

Gender Bias

(Definitely)

Co-opting Caesar

I hope that you did not think that I would leave Caesar alone. I fully intend to interact with Caesar, but not on his terms: not, as a politician. In fact, there is no way to remove Caesar from the equation. First, as Christians, we have a direct commandment to honor Caesar. It is a commandment that comes from the highest source that was made available to us, as provided by the Father God.

Then went the Pharisees, and took counsel how they might entangle him in his talk. And they sent out unto him their disciples with the Herodians, saying, Master, we know that thou art true, and teachest the way of God in truth, neither carest thou for any man: for thou regardest not the person of men. Tell us therefore, What thinkest thou? Is it lawful to give tribute unto Caesar, or not?

But Jesus perceived their wickedness, and said, Why tempt ye me, ye hypocrites? Shew me the tribute money.

And they brought unto him a penny.

And he saith unto them, Whose is this image and superscription?

They say unto him, Caesar's.

Then saith he unto them, Render therefore unto Caesar the things which are Caesar's; and unto God the things that are God's.

When they had heard these words, they marvelled, and left him, and went their way.

(Matthew 22:15-22)

Also, as pertains to our relationship with the rulers of the world, we received further instructions about how we acknowledge their appointed place in our lives. The apostle Paul gives us this further insight into these sorts of required relationships, for the children of God . . .

Let every soul be subject unto the higher powers. For there is no power but of God: the powers that be are ordained of God. Whosoever therefore resisteth the power, resisteth the ordinance of God: and they that resist shall receive to themselves damnation.

For rulers are not a terror to good works, but to the evil.

Wilt thou then not be afraid of the power? do that which is good, and thou shalt have praise of the same: For he is the minister of God to thee for good.

But if thou do that which is evil, be afraid; for he beareth not the sword in vain: for he is the minister of God, a revenger to execute wrath upon him that doeth evil.

Wherefore ye must needs be subject, not only for wrath, but also for conscience sake. For for this cause pay ye tribute also: for they are God's ministers, attending continually upon this very thing.

Render therefore to all their dues: tribute to whom tribute is due; custom to whom custom; fear to whom fear; honour to whom honour. Owe no man any thing, but to love one another: for he that loveth another hath fulfilled the law.

(Romans 13:1-8)

Please understand that there is no such thing as an unnecessary government. I know that this is not a standard thought among various nations of the world. However, regardless of modern thought, God's authorization is not restricted to any one nation. All nations exist by ordinance of God.

Since all existing governments have their place in their, then present, world; no nation can rightfully assign other nation a place that eliminates its value to the world. Also, no nation should ever discount the value of any other nation, as based on the blessing that God has bestowed on that nation, as opposed to another. This is outside of the concept of national pride. National pride is a good thing, as an internal stimulus for the drive to increased excellence. Comparative national pride, though, is somewhat worthless. That is somewhat like comparative family value setting among siblings. Yes, this does mean that nations are siblings of one another. This Scripture sheds essential light on that concept.

Remember the days of old, consider the years of many generations: ask thy father, and he will show thee; thy elders, and they will tell thee. When the Most High divided to the nations their inheritance, when he separated the sons of Adam, he set the bounds of the people according to the number of the children of Israel. For the LORD'S portion is his people; Jacob is the lot of his inheritance.

(Deuteronomy 32:7-9)

Every nation is an offshoot of the family that is made up of *the sons of Adam*.

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Now that we are comfortable with the thought that every government that exists, exists by the ordinance of God, we need to find the place that our government should have in our lives, and how that relates to gender bias as a principle of the church. The connection is found in the social programs of a nation.

Do you recall all those social programs that have started to be maligned so much? Well, these programs are a part of government's responsibility. In fact, there are even governments that think their responsibility goes far beyond just support of the welfare of the citizens; or, maybe I should say, they extend the welfare of the people across outreaches that also support things other than physical support. Among these countries is the United States of America, in which the government says that it has a responsibility for the liberty and the pursuit of happiness, of its

citizens, in addition to the continuation of their lives. This is a first step on the road to fulfillment of the complete obligation of a custodian, as Jesus Christ said his mission is, in the world.

*Then said Jesus unto them again, Verily, verily, I say unto you, I am the door of the sheep. All that ever came before me are thieves and robbers: but the sheep did not hear them.*

*I am the door: by me if any man enter in, he shall be saved, and shall go in and out, and find pasture.*

*The thief cometh not, but for to steal, and to kill, and to destroy: I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly.*

(John 10:7-10)

In this expression of governmental support, there must be gender neutrality. It is in society that we see the blending of treatment for all members of the group, even though such blending is not allowed in the offices of the church. The blending that is possible in the world is an expression of the blending that is the substance of the society of the religious worship of the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, as a whole, in the congregation, exclusive of its officers. This is the macro-relationship of members of societies. Please note: this does not immediately apply to granular components of societies--such as, organizations, fraternities, churches, hospitals, and other functional groups of citizens--as pertains to the whole of the society.

As you read the following, please be careful about separating call to service, and expression of devotion.

*For ye are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus. For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ. There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female: for ye are all one in Christ Jesus. And if ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise.*

(Galatians 3:26-29)

That support comes from the government must cross the entire spectrum of society. The officials of the government must be ready to provide for assistance to anyone who needs it. This can be somewhat difficult when certain officials think that their office demands that they allow the political platform to influence the necessary contribution that they give to the people of the nation. As you think about that, consider this extension of service that was given by the apostle Paul, and keep this in mind: he expounded these binding principles at a time when he definitely had pressure from authority figures of his own nation, calling him to a contrary pronouncement to his own.

*Having therefore obtained help of God, I continue unto this day, witnessing both to small and great, saying none other things than those which the prophets and Moses did say should come: That Christ should suffer, and that he should be the*

*first that should rise from the dead, and should show light unto the people, and to the Gentiles.*

*And as he thus spake for himself, Festus said with a loud voice, Paul, thou art beside thyself; much learning doth make thee mad.*

*But he said, I am not mad, most noble Festus; but speak forth the words of truth and soberness. For the king knoweth of these things, before whom also I speak freely: for I am persuaded that none of these things are hidden from him; for this thing was not done in a corner.*

*King Agrippa, believest thou the prophets?  
I know that thou believest.*

*Then Agrippa said unto Paul, Almost thou persuadest me to be a Christian.*

*And Paul said, I would to God, that not only thou, but also all that hear me this day, were both almost, and altogether such as I am, except these bonds.*

(Acts 26:22-29)

In his statements to them, the apostle Paul let them know that he would not let political pressure cause him to neglect his obligation to the LORD. This is the position that the officials of government need to take for the sake of all members of their society.

Things happen similarly in the church, in general: the churches also have a measure of political posturing. In the church, it, too, needs to maintain the integrity of its purpose. In general, the church needs to be actively concerned about the welfare of the body, as superseding the preference of the individual--when it is required that it do so. This means that officials must locate existing areas of contribution that fit the individual, without trying to reshape the church to fit the talents of its individual members. Thus, the individual is not the focus of the workings of the church; rather, the outreach of the church must be the focus of the individuals in the church. This requires a primary commitment to the ministry of Christ.

We need not fear that the church will not prosper if it does not cater to a particular individual or group. When such a one leaves, another one will join in the ministry. The LORD will take care of preparing the individuals for service to him, as follows.

*And it shall come to pass afterward, that I will pour out my spirit upon all flesh; and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, your old men shall dream dreams, your young men shall see visions: And also upon the servants and upon the handmaids in those days will I pour out my spirit.*

(Joel 2:28-29)

With the preparation that is done by the LORD, the church can, then, tailor the support that it provides the individual; packaging that support in such a fashion as to be consistent with the area of service to which that person has been called. With that in mind, let us look at some of the areas of common service in the church. In general, we will see that these areas of service are

done without having to present a public face, as they are usually done on a very private level.

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One of the areas of participation in the church is the service of miracles. As a foundation for that thought, please read the following Scripture.

And when they were come to the multitude, there came to him a certain man, kneeling down to him, and saying, Lord, have mercy on my son: for he is lunatick, and sore vexed: for oftentimes he falleth into the fire, and oft into the water. And I brought him to thy disciples, and they could not cure him.

Then Jesus answered and said, O faithless and perverse generation, how long shall I be with you? how long shall I suffer you? bring him hither to me.

And Jesus rebuked the devil; and he departed out of him: and the child was cured from that very hour.

Then came the disciples to Jesus apart, and said, Why could not we cast him out?

And Jesus said unto them, Because of your unbelief: for verily I say unto you, If ye have faith as a grain of mustard seed, ye shall say unto this mountain, Remove hence to yonder place; and it shall remove; and nothing shall be impossible unto you.

Howbeit this kind goeth not out but by prayer and fasting.

(Matthew 17:14-21)

In that Scripture, we see an action that anyone can perform. Let us extend this area of service, beyond just the public part that was asked of the disciples, by taking the public part out of it. To do that, consider the example of the father or mother who has a sick child, and who is not near a church gathering. This parent does not need to wait until they can search out a man of God who can provide assistance. The parent of that child can access the assistance that comes from the LORD, directly. This can be done in two key ways. First, it can be done by the parents assembling with one another, and petitioning the LORD for healing. Scripture tells us that this is possible.

Verily I say unto you, Whatsoever ye shall bind on earth shall be bound in heaven: and whatsoever ye shall loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven.

Again I say unto you, That if two of you shall agree on earth as touching any thing that they shall ask, it shall be done for them of my Father which is in heaven. For where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them.

(Matthew 18:18-20)

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The second means of private healing highlights a second calling that is dispersed across the children of God; possibly, regardless of gender. This is the gifts of healings.

The following is a portion of Scripture that gives us insight into our obligation to provide for the service of healing. Please note: we said, "possibly, regardless of gender," only because there is no direct statement that refers to the gift of healing as being gender-specific; though, in the following Scripture, the assignment is only activated in a group of males disciples: *his twelve disciples*.

*Then he called his twelve disciples together, and gave them power and authority over all devils, and to cure diseases. And he sent them to preach the kingdom of God, and to heal the sick.*

*And he said unto them, Take nothing for your journey, neither staves, nor scrip, neither bread, neither money; neither have two coats apiece. And whatsoever house ye enter into, there abide, and thence depart.*

*And whosoever will not receive you, when ye go out of that city, shake off the very dust from your feet for a testimony against them.*

*And they departed, and went through the towns, preaching the gospel, and healing every where.*

(Luke 9:1-6)

As we continue the progression that flows in the LORD, as He pours out His Spirit, and as it activates healing, let us return to the example of healing a sick child. For completion sake, we need to do as we said, by moving to a review of a less than public performance of the miracle that is contained in healings. For, miracles are outcomes from the common request that is made in gatherings of two or more saints of the LORD; however, what happens when it is a single-parent home? Does this mean that the parent has to go and ask for assistance from someone else? No; healing can be invoked in a direct fashion, such as Jesus did, in this case.

*Then Jesus went thence, and departed into the coasts of Tyre and Sidon. And, behold, a woman of Canaan came out of the same coasts, and cried unto him, saying, Have mercy on me, O Lord, thou son of David; my daughter is grievously vexed with a devil.*

*But he answered her not a word.*

*And his disciples came and besought him, saying, Send her away; for she crieth after us.*

*But he answered and said, I am not sent but unto the lost sheep of the house of Israel.*

*Then came she and worshipped him, saying, Lord, help me.  
But he answered and said, It is not meet to take the children's bread, and to cast it to dogs.*

*And she said, Truth, Lord: yet the dogs eat of the crumbs which fall from their masters' table.  
Then Jesus answered and said unto her, O woman, great is thy faith: be it unto thee even as thou wilt.*

*And her daughter was made whole from that very hour.*

(Matthew 15:21-28)

"However, Jesus is not around, now," you say.

Well, this is where we get into the true weight of ones religious convictions. This is the time when we decide if we want to think of Jesus as being a very good man, and a powerful prophet and preacher; or, if we want to truly think of Jesus Christ as being the Son of God. This means that we have to decide if we will take the following literally.

*Jesus saith unto him, Have I been so long time with you, and yet hast thou not known me, Philip? he that hath seen me hath seen the Father; and how sayest thou then, Show us the Father? Believest thou not that I am in the Father, and the Father in me? the words that I speak unto you I speak not of myself: but the Father that dwelleth in me, he doeth the works.*

*Believe me that I am in the Father, and the Father in me: or else believe me for the very works' sake.*

*Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that believeth on me, the works that I do shall he do also; and greater works than these shall he do; because I go unto my Father.*

*And whatsoever ye shall ask in my name, that will I do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son. If ye shall ask any thing in my name, I will do it.*

(John 14:9-14)

Also, we need to determine if we will believe such things as the following, as being literal. It is the record of an event from the life of Stephen. Stephen was one of the chosen servants of the LORD during the time of Jesus and the first New Age apostles of God; all of which are, too, disciples of Christ, by direct, visual selection.

*When they heard these things, they were cut to the heart, and they gnashed on him with their teeth. But he, being full of the Holy Ghost, looked up stedfastly into heaven, and saw the glory of God, and Jesus standing on the right hand of God, And said, Behold, I see the heavens opened, and the Son of man standing on the right hand of God.*

(Acts 7:54-56)

When we accept these portions of Scripture as being literal, we also accept that Jesus Christ is very much active in the present world of the earth. Then, for those who do accept the active presence of the Lord Jesus Christ, it is easy to think both, of the grand things that are possible for

the world, and, that the early miracles of healing are still among the empowerments of the church.

Also of great benefit to us is to know that, healing is only one of Jesus' continuing interventions. The scope of that intervention is immense, and it can accomplish healing that reaches far beyond the individual. The intervention of the Son of man can invoke healing that beneficially impacts the world. Indeed, there are many people who believe that the Lord Jesus Christ has scheduled healing intervention in a world that is yet to come (though, this seems to have already occurred), such as is seen in the following Scripture.

*Immediately after the tribulation of those days shall the sun be darkened, and the moon shall not give her light, and the stars shall fall from heaven, and the powers of the heavens shall be shaken: And then shall appear the sign of the Son of man in heaven: and then shall all the tribes of the earth mourn, and they shall see the Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory.*

*And he shall send his angels with a great sound of a trumpet, and they shall gather together his elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other.*

(Matthew 24:29-31)

However, let us not go to that place, just yet. Let us stay in the everyday weights that beset us. Let us continue with the example of the intervention for a sick child. In this case, we know that we can take the child to a doctor, and seek a remedy. However, we need to generalize that type of assistance. Sometimes, we need to go to a level that is less intense than a miracle, and that does not look for the spontaneity that is often assumed to be in the gift of healing. Sometimes, we need to just look at the level of helps.

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Here is some Scripture to prime your thinking about helps.

After these things the Lord appointed other seventy also, and sent them two and two before his face into every city and place, whither he himself would come. Therefore said he unto them,

The harvest truly is great, but the labourers are few: pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest, that he would send forth labourers into his harvest. Go your ways: behold, I send you forth as lambs among wolves.

Carry neither purse, nor scrip, nor shoes: and salute no man by the way. And into whatsoever house ye enter, first say, Peace be to this house. And if the son of peace be there, your peace shall rest upon it: if not, it shall turn to you again. And in the same house remain, eating and drinking such things as they give: for the labourer is worthy of his hire. Go not from house to house.

And into whatsoever city ye enter, and they receive you, eat such things as are set before you: And heal the sick that are therein, and say unto them, The kingdom of God is come nigh unto you.

But into whatsoever city ye enter, and they receive you not, go your ways out into the streets of the same, and say, Even the very dust of your city, which cleaveth on us, we do wipe off against you: notwithstanding be ye sure of this, that the kingdom of God is come nigh unto you.

(Luke 10:1-11)

The preceding Scripture reminds me of the time when there were home visits by physicians in large cities: maybe there still are. The time that comes to my mind is during my childhood. In that day, physicians would actually visit the homes of families that had been in for treatment. I know that they still do this for patients that are in the hospital, but this was an extension of that; the practice going to the residence, that is. This was also somewhat more than the on-call visits that physician would make in that day. These also had a spirit-lifting aspect to them.

In fact, there are still similar things being done, today. There are still traveling medical services that come to groups of people; treating them in van, and such. These sorts of things are done by anyone who has credentialed expertise in medicine. The thought that caused me to refer to them as, helps, is the extended services that they gave, in that day. Some of the extended services had aspects of social service work. For instance; sometimes, a physician would counsel a person that was distraught. Many times, they would either provide, or arrange for, needed drugs that were free of any charge to the patient. One of the ways this was done, which is still being done, now, is by the distribution of samples from pharmaceutical representatives and companies. However, many of the home physicians of that day would even go beyond that.

In the church, as a public entity, the outreach to help the world, in a social services fashion, is done by the designated men of the church. In the early days of the church, this was activated in the following fashion.

Then the eleven disciples went away into Galilee, into a mountain where Jesus had appointed them. And when they saw him, they worshipped him: but some doubted. And Jesus came and spake unto them, saying,

All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth. Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world.

Amen.

(Matthew 28:16-20)

Also, in the early church; this was accomplished by the women, in the following fashion.

Let not a widow be taken into the number under threescore years old, having been the wife of one man, Well reported of for good works; if she have brought up children, if she have lodged strangers, if she have washed the saints' feet, if she have relieved the afflicted, if she have diligently followed every good work. But the younger widows refuse: for when they have begun to wax wanton against Christ, they will marry; Having damnation, because they have cast off their first

faith. And withal they learn to be idle, wandering about from house to house; and not only idle, but tattlers also and busybodies, speaking things which they ought not.

I will therefore that the younger women marry, bear children, guide the house, give none occasion to the adversary to speak reproachfully. For some are already turned aside after Satan.

(1 Timothy 5:9-15)

From those of us that have benefited greatly from the concentration that our mother's gave to their daughters, we say, "Thank You." Yes, we also thank the fathers for their contributions to the family, but it is not their turn, now. At this time, we want to concentrate on the benefit that comes from the woman who honors the LORD in their preparation for our well-being, and from whom we may learn much. For, the caring mothers', wives', and other supportive females' in-reach to their families is as the LORD directed all of us to do. So, in private communion with the LORD God, we send our thanks. Also, please know that the LORD has directed these words of consolidated praise toward you . . .

Who can find a virtuous woman? for her price is far above rubies. The heart of her husband doth safely trust in her, so that he shall have no need of spoil. She will do him good and not evil all the days of her life.

She openeth her mouth with wisdom; and in her tongue is the law of kindness. She looketh well to the ways of her household, and eateth not the bread of idleness.

Her children arise up, and call her blessed; her husband also, and he praiseth her.

Many daughters have done virtuously, but thou excellest them all. Favour is deceitful, and beauty is vain: but a woman that feareth the LORD, she shall be praised. Give her of the fruit of her hands; and let her own works praise her in the gates.

(Proverbs 31:10-12, 26-31)

Also, we need to give thanks to God that He inspires the women in our lives to teach us discretion; especially, for the men and boys.

Discretion is a great asset, and one that will carry us far. Therefore, the one that helps us acquire this asset must not be aggravated by others, by any disruptive attempt, by them, to hamper the woman's or girl's in-reach. Such sources of aggravation must think carefully about their attempts to skew the position of any of these workers of the LORD. They must not be tugged upon in such a way that they are being drawn into unnecessary and, often unrighteous, actions that are in the limelight of the church. Most of what they do is not of the openly public sort.

We need to let the women--through their diligent attention to their self-worth, and by setting the positive example of their own lives--provide us with the help that we needs. By our being a

