

AN OPEN LETTER TO EGALITARIANS (revised, 2003):
Six questions that have never been answered,
with a consideration of Linda Belleville's 2001 response

Background: In the March, 1998, issue of *CBMW NEWS* (the precursor to *Journal for Biblical Manhood and Womanhood*), I published a short article called "An Open Letter to Egalitarians: Six questions that have never been answered." Then in 2001, Linda Belleville replied to these six questions in her chapter in *Two Views on Women in Ministry*.¹

In this article, I first reprint each section of my original article as it was originally published in 1988, then I give Belleville's response to the question I posed in that section, followed by my evaluation of her response. At the end, I conclude that my six questions remain unanswered.

ORIGINAL ARTICLE (March, 1988):

Dear egalitarian friends,

We know that many of you within the evangelical world hold your views because you have been convinced that egalitarianism is what the Bible teaches. You tell us that our differences on male and female roles are just differences in interpretation, and that Bible-believing Christians can honestly and fairly interpret the Bible to support complete equality in most or all roles for men and women in the family and the church. You say that you are sincere in adopting your views not because of modern cultural pressures but because you think that the Bible itself supports your position. In response to this, we want to say that we appreciate your sincerity in these matters and we believe that you are telling us the truth about your motives.

There are, nevertheless, certain questions of fact that come up frequently in your writings. We focus on these specific questions in this letter because they do not involve detailed arguments about interpretation, but involve only matters of factual data. We are simply asking to see the evidence that has convinced you about certain key interpretations of Scripture passages. If you can point out this evidence to us, then we will be able to understand more fully how you have come to your understanding of key passages. But if you cannot point out this evidence, and if no one among you can point out this evidence, then we respectfully ask that you reconsider your interpretations of these passages.

Here are our questions:

1. ***kephale***: Where the Bible says that the husband is the "head" (*kephale*) of the wife as Christ is the "head" (*kephale*) of the church (Eph. 5:23), and that the head of the woman is the man (1 Cor. 11:3), you tell us that "head" here means "source" and *not* "person in authority over (someone)." In fact, as far as we can tell, your interpretation depends on the claim that *kephale* means "source without the idea of authority."

¹Linda Belleville, "Women in Ministry," in *Two Views on Women in Ministry*, edited by James R. Beck and Craig L. Blomberg (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2001), 77-148.

But we have never been able to find any text in ancient Greek literature that gives support to your interpretation. Wherever one person is said to be the “head” of another person (or persons), the person who is called the “head” is always the one in authority (such as the general of an army, the Roman emperor, Christ, the heads of the tribes of Israel, David as head of the nations, etc.) Specifically, we cannot find any text where person A is called the “head” of person or persons B, *and is not in a position of authority over that person or persons*. So we find no evidence for your claim that “head” can mean “source without authority.”

Does any such evidence exist? In this and the following questions, we would be happy to look at any Greek text that you could show us from the 8th century BC to the 4th century AD (a span of 12 centuries). In all of that literature, our question of fact is this:

Will you please show us one example in all of ancient Greek where this word for “head” (*kephale*) is used to say that person A is the “head” of person or persons B, and means what you claim, namely, “non-authoritative source”?

If you can show us one example, we would be happy to consider your interpretation further. But if we cannot, then we suggest that you have no factual basis for your interpretation of these key verses, and we respectfully ask that you stop writing and speaking as if such factual basis existed. We would also respectfully ask that you also reconsider your understanding of these verses.

BELLEVILLE'S RESPONSE (2001):

Belleville gives five texts in an attempt to answer my question: four passages in the New Testament (Eph. 4:16; Eph. 5:22-23; Col. 1:18; Col. 2:19), and one from a Jewish work, *Life of Adam and Eve* 19.²

It is surprising to see Belleville using four New Testament verses that refer to Christ as responses to a request for examples of *kephale* meaning "non-authoritative source." Does she believe that Christ has no authority over his church? This is unlikely. But then why does she produce them as a response to this question? Far from answering the question, verses about Christ's role as *head* of the church simply support my earlier argument that wherever person A is called "head" of person (or persons) B, person A is in a position of authority over B. Belleville's first four verses here just prove my point.³ To take a similar example from English, it makes sense to say that a school principal is the "head" of the school, since he or she has authority over the school. The principal also provides students with many things, such as leadership, discipline and protection, so we could say that the principal is the "source" of leadership, discipline, and protection for the

²Belleville, 138.

³Belleville notes that Christ "feeds and cares for" the church (Eph. 5:29), which is surely true. In every relationship of authority between persons, the person in authority gives or provides some benefit to the person or group under authority (such as leadership, care, protection, example, teaching, love, nourishment, etc., depending on the nature of the relationship). But that does not mean that person A is the *source* of person B! Nor does it mean that the term "head" *means* "source" when applied to that relationship.

students. But we cannot say that the principal is the "source" of the students! They do not spring out of the principal. The principal is the "head" of the school only in the sense of being the "person in authority over" the school.

The quotation from *Life of Adam and Eve* 19⁴ does not prove Belleville's point either, because it does not give an example where "head (*kephale*) is used to say that person A is the 'head' of person or persons B, and means ... 'non-authoritative source'." This text does not even use *kephale* to refer to a person, but rather says that "lust" is the "beginning (*kephale*) of every sin."⁵

This is one of about 70 examples in ancient literature where *kephale* takes the well-established sense of "beginning, first in a series." But to be the first or beginning is not the same as being the source of something – for example, my oldest son is the first in a series of three sons, but he is not the source of my other sons. To take another example, in the English alphabet the letter "a" is the beginning of the alphabet, but the letter "a" is not the "source" of the other letters in the alphabet. It is just the first in a series. So with *Life of Adam and Eve* 19, the text affirms that coveting or desiring to sin is the *beginning* of every sin (for example, Eve first coveted, then she took the fruit, then she gave some to Adam, then she hid from God, then she denied responsibility), but it does not mean that coveting is the *source* of other sins. (Incidentally, we might note that in Old Testament thought, if anything can be said to be the source of sins, it would be the human heart: see Gen. 6:5; 8:21; Ex. 4:21; Ps. 51:10; 139:23; 140:2; 141:4; Prov. 4:23; 6:18; 26:24-25; Jer. 17:9; contrast Deut. 6:5-6; 8:2; Ps. 19:14; 24:4; in the New Testament, compare Mark 7:21-23).

Belleville does not inform readers that the translation "source" here is her own, and that neither of the two standard English translations of this text renders *kephale* as "source" in this text.⁶ In any case, it is not parallel to Ephesians 5:23, because it does not refer to a relationship between persons.

My question therefore remains unanswered:

Where is an example of *kephale* where person A is the *kephale* of person B and is not in authority over person B?

But are there examples where the expression "Person A is the *kephale* of Person B" means that

⁴The *Life of Adam and Eve* is a pseudepigraphical Jewish work that can be dated to approximately 20 B.C. - 70 A.D. The Greek text is found in C. von Tischendorf, *Apocalypses Apocryphae* (Leipzig: Mendelssohn, 1866), p. 11, lines 1-2; English translations are found in R. H. Charles, *The Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha of the Old Testament* (2 vols.; Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1913), vol. 2, p. 146, and James H. Charlesworth, editor, *The Old Testament Pseudepigrapha* (2 vols.; London: Darton, Longman & Todd, 1985), vol. 2, p. 279. Belleville does not tell the reader that neither of these published English translations supports the translation "source" that she gives in her article.

⁵This is the translation of R. H. Charles, p. 146.

⁶Charles renders it "beginning" and Charlesworth translates it, "For coveteousness is the *origin* of every sin" (p. 279), which he apparently also intends in the sense, "beginning, first in a series of other sins," because in a footnote he explains, "Greek *kephale* corresponds to the Heb. *rosh*, 'head' or 'first'... This text is unusual, because both Charles and Charlesworth point out that the text is probably based on a pun in Hebrew where the words for "head" and "poison" have the same spelling, and the text is referring to poison that the serpent put on the forbidden fruit.

"Person A is an authority over Person B"? Yes, there are over fifty examples, such as the following:

1. David as King of Israel is called the "head" of the people he conquered (2 Sam. 22:44; (LXX 2 Kings 22:44), "You shall keep me as the *head* of the Gentiles; a people which I knew not served me"; similarly, Psalm 18(LXX 17):43)
2. The leaders of the tribes of Israel are called "heads" of the tribes (1 Kings (LXX 3 Kings) 8:1 (Alexandrinus text), "Then Solomon assembled the elders of Israel and all the *heads* of the tribes" (similar statements in Aquila, Deut. 5:23; 29:9(10); 3 Kings (LXX 1 Kings) 8:1)
3. Jephthah becomes the "head" of the people of Gilead (Judges 11:11, "the people made him *head* and leader over them"; also stated in 10:18; 11:8, 9)
4. Pekah the son of Remaliah is the head of Samaria (Isaiah 7:9,"the *head* of Samaria is the son of Remaliah")
5. The father is the head of the family (Hermas, *Similitudes* 7.3, The man is called "the *head* of the house").
6. The husband is the "head" of the wife (Eph. 5:23, "the husband is *head* of the wife as Christ is *head* of the church"; compare similar statements found several times in Chrysostom as quoted above)
7. Christ is the "head" of the church (Col. 1:18, "He is the *head* of the body, the church"; also in Eph. 5:23)
8. Christ is the "head" of all things (Eph. 1:22, "He has put all things under his feet and has made him the *head* over all things for the church")
9. God the Father is the "head" of Christ (1 Cor. 11:3, "the *head* of Christ is God")

Many similar examples could be added to this list. Then there are related statements using not metaphors but closely related similes, such as

10. The general of an army is said to be "like the head": Plutarch, *Pelopidas* 2.1.3: In an army, "the light-armed troops are like the hands, the cavalry like the feet, the line of men-at-arms itself like chest and breastplate, and the general is like the *head*."
11. The Roman Emperor is called the "head" of the people in Plutarch, *Galba* 4.3, "Vindix. . . wrote to Galba inviting him to assume the imperial power, and thus to serve what was a vigorous body in need of a *head*" (compare a related statement in Plutarch, *Cicero* 14.4).
12. The King of Egypt is called "head" of the nation in Philo, *Moses* 2.30, "As the *head* is the ruling place in the living body, so Ptolemy became among kings."

In addition, my 2001 article showed several citations from the Greek church father Chrysostom, where (13) God is the “head” of Christ; (14) Christ is the “head” of the church; (15) the husband is the “head” of the wife; (16) Christ is the “head” of all things; (17) church leaders are the “head” of the church; and (18) a woman is the “head” of her maidservant. In all six of these cases, Chrysostom uses language of rulership and authority to explain the role of the “head,” and uses language of submission and obedience to describe the role of the “body.” (Adding all of these examples together, the count is over fifty, because some kinds of statements are found in several places.)⁷ The 1990 article has references to several other studies of this word, and significant studies published after 1990 are mentioned near the end of the 2002 article.

In addition, there are several statements from various authors indicating a common understanding that the physical head functioned as the “ruling” part of the body: (1) Plato says that the head “reigns over all the parts within us” (*Timaeus* 44.D). (2) Philo says, “the *head* is the ruling place in the living body” (*Moses* 2:30), and “the mind is *head* and ruler of the sense-faculty in us” (*Moses* 2.82), and “‘*Head*’ we interpret allegorically to mean the ruling part of the soul” (*On Dreams* 2.207), and “Nature conferred the sovereignty of the body on the *head*.” (*The Special Laws* 184). (3) Plutarch says, “We affectionately call a person ‘soul’ or ‘*head*’ from his ruling parts” (*Table Talk* 7.7 (692.e.1)).”

What is the state of the evidence, then? While over fifty examples from ancient literature have shown that “A is the *head* (*kephale*) of B” means “A is the person in authority over B,” no examples of such a statement have ever been found where person A is the *not* in a position of authority over person B. The egalitarian desire to understand “the husband is the head of the wife” in such a way that “head” means “source *without authority over the other person*” remains supported by exactly zero facts from the ancient world. To take a sports analogy, those who continue to claim that “head” (*kephale*) can mean “source” (and not “authority”) are in a similar position to those who have lost a football game 50-0 and continue to proclaim, “We won.” One begins to wonder why they continue to claim what they do.

My first question therefore remains unanswered. Where are the facts to support the egalitarian claim?

ORIGINAL ARTICLE (March, 1998):

2. *hypotasso*: Where the Bible says that wives are to “be subject to” to their husbands (Col. 3:18; Titus 2:5; 1 Peter 3:1, 5; and implied in Eph. 5:22, 24), you tell us that the verb “be subject to”

⁷ For more discussion of these passages, and for additional examples like these, see the three previous articles that I published about the meaning of *kephale* in 1985, 1990, and 2001: (1) Wayne Grudem, “Does *kephale* (‘Head’) Mean ‘Source’ or ‘Authority Over’ in Greek Literature? A Survey of 2,336 Examples” (*Trinity Journal* 6 NS [1985] 38-59), and then, answering objections and arguing this in more detail, (2) “The Meaning of *kephale* : A Response to Recent Studies” (*Trinity Journal* 11 NS [1990] 3-72; reprinted as an appendix to *Recovering Biblical Manhood and Womanhood*, edited by John Piper and Wayne Grudem (Wheaton: Crossway, 1991) 425-468.) See most recently, (3) Wayne Grudem, “The Meaning of *kephale* , (‘head’): An Analysis of New Evidence, Real and Alleged,” in *Biblical Foundations for Manhood and Womanhood* (edited by Wayne Grudem), Wheaton: Crossway, 2002. This third article is the same as the one I published in *JETS* 44/1 (Mar., 2001), 25-65, except the 2002 version includes a response to Anthony Thiselton’s commentary on 1 Corinthians (see pp. 194-199).

(*hypotasso*, passive) is a requirement for both husbands and wives -- that just as wives are to be subject to their husbands, so husbands are to be subject to their wives, and that there is no unique authority that belongs to the husband. Rather, the biblical ideal is “mutual submission” according to Eph. 5:21, “be subject to one another,” and therefore there is no idea of one-directional submission to the husband’s authority in these other verses (Col. 3:18; Titus 2:5; 1 Peter 3:1, 5; and Eph. 5:22, 24).

But we doubt that this is a correct interpretation of Ephesians 5:21, because we have never been able to find any text in ancient Greek literature where *hypotasso* (passive) refers to a person or persons being “subject to” another person, and where the idea of *submission to that person’s authority* is absent. In every example we can find, when person A is said to “be subject to” person B, person B has a unique authority which person A does not have. In other words, *hypotasso* always implies a one-directional submission to someone in authority. So our question is this:

Will you please show us one example in all of ancient Greek where this word for “be subject to” (*hypotasso*, passive) is used to refer to one person in relation to another and does not include the idea of one-directional submission to the other person’s authority?

If you can show us one example, we would be happy to consider your interpretation further. But if we cannot, then we suggest that you have no factual basis for your interpretation of these key verses, and we respectfully ask that you stop writing and speaking as if you did, and that you also reconsider your understanding of these verses.

BELLEVILLE'S RESPONSE (2001):

Belleville's first response is to not to produce any other examples, but to claim that this verse is unique. She says,

Christianity is by nature countercultural. Just because mutual submission was not the Greco-Roman way (and so not found in extrabiblical first-century texts) does not mean it was not the Christian way (and consequently found in biblical texts).⁸

She adds,

Every Greek lexicon I've consulted states that Ephesians 5:21 has no secular parallel.⁹

But this is just to confuse the issue. The question is not whether the *teaching* of the Bible is found in secular literature. Of course the Bible teaches hundreds of things that differ with secular culture. The question is whether the *meaning of a specific word used to convey that teaching* is found in *any* literature, whether secular or Jewish or Christian.

My argument was that we complementarians understand Paul to be using *hypotasso* in an

⁸Belleville, p. 131.

⁹Ibid.

ordinary, well-attested sense, "be subject to an authority," and in using this word Paul tells Christians to subject themselves to rightful authorities, which is itself a powerful teaching. But egalitarians have to claim a meaning for *hypotasso* that is found nowhere else, a meaning that empties the word of any idea of submission to an authority. So I wrote,

we have never been able to find any text in ancient Greek literature where *hypotasso* (passive) refers to a person or persons being "subject to" another person, and where the idea of *submission to that person's authority* is absent.

My argument was that *hypotasso* does not just mean "to be considerate and thoughtful of someone else," "to care for someone else," or "to put someone else's interests first" (meanings that are consistent with the egalitarian interpretation of "mutual submission"). It always means to be *subject to someone else's authority*, in all Greek literature, Christian and non-Christian.

Though there are abundant examples of this sense in secular Greek literature, we don't have to seek examples from non-Christian literature to demonstrate this sense, because Paul himself uses the same word to say that Christians should be "subject" to civil government (Rom. 13:1, 5), and that all things are "in subjection" to Christ (1 Cor. 15:27), and that Christ will eternally be subject to God the Father (1 Cor. 15:28), and that servants are to be "submissive" to their masters (Titus 2:9). Other New Testament writers say that Jesus was "submissive" to his parents (Luke 2:51), that the demons were "subject" to the disciples (Luke 10:17), and that we are to "submit" ourselves to God (Jas. 4:7). The meaning "be subject to an authority" is common, it is well attested, and it can be supported by dozens of other examples. This is the ordinary sense of the word, and Paul's readers would have understood the word in that sense.

In fact, the New Testament writers can use this ordinary Greek word to teach *ideas* that are certainly not found in secular Greek literature, such as the idea that all things in the universe are subject to Jesus Christ, and that demons are subject to Jesus' disciples, and that Christ is subject to God the Father. The New Testament authors generally use *ordinary Greek words* and depend on the ordinary meanings of those Greek words to teach the unusual, world-changing content of the New Testament. This is not surprising, for they were communicating to ordinary Greek-speaking people in language they could understand.

But if the New Testament writers, including Paul, use *hypotasso* regularly to mean "be subject to an authority," then on what basis can Belleville claim that the word takes a *different* sense in Ephesians 5:21? On what basis can she claim that the word here means *something it has never meant anywhere else*? And how would Paul's readers ever have known that he wanted them to understand *hypotasso* in Ephesians 5:21 in a new sense, a sense it had never taken before? How could Paul's readers have known that this was the only time in all of ancient Greek that *hypotasso* was used to speak of one person being "subject" to another and it did not mean to be subject to the authority of that other person?

Now if there were other cases where *hypotasso* could be shown to mean things like "be considerate, be kind, be thoughtful toward (someone)," *where there was no idea of being subject to that person's authority*, then Belleville would be free to argue that *hypotasso* has two known senses, (1) be subject to someone's authority, and (2) be considerate, kind, thoughtful to someone

else. She could then argue for sense (2) from the context of Ephesians 5:21. But has she given any examples from inside or outside the Bible to establish this other sense?

She cites two verses, saying that "Even a cursory look at Paul's writings shows that mutual submission is basic to his understanding of how believers are to relate to one another"¹⁰:

Philippians 2:4 Let each of you look not only to his own interests, but also to the interests of others.

Ephesians 5:21 submitting to one another out of reverence for Christ.

But Philippians 2:4 does not contain the word *hypotasso*, so it cannot provide the needed evidence for the meaning of this word. This means that Belleville's sole proof for this unprecedented, unique meaning of *hypotasso* is Ephesians 5:21.

At this point her argument has taken the following form:

Question: What example can you give from any other passage to show that it is possible that *hypotasso* could take the unprecedented meaning you propose in Ephesians 5:21?

Answer: My example is Ephesians 5:21.

It seems evident that this is tantamount to an admission that the meaning she claims for *hypotasso* in Ephesians 5:21 is not found anywhere else in Greek literature.

Then why should we accept her interpretation? The reason to ask for other examples is that other examples give us a sense of the *range of meaning* that a word could take in the ancient world. Then from that known range of meaning we look at the context to decide what sense fits best. But if there are no other examples to prove a new sense for a word, we are not free to make up a new meaning on the spot, one that supports the particular point we are anxious to establish.

Now someone may argue that Paul's expression "to one another" is a contextual factor in Ephesians 5:21 that is so strong that it *requires* this idea of "mutual submission," and therefore that the idea of one-directional submission to an authority that is present in every other similar instance of this verb must not be present here. The context, then, may be said to make this a unique case.

But before we rush to this conclusion, a basic principle of lexicography provides us with a helpful warning, one emphasized by John Chadwick in reflecting on his many years of work on the editorial team for the Liddell-Scott *Lexicon*:

A constant problem to guard against is the proliferation of meanings . . . It is often tempting to create a new sense to accommodate a difficult example, but we must always ask first, if there is any other way of taking the word which would allow us to assign the example to an already established sense . . . As I have remarked in several of my notes,

¹⁰Belleville, p. 132.

there may be no reason why a proposed sense should not exist, but is there any reason why it must exist?¹¹

So the question then becomes, does "one another" provide such a compelling contextual factor that we must adopt a new meaning for *hypotasso* in order for the sentence to make sense? Belleville argues this way, saying that the term translated "one another" (Greek *allelous*; lexical form *allelon*)¹² "simply cannot bear any other lexical meaning but a reciprocal one," and therefore the verse must teach some kind of "mutual submission."¹³

However, in making this argument, Belleville fails to understand the actual issue under dispute. Everyone agrees that *allelon* has a "reciprocal" meaning. The question is what specific kind of "reciprocal" meaning the term implies. Of course when a writer says that a group of people "love one another" or "care for one another" or, conversely, that a group of people "were killing one another" or that they "were trampling on one another," the meaning is always *in some sense reciprocal*, because in every case *some in the group* do something to *others in the group*. In that sense the meaning of "one another" is reciprocal - the group acts upon itself, in contrast to saying that the group "loves other people," or that the group "was killing other people."

What Belleville fails to distinguish, however, is that sometimes *everybody* in the group does something to *everybody else* (loving one another, for example), and sometimes *some people* in the group do the action to others in the group (killing one another, when some are killing and others are being killed). In English we use "one another" for both senses, and we say they were "loving one another" or they were "killing one another." In Greek likewise, the term *allelon* can be used in both cases. The *kind of activity* involved determines the exact sense of reciprocal *allelon* that is intended.

My argument for Ephesians 5:21 is that "being subject" to someone in the sense intended by Greek *hypotasso* is a one-directional activity. In that sense it is like the action of "killing one another" – in the nature of the action of killing, one person kills and the other is killed. The dead person does not rise from the dead after a few minutes and kill the other person, nor could every single person kill every single other person. Killing one another rather has the sense "some to others," in that some were killing others. Trampling on one another is a similar example: some trample on others, so the group can be said to be "trampling on one another." Waiting for one another when some people are late is the same idea: some wait, and some are waited for.

Belleville says she is unable to understand this distinction in meaning, and therefore she rejects it as a possibility. She says,

¹¹John Chadwick, *Lexicographica Graeca: Contributions to the Lexicography of Ancient Greek* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1996), 23-24.

¹²The pronoun takes no singular (since it is always plural) and no nominative form (since it can never function as the subject of a sentence). In my earlier article I used the accusative plural *allelous* as the lexical form, from a habit learned from teaching Greek from J. W. Wenham's *The Elements of New Testament Greek* (Cambridge: CUP, 1965), p. 205. However, the genitive plural *allelon* is used in the standard lexicons, and I have changed to it throughout the article as reproduced here.

¹³Belleville, p. 132.

Wayne Grudem's claim that *allelous* ... in Ephesians 5:21 takes the "common" meaning "some to others" ... boggles the lexical imagination.... And how exactly Galatians 6:2 ("Carry *each other's* burdens"), 1 Corinthians 11:33 ("When you come together to eat, wait for *each other*"), and Revelation 6:4 ("To make the people [on earth] slay *each other*") support such a "common meaning" is likewise incomprehensible.¹⁴

But is it really that difficult to understand that Paul in Galatians 6:2 did not want every single person in the churches of Galatia to carry every other person's burden (each person would be carrying hundreds of burdens!), but that he wanted *some* to help *others* as they had need? Is it really "incomprehensible" that in 1 Corinthians 11:33, Paul wanted *some* (who were on time) to wait for *others* (who were late), not that those who were late should wait for those who were on time? And is Belleville really unable to understand that in Revelation 6:4 some were killing and some were being killed (rather than the impossible idea that every single person was killing every single other person)? These are straightforward understandings of these passages. Belleville's only objection is to say that she finds them "incomprehensible."

Now with respect to Ephesians 5:21, our conclusion is (1) that *allelon* often takes the sense of "some to others" within a group, when the activity described is by nature a one-directional activity, and (2) that *hypotasso* always indicates a one-directional submission to an authority. Therefore we do not need to invent a new, unprecedented meaning for *hypotasso* in Ephesians 5:21. It takes a common, ordinary meaning, "be subject to an authority," and *allelon* takes a common, ordinary meaning, "some (in the group) to others (in the group)."

To return to the original question, it is significant that Belleville has brought forth no counterexamples for this sense of *hypotasso* as one-directional submission to an authority.

The second question remains unanswered. Where are the facts to support the egalitarian claim?

ORIGINAL ARTICLE (March, 1988):

3. "**or**" (*Greek e*): In 1 Cor. 14:36, some of you argue that the Greek word *e* ("or") shows that the preceding verses are a quotation from the Corinthian church which Paul denies. Therefore you say that Paul is not really telling the Corinthian church,
the women should keep silence in the churches. For they are not permitted to speak, but should be subordinate, as even the law says. If there is anything they desire to know, let them ask their husbands at home. For it is shameful for a woman to speak in church (1 Cor. 14:34-35).

Paul is not telling the Corinthians this, you say, because the next verse says, "*Or* did the word of God come originally from you? Or was it you only that it reached?" (vs. 36). Some of you claim that the first word translated "or" might be paraphrased as, "Are you crazy?" This proves, you claim, that Corinthians have been saying, "the women should keep silence in the churches...(etc.)," and in verses 34-35 Paul is just quoting the Corinthians. You tell us that Paul's response is to *deny* what they have been saying, and to say, "What! Are you crazy?" This, you tell us, is the force of the tiny Greek word *e*, which is usually translated "or." You tell us that *e*,

¹⁴Belleville, p. 132, n. 102.

“or,” is used in Greek to *deny* what went before it.

Our problem is that when we look at other examples of *e* used in constructions like 1 Corinthians 14:36, where the *following* material is clearly false (that is, Paul and the Corinthians know that the word of God did not come from them), then “or” functions to show that the *preceding* material has to be true. This would mean that verses 34-35 are affirmed by Paul.

To put it another way, Paul is arguing:

You must do A.
Or: Is B true?
(No.)
Then you must do A.

This is just the opposite of what you claim. You claim that Paul uses “or” to deny A (verses 34-35). In fact, we can find no parallel examples where it is used to deny *both* what precedes *and* what follows. This is also what all the Greek lexicons tell us as well. So our question is this:

Will you please show us one example in all of ancient Greek where this word for “or” (e) is used to introduce what the readers know to be false, so the author can *deny* both what goes before and what follows?

If you can show us one example, we would be happy to consider your interpretation further. But if we cannot, then we suggest that you have no factual basis for your interpretation of this key verse, and we respectfully ask that you stop writing and speaking as if you did, and that you also reconsider your understanding of these verses.

BELLEVILLE'S RESPONSE (2001):

Belleville apparently agrees with my own position on this egalitarian claim, for she says,

The Council's third challenge is rather puzzling. I know of very few evangelicals who argue that the Greek particle *e* in 1 Corinthians 14:36 is Paul's signal that he is responding to the Corinthian position ("Let the women in the churches be silent").¹⁵

She then says that the standard Greek lexicon lists only two examples where this particle shows disapproval of what precedes (a standard egalitarian claim), and both of those are different from 1 Corinthians 14:36 in that they have the particle twice, *e e*.¹⁶

While I am grateful that Belleville agrees with my objection to some egalitarian claims about this passage (the claim that 1 Corinthians 14:33-35 is a Corinthian saying that Paul denies), it is unclear why she thinks this challenge to be "puzzling." After all, this position on Greek *e* is

¹⁵Belleville, p. 133.

¹⁶Ibid.

advocated by Gilbert Bilezikian in his well-known book, *Beyond Sex Roles*.¹⁷ Bilezikian also claims support for this view from several other writers, including Katherine Bushnell, J. Sidlow Baxter, Joyce Harper, and Walter Kaiser.¹⁸ The view has been widely influential.

Nevertheless, I am glad to see that Belleville apparently agrees with my view, and differs with the unusual positions of Gilbert Bilezikian and Walter Kaiser on this verse. I am also glad that the editors of *Two Views on Women in Ministry*, James Beck and Craig Blomberg, also disavow this Bilezikian/ Baxter/ Kaiser view. They classify "the view that 1 Corinthians 14:33-38 [sic] is in any way a Corinthian slogan that Paul then refutes" as one of "the so-called hermeneutical oddities that some hierarchicalist authors have identified in the evangelical egalitarian literature."¹⁹

If Belleville's essay and the comments of the editors in this recent book are any indication, it seems that many of the more responsible egalitarian authors have no interest in answering this third question or in supporting the "hermeneutical oddity" that it challenges.

The third question, therefore, remains unanswered. Where are the facts to support this egalitarian claim that 1 Corinthians 14:33-35 are a Corinthian saying that Paul refutes?

ORIGINAL ARTICLE (March, 1988):

4. *authenteo*: In 1 Tim. 2:12, Paul writes, "I permit no woman to teach or to have authority over men." Many of you claim that the word translated "have authority" (*authenteo*) means "misuse authority" or "domineer" (or even "instigate violence") in this sentence, so that Paul is not prohibiting women from having authority over men, but he is prohibiting women from *misusing authority* or *domineering* over men.

Our problem is this: we have never seen any clear example in ancient Greek literature where *authenteo* means "domineer" or "misuse authority." Whenever we have seen this verb occur, it takes a neutral sense, "have authority" or "exercise authority," with no negative connotation attaching to the word itself. We are aware that a related noun, *authentos*, has several different meanings, but Paul used a verb, not that related noun, and we are interested in the word that Paul actually used. So our question is this:

Will you please show us one clear example in all of ancient Greek where the verb *authenteo* means what you claim, namely, "misuse authority or domineer" (or even "instigate violence")?

If you can show us one example, we would be happy to consider your interpretation further. But if you cannot, then we suggest that you have no factual basis for your interpretation of this key verse, and we respectfully ask that you stop writing and speaking as if you did, and that you also

¹⁷Second edition (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1985), pp. 152-153.

¹⁸Bilezikian, pp. 284-285.

¹⁹James R. Beck and Craig L. Blomberg, editors, *Two Views on Women in Ministry* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2001), 159, n. 4.

reconsider your understanding of these verses.

BELLEVILLE'S RESPONSE (2001):

Belleville quotes four examples of the word *authenteo* to answer this question:

1. *Scholia Graeca* in Aeschylus, *Eumenides* 42a (first century B.C.): "The murderer, who had just committed an act of violence [*authenteo*]," where *authenteo* (perfect participle) means "to commit violence" or "to murder."
2. BGU 1208 (first century B.C.): "I had my way with him [*authenteo*] and he agreed to provide Calatyti the boatman with the full payment within the hour."
3. Philodemus, *Rhetorica* II Fragmenta Libri [V] fr IV line 14 (first century BC): "These orators ... even fight with powerful (*authenteo*) lords." (This is a hypothetical reconstruction of a fragmentary text.)
4. Ptolemy, *Tetrabiblos* III.13 [#157] (second century A.D.): "Therefore, if Saturn alone takes planetary control of the soul and dominates (*authenteo*) Mercury and the moon
...²⁰
...

But the first example should not be considered relevant for this discussion, since the comments on Aeschylus, *Eumenides* found in the *Scholia Graeca* are from a 10th century A.D. manuscript.²¹ Belleville gives the reader no indication of why she claims a date of "first century B.C." for this 10th century A.D. reference.

The other three texts provide no clear examples of the meaning "misuse authority." In the second, the speaker simply "exercised authority" over the person. Baldwin gives the translation, "I exercised authority over him."²² It would make little sense to say, "I misused authority over him and he agreed to pay the boatman." In the third (the fragmentary manuscript), the meaning, "authoritative lords" makes good sense, and it would be impossible to demonstrate the meaning "lords who misuse authority." Baldwin's gives the translation, "those in authority."²³ In the fourth example, Saturn rules or exercises authority over Mercury (the text is talking about the influence of the planets and no sense of "misuse authority" would be appropriate: Saturn does not "misuse its authority" over Mercury). Baldwin gives the translation, "Saturn ... dominates Mercury and the moon,"²⁴ which is an appropriate way to speak of the relative influence of planets, but once again we find no meaning like "misuses its authority."

²⁰Belleville, 134. I have shortened Belleville's renderings of these passages but these are the exact words she uses to translate them.

²¹The passage is quoted in full in Greek, with English translation, in H. Scott Baldwin in *Women in the Church: A Fresh Analysis of 1 Timothy 2:9-15*, edited by Andreas J. Köstenberger, Thomas R. Schreiner, and H. Scott Baldwin (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1995), p. 302. Baldwin notes that the editor of all extant ancient scholia on Aeschylus, O. L. Smith, says that the scholia apparently stem from a some earlier date, but no manuscript earlier than the 10th century A.D. exists (Baldwin, p. 302, n. 25). Of course, even if some of these marginal notes ("scholia") are from an earlier date, it is impossible to tell if some of them were added by the 10th century scribe who produced the manuscript we have. Baldwin concludes, "the 10th cent. A.D. is the earliest sure dating possible for this scholion."

²²Baldwin, p. 276, quoting an earlier article by George Knight.

²³Baldwin, p. 275, quoting the published English translation of H. H. Hubbell, "The Rhetorica of Philodemus," *Transactions of the Connecticut Academy of Arts and Sciences* 23 (1920), 306.

²⁴Baldwin, p. 275, quoting the Loeb Classical Library translation of F. E. Robbins.

Why did Belleville give these examples? None of them proves her point. She apparently misunderstood the matter in question. One egalitarian interpretation of 1 Timothy 2:12 claims that it means, "I permit no woman to teach or to *misuse authority* over men," so that Paul is not talking about the mere exercise of authority but its *improper* use, its *misuse*. So the question is, can *authenteo* mean, "misuse authority"?

When I referred to the meaning "misuse authority" in my first article, I also used the term, "domineer" to speak of such misuse. This was because the word "domineer" means, "To rule over or control arbitrarily or arrogantly; tyrannize."²⁵ But this English word "domineer" must be distinguished from the word "dominate," which has no connotation of misuse of authority, but just means, "To control, govern, or rule by superior authority or power."²⁶ Because "domineer" (a negative term) and "dominate" (a neutral term) sound so much alike in English, perhaps it is misleading to use "domineer" to indicate a misuse or abuse of authority. In any case, the essential point is that the egalitarian position requires the sense, "misuse authority."

Belleville writes,

The Council's challenge to produce extrabiblical texts where the Greek word *authenteo* bears the sense "to domineer" is easily met. In fact, all known extrabiblical instances of *authenteo* prior to the second century A.D. ... without exception have to do with power or domination ("to overpower," "to dominate").²⁷

Here she confuses "domineer" and "dominate." To produce texts showing that a person who exercises authority is the one who has more power is no great challenge! That is normally the case in human relationships. But that does not mean the person in question *misuses* authority, so Belleville's quotations prove nothing about the egalitarian view of 1 Timothy 2:12, which is that the term *means* "misuse authority."

It is puzzling why Belleville calls for more work on *authenteo* : She says, "Much more work needs to be done in analyzing the verb (and verbal forms) in primary sources that are contemporaneous with Paul."²⁸ She shows no awareness of the fact that Baldwin's work is exhaustive: he included *every* example of *authenteo* found in the TLG CD-ROM #D and in the Duke University's Greek Documentary CD-ROM #6, which includes documentary papyri, ostraca, and inscriptions. Baldwin says, "The material presented here is an attempt to provide an exhaustive list of the ancient uses of the verbal form known to scholars to date."²⁹ So it is unclear why Belleville calls for "more work" when *there are no other currently known examples of authenteo* than those quoted and translated in Baldwin's essay.

²⁵American Heritage Dictionary (1996 edition), 550.

²⁶Ibid.

²⁷Belleville, 133.

²⁸Belleville, 135, n. 108.

²⁹Baldwin, 72. Baldwin notes that he did not include over twenty citations from the church fathers where they were just quoting 1 Tim. 2:12, and ten uses of the word in the *Alexander Romance*, a manuscript from the late Byzantine period, which is too late to be of relevance for New Testament exegesis.

Of eighty-two examples, Baldwin found one example (in Chrysostom, around 390 A.D.) where he thinks the meaning "to domineer/ play the tyrant" is likely, but he says that is probably a hyperbolic use,³⁰ and thus it is not a typical example. And even that case is questionable, because the sense "exercise authority" is possible: just as Paul tells Philemon that he could "command" him but he prefers to "appeal" to him (Philemon 8-9), so Chrysostom could be telling husbands not to exercise their authority but to act in love: "Do not, therefore, because thy wife is subject to thee, exercise authority For this cause hath He subjected her to thee, that she may be loved the more."³¹ In Baldwin's other eighty-one instances, the sense "misuse authority" is not found, and the meanings "to rule, to reign sovereignly, to control, to dominate" are found many times.³²

Belleville also says that Baldwin's work contains "dozens of Greek texts and writings of the church fathers that either lack the verb *authentēo* or postdate Paul by hundreds of years."³³ As for the dates, Baldwin clearly dates every quotation, and recognizes that less weight should be given to those far removed in time from the New Testament, so there is nothing illegitimate in his exhaustive listing.

But why does Belleville say many of H. Scott Baldwin's examples "lack the verb *authentēo*"? Baldwin has given the Greek text for every example, and the word *authentēo* appears in every one of them (pp. 275 - 305). Is Belleville saying that Baldwin has inserted the word *authentēo* into those quotations? If so, that would be a most serious charge, but she provides no evidence to back up this serious allegation. Baldwin, by contrast, gives the full Greek text for every citation, and every one of them has the verb *authentēo* in one of its forms.³⁴ Belleville's claim at this point is not true.

Where does that leave us with regard to *authentēo*? Baldwin thought there might be one possible example out of eighty-two that he thought used *authentēo* in a hyperbolic sense to mean "domineer, play the tyrant," and even that example is not conclusive. The egalitarian assumption

³⁰Baldwin, 286, and comments on 75, with respect to Chrysostom, *Homilies on Colossians*, MPG 62:366.29; NPNF, Series 1, Vol. 13, 305.

³¹See the context in Chrysostom's Homily 10 on Colossians, NPNF 1:13, p. 304.

³²Baldwin, p. 73, gives a table of meanings, and the following pages summarize his findings with respect to each meaning.

³³Belleville, 135, n. 108.

³⁴It is hard to know what Belleville's accusation could mean, but perhaps she means that some of Baldwin's citations contain the *infinitive* form of *authentēo*, and she does not think those should count as legitimate examples in determining the meaning of a verb. That this may be her meaning is suggested by a statement on the next page, where she says, "But 1 Timothy 2:12 correlates *infinitives* (verbal nouns), not verbs" (p. 136). So she is apparently claiming on p. 135 that the infinitive forms of verbs should not be used by Baldwin in determining the meanings of verbs.

This is a rather astounding claim in light of hundreds of years of Greek lexicons, grammars, and concordances that all include infinitives along with finite verbal forms in defining meanings of words. In fact, Belleville's claim here implies that standard lexicons like BDAG and Liddell-Scott are wrong not in one or two specific entries, but with regard to every single verb they define, and with regard to the very basis of their methodology, since they regularly include examples of infinitive forms along with examples of other forms when they illustrate the meanings of Greek verbs. Moreover, 1 Tim. 2:12 itself has the infinitive form of *authentēo*! Therefore, it can hardly be wrong for Baldwin to compare other citations that contain the infinitive form.

that *authenteo* must have the sense "misuse authority" is surely not established.

The fourth question remains unanswered. Where are the facts to support the egalitarian claim?

ORIGINAL ARTICLE (March, 1988):

5. **“neither X nor Y”**: In 1 Tim. 2:12, where Paul says, “I do not permit a woman to teach or to have authority over a man,” the grammatical structure in Greek takes the form, “neither + [verb 1] + nor + [verb 2].”

Regarding this verse, many of you tell us that the phrase “to teach or to have authority” means “to teach in a domineering way,” or “to teach in a way that usurps authority.” You base your understanding on the idea (already mentioned above) that the verb *authenteo* has a negative sense such as “domineer” or “usurp authority.”

But we have a second problem with this: when we look at other examples of this Greek construction, in the form “neither + [verb 1] + nor + [verb 2],” only two patterns occur: (a) verb 1 and verb 2 are activities or concepts that are *both viewed positively*, such as “neither sow nor reap,” or “neither eat nor drink,” or (b) verb 1 and verb 2 are activities or concepts that are *both viewed negatively*, such as “neither break in nor steal” or “neither leave nor forsake.” (In fact, Andreas Köstenberger’s research found 52 examples of this structure in the New Testament, and 48 more examples in Greek literature outside the New Testament (from 3rd century B.C. to 1st century A.D.), and the pattern was the same in all 100 examples. So we wonder how your interpretation can claim that verb 1 (“teach”) is a concept that is viewed positively but verb 2 (“have authority”) is a negative concept (“domineer, usurp authority, or instigate violence”).

So our question is this:

Will you please show us one example in all of ancient Greek where the pattern “neither + [verb 1] + nor + [verb 2]” is used to refer to one action that is viewed positively and one action that is viewed negatively?

If you can show us one example, we would be happy to consider your interpretation further. But if we cannot, then we suggest that you have no factual basis for your interpretation of this key verse, and we respectfully ask that you stop writing and speaking as if you did, and that you also reconsider your understanding of these verses.

BELLEVILLE'S RESPONSE (2001):

Belleville provides three responses. (1) She says, "Does the Greek correlative pair *opposites*? Of course it does. 'Neither Jew nor Greek ... neither slave nor free ... ' in Galatians 3:28 is a perfect example" (p. 136). But this response fails to understand the question. Kostenberger's study did not claim that the construction “neither + [verb 1] + nor + [verb 2]” never connects pairs of *opposites*. He claimed that it never connects "activities or concepts" *where one is viewed*

*positively and one is viewed negatively.*³⁵ To take Belleville's examples, in Galatians 3:28 Paul views both Jews and Greeks positively and he views both slave and free positively (they are all part of the body of Christ). Therefore, even though this example uses nouns, it fits Kostenberger's pattern.

(2) Then she says, "In biblical Greek ... 'neither ... nor' connects similar or related *ideas* What we are dealing with is a poetic device. And so to do a study of the Greek construction 'neither + [verb 1] + nor + [verb 2]' (as Kostenberger does) is to ignore both the literary form and the nature of Greek correlatives" (pp. 135-136).

This objection is unpersuasive. It essentially says that in analyzing the construction "neither [verb 1] nor [verb 2]," Kostenberger is wrong to study other examples of the construction "neither [verb 1] nor [verb 2]," because to do so is to "ignore both the literary form and the nature of Greek correlatives."

But Kostenberger is studying other examples of *the same literary form* and other examples of *the very same correlatives*. This objection is similar to saying that someone who is attempting to understand the pattern of behavior of a squirrel should not look at other examples of squirrels because this would be "to ignore both the form of squirrels and the nature of squirrels." On the contrary, to look at other examples of this precise grammatical construction is *exactly* how one should go about understanding this construction.

(3) Finally she objects that Kostenberger's study "looks only for correlated verbs. But 1 Timothy 2:12 correlates *infinitives* (verbal nouns), not verbs It would be logical, then, to look for correlated nouns or adjectives" (p. 136).

Again, this is not a persuasive objection, both because Belleville herself provides no examples even of nouns that differ from Kostenberger's observed pattern, and also because infinitives convey verbal ideas (such as "to teach" and "to exercise authority"), and are counted as forms of verbs in all Greek lexicons.³⁶ Therefore, Kostenberger's search of parallel constructions with verbs is exactly what is needed to see how these words function.

(4) She objects that Greek correlatives "pair *a general then a particular idea*, as in 1 Corinthians 2:6: neither wisdom 'of this age' nor 'of the rulers of this age,' but not a *particular then a general idea* (such as "neither to teach nor to exercise authority over") (p. 136). She concludes, "So if Paul had the exercise of authority in mind, he would have put it first, followed by *teaching* as a specific example (namely, 'I permit a woman neither to exercise authority or nor to teach a man')" (p. 136).

It is unclear what Belleville's point is, for Kostenberger and many complementarians understand 1 Timothy 2:12 to refer to two distinct activities, "teach" and "exercise authority." The pattern is

³⁵Kostenberger, "A Complex Sentence Structure," pp. 85, 87.

³⁶Kostenberger himself says that Belleville's refusal to consider infinitives as forms of verbs is "bizarre and highly eccentric" (JETS 44/2 (2001), p. 345).

not specific-general or general-specific, but specific-specific.³⁷

Kostenberger has given 100 examples of the construction “neither + [verb 1] + nor + [verb 2]” and in all 100 examples both activities were viewed positively by the author or both were viewed negatively. My original question asked for one example in all of ancient Greek where the pattern was used to refer to one action that is viewed positively and one action that is viewed negatively. Belleville has provided no such example.

The fifth question remains unanswered. Where are the facts to support the egalitarian claim?

ORIGINAL ARTICLE (March, 1988):

6. *Women teaching false doctrine at Ephesus*: In 1 Tim. 2:12, where Paul says, “I do not permit a woman to teach or to have authority over a man,” many of you say the reason for Paul’s prohibition is that women were teaching false doctrine in the church at Ephesus (the church to which 1 Timothy was written). Our problem in understanding the basis for your claim is that we see no evidence inside or outside the Bible that tells us that *any* women were teaching false doctrine in the church at Ephesus. More than that, since Paul’s prohibition applies to all women, it seems to us that your position really needs to show that *all* the women at Ephesus were teaching false doctrine. So we are wondering if there is any text that tells us that all (or any) Christian women were teaching false doctrine in the church at Ephesus.

We recognize that some women were gossiping at Ephesus (1 Timothy 5:13), but that is not the same as teaching false doctrine -- we all know people who gossip but who don’t teach false doctrine! And we know that there were pagan religions in Ephesus where non-Christian men and women did a number of things that were not done by Christians -- but to say that they did such things after becoming Christians just strikes us a speculation, not evidence. We also aware that there was false teaching by a woman named Jezebel in a different city, Thyatira, at a later time period (Rev. 2:20), but that is not this time period and that is not Ephesus. We agree, of course, that Jezebel shows the *possibility* of women teaching false doctrine, but many things are *possible* in life that never happen. So we wonder if you are just basing your interpretation on a *possibility for which there is no supporting evidence*, or if you might somehow have evidence that we have not yet seen.

In fact, we have read some very clear evidence in the Bible about people teaching false doctrine at Ephesus, but they are not women, they are men. For example, Paul talks about “Hymenaeus and Philetus, who have swerved from the truth by holding that the resurrection is past already. They are upsetting the faith of some” (2 Tim. 2:17-18). He also speaks of “Hymenaeus and Alexander, whom I have delivered to Satan that they may learn not to blaspheme” (1 Tim. 1:20). But “Hymenaeus,” “Philetus,” and “Alexander” are men’s names, not women’s names. Similarly, Paul warns the Ephesian elders, “from among your own selves will arise *men* speaking perverse things, to draw away the disciples after them” (Acts 20:30), and here he says these false

³⁷In any case, Kostenberger's examples include some of specific then more general ideas, such as Acts 21:21 (“not to circumcise their children or walk according to our custom”) or Rom. 9:11 (“they were not yet born and had done nothing either good or bad”).

teachers will be *men* (Greek *andres*), not that they will be women.

So our question is this:

Will you please show us one reference in all of ancient literature, whether inside or outside the Bible, that states that all the Christian women at Ephesus (or even that *any* Christian women at Ephesus) were teaching false doctrine?

If you can show us one example, we would be happy to consider your interpretation further. But if we cannot, then we suggest that you have no factual basis for your interpretation of this key verse, and we respectfully ask that you stop writing and speaking as if you did, and that you also reconsider your understanding of these verses.

BELLEVILLE'S RESPONSE (2001):

Belleville graciously opens her comments by saying this:

Grudem claims that there are no explicit examples of female false teachers in 1 Timothy, and he is correct. The cumulative picture of the activities of women in 1 Timothy may well *imply* the existence of female false teachers, but there is no explicit reference to such.³⁸

She then says, however, (1) that false teaching was "the primary problem" Paul was facing in 1 Timothy; (2) that "women receive a great deal of attention in 1 Timothy"; and (3) that some factors in the text (such as 1 Tim. 5:13, 15; 2 Tim. 3:7) "suggest" that some of the "affected leaders" were women.³⁹

But these texts are hardly persuasive. Here is what they say:

1 Timothy 5:13-15 [Referring to younger widows, if they are supported by the church]: Besides that, they learn to be idlers, going about from house to house, and not only idlers, but also gossips and busybodies, saying what they should not. So I would have younger widows marry, bear children, manage their households, and give the adversary no occasion for slander. For some have already strayed after Satan.

2 Timothy 3:6-7: For among them are those who creep into households and capture weak women, burdened with sins and led astray by various passions, always learning and never able to arrive at a knowledge of the truth.

We find here that some women were being deceived by false teachers. We find that some younger widows could become "gossips and busybodies." Both of these things are entirely understandable in a church where there were no women teachers, and therefore no women teaching false doctrine. The fact that Belleville can produce so little evidence serves to reinforce

³⁸Belleville, p. 136.

³⁹Belleville, p. 137.

the point of my question: the essential egalitarian claim that Paul was responding to a problem of women who were teaching heresy at Ephesus is simply speculation with no proof based on any historical fact.

The sixth question remains unanswered. Where are the facts to support the egalitarian claim?

CONCLUSION

Belleville gave responses to my original six questions, but her responses turned out not to be answers to any of the questions. (1) She gave no example of *kephale* where Person A is the head of Person B and is not in authority. (2) She gave no example of *hypotasso* that lacked one-directional submission to authority. (3) She agreed with the force of my question on "or" (Greek e). (4) She gave no example of *authenteo* where it meant "misuse authority." (5) She gave no example where the construction "neither X nor Y" included one verb viewed positively and one viewed negatively. (6) She gave no reference from ancient literature stating that women were teaching false doctrine at Ephesus.

After considering Belleville's responses, we are now in a position to affirm the following conclusions with regard to these six questions:

1. **"Head" (*kephale*):** In every ancient example of statements that say Person A is the "head" (*kephale*) of Person B, Person A is in a position of authority over Person B. No example (from about 50 that have been discovered) has yet been found where Person A is said to be the head (*kephale*) of Person B, and where Person A is *not* in authority over Person B. Therefore the egalitarian claim that *kephale* in 1 Corinthians 11:3 and Ephesians 5:23 means "source without authority" is still without basis in fact.
2. **"Be subject to" (*hypotasso*):** The term *hypotasso* is commonly used both inside and outside the Bible to speak of one-directional submission to an authority. No example has yet been found where *hypotasso* is used to refer to one person in relation to another and the idea of one-directional submission to an authority is absent. Belleville produces no such examples for this word other than to re-assert her interpretation of Ephesians 5:21, an interpretation that must understand *hypotasso* in a sense it takes nowhere else in all of ancient Christian and secular literature. Therefore the egalitarian claim that Ephesians 5:21 refers to a "mutual submission" that nullifies any unique authority for the husband over the wife is still without basis in fact.
3. **"Or" (e):** No example has yet been found where "or" (Greek e) introduces a statement the readers know to be false so the author can *deny* both what goes before and what follows. Therefore the claim of egalitarians like Gilbert Bilezikian, who argue from Greek e to say that Paul in 1 Corinthians 14:36 *denies* what he wrote in 1 Corinthians 14:33-35, is still without basis in fact. (In addition, Belleville herself says she knows of "very few evangelicals" who take Bilezikian's position on this passage.)
4. **"Exercise authority over" (*authenteo*):** Belleville gives four examples of *authenteo*, one of which is from the 10th century AD and not relevant for meanings of words at the time of the New Testament. The other three carry the sense "exercise authority over," not "misuse authority." For

the eighty-two examples of the verb *authenteo* ("to have authority over") that exist from ancient Greek, the meanings "to rule, to reign sovereignly, to control, to dominate" are common, and the sense "misuse authority" may be the meaning in one hyperbolic example in Chrysostom, or it may not exist at all. In answering H. Scott Baldwin's study of *authenteo*, Belleville is forced to resort to the rather astounding claim that infinitival forms of verbs should not be counted as forms of those verbs. No unambiguous example of *authenteo* meaning "misuse authority" (or "commit violence," or "commit murder," or "proclaim oneself author of a man") has yet been found for any Greek writings anywhere near the time of the New Testament. The egalitarian claim that *autheneto* in 1 Timothy 2:12 means "misuse authority" is still without basis in fact.

5. **"Neither X nor Y":** The construction "neither + [verb 1] + nor + [verb 2]" falls into one of two categories in all 100 examples from ancient Greek literature around the time of the New Testament: either both activities are viewed positively, or both are viewed negatively. Belleville produces no examples where one activity is viewed positively and the other negatively, and appears not even to understand these categories, or the nature of Greek infinitives as forms of verbs, or the value of studying other examples of similar grammatical constructions. Kostenberger's conclusion remains true: in 1 Timothy 2:12, "to teach" is viewed positively, and therefore "to exercise authority" must be viewed positively as well, to fit this pattern. Therefore once again the egalitarian claim that 1 Timothy 2:12 forbids women to "misuse authority" is still without basis in fact.

6. **Women teaching false doctrine at Ephesus:** While it has always been clear that some women were being deceived and led astray by false teachers in Ephesus, Belleville has produced only speculation, and no specific evidence, that women were actually doing any false teaching in Ephesus. The actual facts of 1 Timothy can easily be understood against a background where there were no women in positions of teaching authority, and where the actual teaching of false doctrine was actually being done by men (some of whom are named in 1 Tim. 1:20 and 2 Tim. 2:17-18). The egalitarian claim that Paul wrote 1 Timothy 2:12 because women teachers were propagating false teaching in Ephesus is still without basis in fact.

CONCLUSION TO ORIGINAL ARTICLE (March, 1988):

We know that there are many other questions of interpretation on which we may differ, and we realize that these matters do not solve all of those questions. But we thought that these matters might be the simplest to resolve, since they just involve questions of factual evidence.

Are there any real facts to support your claims?

Thank you for considering our questions. We look forward to hearing a response from you.

Sincerely yours,

Wayne Grudem, Ph.D.

(responses may be sent to me in care of the CBMW office: E-mail to: office@cbmw.org)