

BIBLE STUDY FOR GENDER EQUALITY

# Reclaiming Equality

5-week plan to reclaim our newbirth right

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2015

B W E BAPTIST WOMEN FOR EQUALITY

# Reclaiming Equality

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# Reclaiming Equality—Why?

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Christians are of two minds. That comes as no surprise to us because we see all around us churches of various denominations and beliefs. We are divided in many ways doctrinally, but the biggest division among Christians is regarding women's places in those churches and in their own homes.

This division can be identified as: those who believe women are equal in duties and responsibilities in church and home, and those who believe that women are not equal, and are to have certain so-called 'roles' that define them in both church and home. There are various degrees of what a church or denomination believes and practices. However, when "equal" is qualified in any way, women become unequal in whatever way a religion decides to define it.

The Civil Rights Act of 1964 exempted churches from discrimination against women. Churches took this and ran with it. They clamped down on women with what is called male headship, or male leadership. Complementarian is another word for this theology. Church constitutions and by-laws, and statements of faith affirm a church and/or denomination's belief and practice in male headship. Male headship means that all men have authority over all women all the time. This is in the home and in the church. Only males can be in authority. All women must submit.

Male headship gives a husband complete and total control over his wife and family. He calls the shots. One day he is an unmarried 20 year old and with the "I do" he has carte blanche in running his family. While the Bible says men should be of good character, male headship cannot by its very nature, make that distinction. Male headship, unlike women, has no restrictions. It cannot. If males are heads, then they are heads, subject to do whatever they choose.

*"Jesus is our standard, and since Jesus did not commit women to husbands, or to males, and because Jesus did not deny women anything based on their being women, then we cannot in good stewardship of the gospel, do so either."*

*(Shirley Taylor)*

# Biblical Foundation

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Dear Pastor,

**Y**ou know me, of course. I am the sister of one of your members and you knew me when I worked for Baptist General Convention of Texas.

It is a little late, but I just read your July 4<sup>th</sup> article in your newsletter this morning. I get your church newsletter regularly because it comes to my post office box, addressed to a former member of your church who previously had my mailbox.

When I found it in my mailbox Friday, I tossed it in the front seat of the car. This morning I arrived early at my church and picked up your newsletter and read it. This is what you wrote:

*“The history of the human race is largely one of enslavement. Men have enslaved each other...Yet man is enslaved by a worse slavery than the literal kind – by circumstances, by customs, by fear, and by his passion for sin. John 8:32 tells us it is the truth that makes man free. Christ came to make man free, not just from institutional slavery but from every kind of slavery. He frees through Himself, who is the truth incarnate. If a person wants true freedom all he has to do is surrender to Jesus Christ.”*

I like the story of freedom through Christ. Paul told the people of Galatia “It is for freedom that Christ has set us free. Stand firm, then, and do not let yourselves be burdened again by a yoke of slavery.” (Gal 5:1).

I put down your newsletter and went into my own church. Today, our praise song was “Open Our Eyes (we want to see Jesus).” The song says ‘we want to reach out and touch you, and say that we love you.’ Surely you hear the wistfulness in women’s voices when they sing this song. Much like Mary at the tomb the morning of the resurrection when she saw Jesus.

“You blind people! You have eyes, but you do not see!” Our birthright has been stolen. I wanted to shout that to a local pastor. Instead, I wrote this letter to him.

My pastor began to preach. I was glued to his every word. He told the story of Esau and Jacob. You remember the story. Jacob steals Esau's birthright. The name "Jacob" means "supplanter, deceiver." Jacob took what was not his to take. Through opportunity and deception, he received the inheritance of goods and position.

That was the Old Testament. In the New Testament, there is a 'newbirth' right, given by Jesus, where both men and women were set free. A new birth: a new *right* as sons and daughters of God. That was our birthright. We were free! Christ set us free from 'institutional slavery and every kind of slavery.'

We were all firstborn, and set to inherit goods and positions. But something happened along the way.

The supplanters and deceivers came and women's birthright through Jesus Christ was stolen from them. Women were made slaves again. Like Esau, we have been tricked and we have lost the precious birthright that came with Jesus. Yes, like Esau, we have sold our birthright for a bowl of pottage. We have received a bowl of beautiful words of flattery served with 'equal-but.'

Jacob sought to make amends with his brother. God met Jacob on the way, and Jacob was engaged in a spiritual battle to account for what he had done. Jacob would not give up the struggle until he knew that he had received a blessing. This changed Jacob forever. He limped, but more than that, he had received forgiveness.

A birthright has been stolen. The birthright was a way of living, a position in society and family, something to be passed on to the next generation.

So it is today. And it has been stolen.

Which belies the last statement in your article on the 4<sup>th</sup> July 2014: "If a person wants true freedom all he has to do is surrender to Jesus Christ."

True freedom would mean a full birthright. To preach. To be a deacon. To serve the Lord's Supper. To take up the offering. To pass out an attendance pad and worship bulletin. That is not a freedom that you are willing to give the women in your church.

This past Fourth of July, as you ate your hotdogs and apple pie, women are still being oppressed by the very church that claims to set them free. What would happen if next July 4<sup>th</sup>, the women in your church can serve as God calls? Will you lead the way?

Shirley Taylor

**Tell your friends! Involve your Sunday school class, your Bible study group,  
facebook friends, twitter, and other social media**

# Week 1

## Reclaiming Equality—Prayer

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**You've put us at odds with our neighbors;  
Our enemies make fun of us.  
Restore us, god of heavenly forces!  
Make your face shine so that we can be saved!**

**- From Psalm 80 Common English Bible (CEB)**

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**L**ike the Psalmist, I, too, have cried out to God our Creator and asked him why he has withheld his favor from women. Why has he put us at odds with our fellow Christians, and why has he allowed our enemies to make fun of us? Many of you have also pleaded with God and have poured out your hearts to Him.

Monday through Friday we will lift up our voices in unity and pray together. Pray earnestly, but remember that God uses our hands and our feet, our voices and our minds.

### **Monday**

Pray for those who are actively working for equality, that they will not be discouraged in their resolve. Pray that God increases their vision, and that they (we) will speak up at every opportunity that God gives us. Stretch our minds, Lord, that we will see a possibility to speak out in the most ordinary encounters with people sent our way. Open our mouths so that words of equality spring forth. Put in our hands materials that will pave the way to speak out – by giving us knowledge and by passing on that knowledge to others.

### **Action**

**Send someone who is working for equality a note of encouragement.**

*To reclaim the equality given at creation, women must pray for deliverance from the female denigration that is taught in seminaries and practiced in churches and homes.*

## Tuesday

Pray that some of the leaders in the two largest and most influential Christian denominations (Roman Catholics and Southern Baptists) will begin to sense that what they are teaching and preaching about women is not the message of Jesus and love. We know that God could change everybody's heart in a flash, but God doesn't work that way. He changes the heart of individuals and then that person begins to speak. So today, pray that God will speak to some pastors, to some church leaders, and to some priests and bishops and that their eyes will be opened to the injustice against women. We pray for that crack in their armor to grow and to widen.

### Action

**Write a letter to a Baptist leader or Roman Catholic bishop. Or the Pope! Let them know that what they do affects Christian woman in America and abroad, and ultimately the kingdom of God.**

## Wednesday

Pray for those who write church literature, Sunday school lessons, mission magazines, blogs – anything that will be read by church leaders – that they will feel uneasiness in their complementarian teaching, and that they will respond to the urging of the Holy Spirit. Pray that in their research their eyes will be opened to the injustice against God's female creation. Pray that their eyes will be opened to the part that they play in keeping women from achieving what God has for them, and for denying and limiting the gifts of women.

### Action

**Send an email to one of the writers in a Christian magazine, blog, or Sunday school book, and ask them to focus on women's gifts in ministry.**

## Thursday

Thursday is a day of sadness and we reach deep into ourselves as we recognize the price women pay for male headship. We pray for those hurt by this teaching, recognized in two groups: 1) the rejected and 2) the abused. Pray for those women who feel called to preach, attend seminary, and who then can find no church that will accept their calling. Pray for those who left their church because the church loved boys more than it loved the girls.

Now pray for the abused. Pray for women and girls who have been physically and emotionally hurt by men, and for those who recognize that the church itself

perpetuates this abuse. Bow your heads and pray for those who had rather just talk and argue the scriptures than to get up and get out and do something about it. Today is a day of sadness as we ourselves see no immediate solution to abuse of women. Isn't it also abuse of women when we deny their calling?

**Action: Write a letter to an unknown woman, or to someone you know who is a female seminarian and express your sorrow that she can't fulfill her calling. She knows it already and will be glad to know that others feel her pain. Promise her you will work for her. Then do it.**

**Write a letter to an unknown, or known, woman who has been abused due to male headship. Then send the letter, or tear it up because it should not be sent, or keep it, but remember the need to reach out to these women. Male headship is often the cause of abuse of women and girls. Make the effort to change the cultural attitude of male superiority.**

## Friday

Finally, we come to the largest group of all because it takes in all those for whom we prayed Tuesday through Thursday. These are the Indifferent (those who don't have a clue and are unconcerned); the Believers (those who sit under male headship and have swallowed all of it); the Traditionalists (those who think that because men have always had charge of the church and family that it must be God's plan); and then Deceivers (those who have read the bible and know that the Word of God does not give women over to the charge of males, but who have a vested interest in keeping it that way).

Direct your prayers today to the Indifferent, the Believers, and the Traditionalists. Pray for their eyes and hearts to be opened to the whole message of redemption and love. For this day, do not pray for the Deceivers.

## Action

**Take or bake some bread, tear off a piece and drink some juice as a symbolic action that these are our brothers and sisters in Christ, and that one day we will be reunited as equals.**

**I will write to these people**

**Letter of encouragement to \_\_\_\_\_**

**Letter to Baptist or Catholic leaders** \_\_\_\_\_

**Letter to bloggers, Christian literature, etc.** \_\_\_\_\_

**Letter to woman in seminary** \_\_\_\_\_

**Letter to abused woman** \_\_\_\_\_

**Other** \_\_\_\_\_

# Week 2

## Reclaiming Equality— Awareness

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*Make an effort to present yourself to God as a tried-and-true worker, who doesn't need to be ashamed but is one who interprets the message of truth correctly.*

*-2 Timothy 2:15 (CEB)*

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**W**e focus on educating ourselves, which we must do before we can educate others. Awareness of the situation in our churches comes through recognizing the problems and arming ourselves with knowledge of the scriptures through available resources.

This week we will commit to learn more about women's equality by reading at least one article and one book that promotes gender equality. Articles can be found on the website of Christians for Biblical Equality – of which I am a member—[www.cbeinternational.org](http://www.cbeinternational.org).

CBE is the largest active group striving for women's equality. Most people and groups do not have the resources that CBE has. So it is with confidence that I steer women to CBE International for resources, helps, and conferences. However, beginning in January 2015, Jocelyn Andersen and I will be introducing a new website called Equality Junction which we will provide free of charge for membership. There will be discussion forum, talk radio, blogs, listing of available books, newsletter and resources.

Christians for Biblical Equality (CBE) was founded in 1987 at the same time that the Council on Biblical Manhood and Womanhood (CBMW) was founded. CBE presents the biblical

*Churches stubbornly cling to pet doctrines about male superiority that are nothing more than links to the past that still bind women in the 21st century. Pastors like to think of themselves as being modern, so 21st century, but when they deny Christian women equality, they are promoting a culture that is outdated and antiquated, and which has no biblical basis for continuation. They fail to see that they have fallen into the same bias against women that has restricted women for centuries.*

*Women themselves do not realize these restrictions are remnant rags from a previous culture that are clinging to them.*

*(Dethroning Male Headship,  
Shirley Taylor)*

foundation for women's equality, whereas CBMW presents what they claim is a biblical foundation for female submission and male superiority. CBE seeks to free women from restrictions, while CBMW's agenda is to constrain women, heaping male headship upon their heads. CBMW is complementarian (male headship). CBE is egalitarian, meaning that women are spiritually gifted and should be able to use those gifts as they are called. It is important that we understand the mission of these two organizations because of the effect each has upon us.

Many people have never heard the term 'male headship' but they can quote scriptures telling women that they are not to have authority over men, and that husbands are head of their wives, or that a wife is to submit to her husband as Christ submits to the Lord. We call this theory complementarian. Complementarianism denies the truth of the statement below:

Jesus is our standard, and since Jesus did not commit women to husbands, or to males, and because Jesus did not deny women anything based on their being women, then we cannot in good stewardship of the gospel, do so either.

In other words, we have mistranslated and misused the gospel. We know this because restrictions against women serving fully as they are, does not match the standard by which we have our being, Jesus Christ.

## **AWARENESS**

So what do we do when we hear those scriptures used in church services and by friends and relatives who seem to know what they are talking about? The answer is to be prepared. We prepare ourselves by learning the origin and the result of those scriptures. To apply those scriptures literally the way they are spoken means that Jesus shares his headship over women with a husband! In this way, husbands become little man-gods. Now who believes the revered apostle Paul would ever speak that way?

It is hard to find egalitarian books in Christian bookstores. But it is easy to find well-known Christian book authors that promote female submission to husbands and to male leadership. The majority of Christian bookstores carry their works, but they will not carry Christian books promoting Biblical female equality. The reason they will not carry these books on Christian women's equality is because they are owned by denominations that have language that restricts women to certain roles in their Statements of Faith. So we must look outside Christian bookstores such as LifeWay books on Christian women's equality.

The best source of Christian egalitarian books are found in the [CBE Bookstore](#).

The best source for [articles](#) to learn more about Christian women's biblical equality is also from Christians for Biblical Equality



# Week 3

## Reclaiming Equality— Speech

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*I am the vine; you are the branches. If you remain in me and I in you, then you will produce much fruit.*

*- John 15:5*

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“I can’t talk to people about equality in the church,” you say. Many people feel that way and probably if you asked me to stand up in front of a church and make a speech about women’s equality, I would shake in my shoes, and the words would flee from my mouth.

But speech takes many shapes. It is the spoken word, to be sure, but it does not have to be vocal. It can be what we write and what we promote with our time and money. Last week I pulled up behind a truck with this bumper sticker “Well-Behaved Women Seldom Make History.” (That is a quote by Laurel Thatcher Ulrich in 1976). I wondered about the woman driving the truck. I was interested to know how that particular quote speaks to her.

What you have in your car, or on your car, presumably tells others something about you. These things are talking points, conversation starters, or visuals to get people thinking.

I have a bumper sticker on my car and I have a window decal. I call myself a “street evangelist for women’s equality.”

Not everyone is comfortable with decorating their car with bumper stickers and decals. Certainly not everyone has a book (or two!) to promote. A little over a year ago, I wouldn’t have either. But now I do and that is what I use.

*Let your pastors know that you want women to be able to walk into church and feel that their church values them as complete in the sight of God, and not just as a complement to their husbands.*

*(Dethroning Male Headship,  
Shirley Taylor)*

## WAYS TO SPEAK OUT FOR WOMEN'S EQUALITY:

1. Help someone who is speaking out. Speak words of encouragement to that person. I have a friend who bought 20 of my books for me to give away to whomever I choose. This is her way of working for women's equality.  
Name \_\_\_\_\_
2. Make plans to attend the Christians for Biblical Equality Conference in Los Angeles in July 2015. Gather a group to go, learn all you can about this organization. Become a member. Give a donation. (cbeinternational.org)  
Plans \_\_\_\_\_
3. Help make it possible for someone to attend a conference on equality. (CBE International in Los Angeles in 2015, or a local CBE conference).  
What I will do \_\_\_\_\_
4. Support Christians for Biblical Equality through membership and by telling your Bible study group and Sunday school class about this organization and encouraging them to become members. (cbeinternational.org).  
Donate \_\_\_\_\_  
Who I will tell \_\_\_\_\_
5. Make a change in the way you think about women in your Sunday school class. If you are a Sunday school teacher of either adults or children, look behind the scripture to find the women in the stories. There is usually a mother and women in these stories. Read *Every woman & Child: All the Scriptures Pertaining to women & Children in the New Testament* Adele Hebert.  
A 'hidden woman' I found in scripture \_\_\_\_\_
6. If you are a children's Sunday school teacher, focus on the women to make sure girls find strong women heroes in their Bible stories. If you write children's books, ditch the stereotypes and ban the witches and focus on brave women leaders.  
Girls I have helped \_\_\_\_\_
7. Attend a small group Bible study or book discussion group, facebook, or internet group that promotes women's equality. Make one change in the way you speak about women's equality among your church small group or Bible study class, or in how you participate in worship services and church activities.  
Group I joined \_\_\_\_\_



# Week 4

## Reclaiming Equality— Involvement

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*...But when you grow restless, you will tear away his harness  
from your neck.”*

*- Genesis 27:40 (CEB)*

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**E**quality will not happen by osmosis. The only way equality for Christian women can happen is through a deliberate, concentrated, dedicated plan. A plan devised by women and men who have a fire in their belly for equality.

### **WHAT YOU CAN DO:**

Just because something has not been done, does not mean that it cannot be done. All it means is that it *has not* been done before.

**Bookstores.** Contact bookstores such as Cokesbury and request that they have a classification for Gender Equality (or egalitarian) listed in their line-up of books. Currently these bookstores do not have a special listing for books relating to Gender Equality, making it hard to find books on biblical female equality in the church. In fact, it is almost impossible to find any book promoting egalitarian living and marriages through these booksellers. Perhaps one reason is that nobody has asked them to do it. Think through the Christian bookstores you shop with and ask for a section on women's equality. Otherwise, these egalitarian books, if there are any, are in the theology section, or buried deep among complementarian books. Advertisers know that most time a person does not know he needs a product until he sees it advertised.

*History has shown that churches and denominations have often been on the wrong side and now they are again. Pastors of all denominations and faith groups have a decision to make. History is being made now. Pastors, you have a great responsibility. How will you be remembered? Will your church be recognized as one who opened its doors to women deacons and women pastors, or will your church be remembered as closing its doors to over one-half of God's people?*

*(Dethroning Male Headship,  
Shirley Taylor)*

Ask these bookstores to be proactive in gender equality by carrying books, old and new, that are egalitarian in nature. This includes Egalitarian Leadership and Egalitarian Marriage. Currently Christians for Biblical Equality ([www.cbeinternational.org](http://www.cbeinternational.org)) has books dedicated to Christian biblical female equality.

**Egalitarian Marriage Seminars.** Male Headship teaching seminars are held frequently, but rarely do we find a marriage seminar that is for egalitarian leadership. This is a vacuum that needs to be filled. There are actually few materials available for such a seminar, and this, too, needs to be addressed. Write or contact Abingdon Press and Cokesbury for such material. LifeWay Resources will not carry such material because it is in their statement of faith that women are to submit ‘graciously’ to their husbands.

**Cultivating Friendships with Religion Writers.** If your denomination has a newspaper or online presence, write to the editor and let them know that you would like to see more stories regarding those who are working for women’s equality. Ask them to be pro-active in presenting the egalitarian side.

**Targeting Women’s Ministry Groups.** Enlist and train women of all ages to present seminars, Bible studies, special events in churches and/or at a neutral location. This could be done with a specific program, or with each woman or man (we have found men are more open to women pastors and preachers oftentimes than women are) using their own materials that teach biblical female equality.

**Contact seminaries that are egalitarian.** A husband-wife team who were in the first graduating class at Truett Theological Seminary in Waco, Texas, brought this to my attention. They said that pastors who are trained at Truett, when they secure their pastorates, forget about female equality. Their churches do not have women deacons, and they themselves do not make an effort to promote their female classmates who are looking for an opportunity to serve their calling.

In theological seminaries where both men and women are equal, remember that it will not be that way for women once they enter the ministerial field. Contact these pastors and ask them to have at least one sermon a year on biblical equality. Ask the male students before they graduate to commit to encouraging female equality in their church when they begin their pastorate.

Encourage these male students to bring in speakers to teach their congregations about female equality. In my experience, the church pastor is not necessarily the best person to hold these classes.

Most churches have members who have come from a fundamental religion background and those members are not absolutely sure that it is not biblical to have female deacons

and elders, and pastors. It is imperative that we teach them why it is biblically correct to have females in leadership. These members have neighbors and family and friends who are being taught that women are to remain submissive to men.

**Sunday School Lessons.** Enlist those who write Sunday school lessons to offer lessons for one quarter each year that highlight the women of the Bible. Having taught Adult Women's Sunday school classes for years, and attending Sunday school classes all my life, I had never heard of Hulda, and I am sure most women can tell you the same thing.

Make sure our children see those female heroes. That means that Children's literature should be scrutinized to present female Bible characters. If you have old children's literature in your church library that promotes only males, see that it is removed. Know what your children are learning in Sunday school. Make sure new teachers know what to look for, and that they themselves understand women's equality.

**Youth Programs.** Provide and actively encourage churches to teach from literature that promotes female equality. Provide such information to each Youth Pastor, at least in those churches that have a egalitarian teaching graduate as pastor.

Watch carefully for email solicitations from fundamental churches inviting your youth to participate in their conferences and events. Learn to recognize key words that tell you that your girls are not thought of as being equal. Words such as 'roles' and 'biblical man' or 'biblical woman' should always cause alarm. Recognize the names of key leaders who are known for their complementarian stance against women. Avoid these. Be vigilant. Train the church secretary to recognize solicitations through email and telephone calls that are from complementarian leaders.

This is just a start. I am sure that there are more avenues that can be explored. The point is that we must do something.

If we don't do something, there is a real danger that before too many years, female equality conversations will stop altogether, as we have not won. Those who have won are in danger of losing their equality because they are swimming against the tide, and they have not taught their people the biblical basis for female equality.

## **PEOPLE I KNOW WHO MAY HAVE INFLUENCE IN RELIGIOUS CIRCLES**

My pastor \_\_\_\_\_

My local Christian bookstore owner (manager) \_\_\_\_\_

The editor or staff writer of our local newspaper \_\_\_\_\_

The editor of denominational newsletter (online or print) \_\_\_\_\_

A seminary professor \_\_\_\_\_

The female pastor of a local church \_\_\_\_\_

Christian women's organizations \_\_\_\_\_

**PEOPLE WHO I CAN CONTACT ABOUT CHURCH LITERATURE**

Group \_\_\_\_\_

Bluefish \_\_\_\_\_

BaptistWay Press \_\_\_\_\_

Other \_\_\_\_\_

# Week 5

## Reclaiming Equality— Personally

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### *The Canaanite woman*

*From there, Jesus went to the regions of Tyre and Sidon. A Canaanite woman from those territories came out and shouted, "Show me mercy, Son of David. My daughter is suffering terribly from demon possession." But he didn't respond to her at all. His disciples came and urged him, "Send her away; she keeps shouting out after us."*

*Jesus replied, "I've been sent only to the lost sheep, the people of Israel." He replied, "It is not good to take the children's bread and toss it to dogs."*

*She said, "Yes, Lord. But even the dogs eat the crumbs that fall off their masters' table."*

*Jesus answered, "Woman, you have great faith. It will be just as you wish."*

*Right then her daughter was healed.*

**Matthew 15:21-28 (CEB)**

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**A**sk any woman in your church how they feel excluded in church simply because they are women. You'll probably get blank stares. Most women have not even thought about it. But now that you have put the idea into their heads, one of two things will happen. They will accept what you said, or they will reject it.

Now, don't get too comfortable with either reaction. Neither position is the final word. We have just begun the process. You have started someone thinking.

Many women will say "women do all the work anyway" and then in the next breath, they will tell you that they don't want to hear a woman preach. So, while it appeared that at first they agree with you, you can see that they don't believe that women should be equal in the church or in the home, because

*Women, tell your pastors how degraded it makes you feel when you walk into your church with the knowledge that your church does not see you as a full church member with all the rights and responsibilities afforded the men in your church.*

*(Dethroning Male Headship,  
Shirley Taylor)*

they believe that males are superior to females. They have been taught this.

However, if they reject it outright, that is not necessarily a cause for concern. That is a gut, knee-jerk instinct, simply parroting what they have heard or learned.

Now you are going to show them that what they have learned about men's role and women's roles in church does not work, because it is in the home where these things are played out.

### **Action**

For this week, I want you to engage people in the conversation of Christian women's equality. Start with the NFL football player Ray Rice because most people have heard of that. (As time moves on, there will be other such cases. Look for them and adapt them).

Be prepared by reading the following links. Quote ESPN [Hannah Storm](#): "I spent this week answering seemingly impossible questions about the league's biggest stars. 'Mom, why did he do that? Why isn't he in jail? Why didn't he get fired?'"

Then read what Russell Moore of the Southern Baptist Convention [said about spousal abuse](#):

Quote Rev Moore: "We must teach from our pulpits, our Sunday school classes, and our Vacation Bible Schools that women are to be cherished, honored, and protected by men. This means we teach men to reject American playboy consumerism in light of a Judgment Seat at which they will give account for their care for their families. It means we explicitly tell the women in our congregations, "A man who hits you has surrendered his headship, and that is the business both of the civil state in enacting public justice and of this church in enacting church discipline."

**Ask:** Why does a man have automatic headship over his wife when he says "I Do?" And if he has automatic headship, then how on earth can he surrender it? He can't. If male headship is something that God gave him, then he cannot give it up.

There is NO scripture that says that husbands will give account for their care of their families at the judgment seat.

So we see pastors making up new laws that are nowhere in the Bible. There is nothing that says a man can surrender his headship if he hits his wife. Nothing.

In fact, a commandment for male headship over a wife is not in the Bible. It is contrary to everything that Jesus said and did, and it even contradicts what the Apostle Paul said.

I encourage you to read the book *The End of Always* by Randi Davenport (2014). *The End of Always* is a true story based on records of an abusive marriage in 1907. Churches

have not changed since then as we see from Moore's statement, where he even talks about church discipline. The church has no discipline for abusive males, except praying for them. There is nothing in Rev Moore's denominational church by-laws that gives churches ANY authority over men, other than church staff.

Spend some time reading about wife abuse. Read [Why I married my abuser](#) .

**ASK THE QUESTION: "WHAT DO WE TELL OUR DAUGHTERS?"**

# Conclusion

## What equality for Christian women will look like

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People have asked me “what does women’s equality look like for you?” Since churches and denominations have their own set of restrictions against women in ministry, each person’s picture would look different.

We began this 5 Week Plan with the story of Jacob and Esau. We will close by showing how Esau, who had given up his birthright for a bowl of porridge, desired to be family again with his twin brother Jacob. Jacob, having stolen something precious that did not belong to him, seeks reconciliation and forgiveness.

Jacob, through deception and opportunity, stole the birthright of his twin brother Esau. Esau was guilty of dismissing the importance of his birthright. This analogy has Jacob representing men who pushed women aside even though men and women were both firstborn in the New Creation, and set to inherit the goods and possessions of the Father. Esau represents women who now realize that they gave up their most valuable inheritance.

Esau, who had allowed his birthright to be stolen, met his brother with his own set of gifts and forgiveness. Women, all of whom have had their newbirth right stolen, can do the same.

- Beginning the journey
- Gather your gifts
- Bring along your army of supporters
- Go with forgiveness
- Offer reconciliation
- Reclaim equality as sons and daughters in the family of God

*To find out what equality will look like, we see how Jesus gave equality to women.*

*The Jewish woman, Mary of Bethany, who Jesus permitted to sit at his feet right beside the men, and learn at a time when learning scripture was forbidden to women.*

*The Gentile woman to whom Jesus revealed that he was not sent only to Israel, but to all people, which included her.*

*The Samaritan woman to whom Jesus revealed that he was the Messiah, who the Samaritans were also expecting, since they claimed theirs was the true religion of the ancient Israelites.*

*(Dethroning Male Headship, Shirley Taylor)*

**ESAU GATHERED HIS GIFTS, AND HIS ARMY OF 400 MEN AND WENT TO MEET HIS BROTHER.**

Esau said, “What’s the meaning of this entire group of animals that I met?”

Jacob said, “To ask for my master’s kindness.”

Esau said, “I already have plenty, my brother. Keep what’s yours.”

Jacob said, “No, please, do me the kindness of accepting my gift. Seeing your face is like seeing God’s face, since you’ve accepted me so warmly this present that I’ve brought because God has been generous to me, and I have everything I need.” So Jacob persuaded him, and he took it.

Esau said, “Let’s break camp and set out, and I’ll go with you.”

Genesis 33:8-12 Common English Bible (CEB)

**We have no malice and we are willing to meet our brothers half-way. We, too, have gifts to bring. With your family and my family together again, we will be able to do many things for the Lord. Will you start the journey?**

# Challenge

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This study ends with the story that became the introduction to my book *Women Equal – No Buts: Powered by the same Source*.

The story begins this way:

What began in Jerusalem has found its way to you. It was in Jerusalem 2006 that I made a stand for my own equality. Don and I were on vacation in Israel and equality was the farthest thing from my mind. But later I realized that what happened there was the beginning of this journey that has led to this book.

Ariel Sharon lay in a coma in a room near where my husband Don and I stood at the Hadassah Ein Keremin Hospital in Jerusalem. We were standing at the same spot that Shepherd Smith of Fox News had stood just a few days before while he sent back a news report of the Prime Minister's condition. But we were not there to see Ariel Sharon. We were there to see the synagogue where the famous artist Marc Chagall had created the 12 stained glass windows of the 12 Tribes of Israel.

As we prepared to enter the synagogue, Don was told to put a small hat on his head so his head would be covered before he entered the synagogue. He picked up a homemade hat made of black construction paper that had been stapled together to form a hat. This gave compliance to the head covering rule. A young man of 14 or so entered the synagogue briefly and before he stepped in, his arm went up and the fingers on his hand spread out over his head so his head would be covered.

Don sat on one side of the synagogue while I sat on the other side. Our tour group consisted of the female guide, Don, another man, and me.

One day we went to see the tomb of King David. It was in a small room, separated down the middle by a curtain. Men go through the main entrance, so my husband Don entered on one side and I entered on the opposite side which was the woman's entrance. There was a woman under the table covering lying prostrate on the floor praying. I could see her feet moving under the table covering.

The Wailing Wall is a place of prayer, and it is a must see for tourists when they are in Jerusalem. There is a courtyard where people mill around and down at the end is the Wall. We could see many men lined up against the wall praying, rocking back and forth as they often do. Many were Orthodox Jews dressed in traditional black clothes and black hats. There was a section screened off and I was told that it was the women's section and that I had to go over there to a separate entrance if I wanted to stand by the Wall and pray. It was on a slight decline and I could see chairs up against the screen barricade. Those chairs were placed there so the women could climb up on them to see.

“No!”

Thus began my protest. I stood in the courtyard— proud. All alone. I was a Christian woman and this is the 21<sup>st</sup> century and I will not be treated as if I am a Jewish woman. I have been saved by grace and given the freedom through Christ that He gave all his children, male and female.

Will you join me in standing – alone if necessary – in protest against the separation of men and women? Stand with me against assigned roles that men want to give women, stand with me against the separate entrances where women are allowed to go only so far, and where women do not have the full relationship with God that many men feel is their ‘birthright?’

Will you speak up with me and claim your newbirth right?

*So then, if anyone is in Christ, that person is part of the new creation. The old things have gone away, and look, new things have arrived!*

*2 Corinthians 5:17*

*Common English Bible (CEB)*



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bWe Baptist Women for Equality  
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<sup>15</sup>You didn't receive a spirit of slavery to lead you back again into fear, but you received a Spirit that shows you are adopted as his children.

With this Spirit, we cry, "Abba, Father."

Romans 8:15 Common English Bible (CEB)

Bible Study for Gender Equality (2015)

*Reclaiming Equality: 5-week plan to reclaim our newbirth right*

Shirley Taylor

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