocably. In post-industrial cultures, both men and women work outside the home. Many of the activities that were

necessarily done in and about the home in pre-industrial cultures are now done by industry: farming, food and clothing production, medicine, education of children, elder care. Because they are no longer needed as a source of domestic labor, large numbers of children are not an economic necessity and family sizes become smaller. Because children are normally educated outside the home, and thus absent for much of the day, there is no longer a biological necessity for women's activities to be restricted to the domestic sphere.

Given the biological basis of a division of labor in pre-industrial societies, it is, of course, no surprise that the writers of the *Response* can point to men who engaged in "Petrine" ministries and women who engaged in "Marian" ministries, both in the biblical period, and throughout the history of the pre-modern church. This is exactly how one would expect Christian men and women to have exercised their respective ministries in pre-industrial cultures where biological necessity limited the activities of women largely to the domestic sphere, while men, and men only, were able to work outside the home. However, the suggestion that men's and women's roles in the church should still be limited by a division of the sexes that is rooted in a connection between biological and economic necessities that no longer apply in the post-industrial world is not only short-sighted, but also likely impossible. Even if we could put the industrial genie back in the bottle, not even traditionalists would likely want to do so. (I note that the argument for a distinction between a Petrine charism and a Marian charism appeared on the internet. Presumably the writers would prefer not to go back to the pre-industrial economic conditions in which the traditional divisions between men's and women's economic tasks are based, in which women would stay home to give birth to and nurse large numbers of children, and there was no internet on which men could distribute essays about why women should not be ordained.)

See the discussion of changes introduced by industrialism in my essay "[Concerning Women's Ordination: Beginning with Genesis.](#)"

Conclusion

As noted above, there is nothing new in the arguments presented by the *Response*. I was not surprised that I had already addressed each one of these objections in essays I have been writing in the last several years. I am disappointed, however, that the *Response* either seems unaware that each one of these objections has long been addressed (not just by me), or, alternatively, chose to ignore them.

The *Response* is problematic for the following reasons:

- 1) The *Response* uncritically combines two different kinds of arguments against women's ordination (Evangelical Complementarian and Roman Catholic sacramentalist) without apparent awareness that these approaches are mutually at odds.
- 2) The *Response* uniformly relies on the Complementarian-leaning ESV with no acknowledgement that its translations are often tendentious.
- 3) The *Response* repeats Complementarian readings of standard proof texts without acknowledgment that Complementarian exegesis has been challenged repeatedly by some of the best contemporary biblical exegetes.
- 4) The *Response* endorses the new Complementarian understanding of the Trinity without acknowledgment of its departure from the historic Catholic doctrine.
- 5) The *Response* endorses the new Catholic argument based on sacramental resemblance between a male celebrant and a male Jesus Christ without acknowledgment that it is indeed a new argument and represents a distinctively Western Catholic eucharistic theology.

6) The *Response* appeals to a typology of male symbolism based on masculine metaphors for God, Jesus' male sex, and the male sex of the apostles without asking the fundamental question of how this masculine imagery actually functions in the Scriptures. In addition, the argument simply assumes that the ordained minister functions symbolically as a representation rather than a representative.

7) The *Response* appeals to a notion of Petrine and Marian charisms that simply reflects the traditional division of labor in pre-industrial societies in such a way as to make pre-industrial models of the relationship between the sexes normative.