

Baptist Planet said:

Shirley Taylor, who with her husband publishes [bWe: Baptist Women for Equality](#) email newsletter and Web site, told us via email on Jan. 24:

I am just an ordinary woman who got fed up with the Southern Baptist Convention which holds sway over the local church, the local Baptist association, the state convention, and refuses to realize that the greater sin is not that women be allowed to serve, but that the greater sin is to keep women in their so-called place.

She explains, writing with the quiet tone of an after-church conversation, that SBC disregard for women can be cured, because it is a result of ignorance. Pastors “just don’t know” how many of the women in their congregations believe women should be free to serve as deacons and “even pastors.”

She is determined to enlighten misinformed pastors, and brings the summary force of a hammer blow to her convictions.

I wonder if that is in part because she has three granddaughters and would like a better future for them. In any case, she wrote:

Many of these church members have daughters and granddaughters who are feeling the call to go into ministry, and there is no option for them except to go on to the mission field. We are more than willing to ship our daughters off to a foreign land, but we allow our sons to stay home and preach. Doesn’t anybody see the hypocrisy in this? Our bellies are full of camels that we have swallowed while straining out the gnat when it comes to women in authority. We stab those scriptures with our bony fingers and declare that women shall not have authority over men, and then we put them on every committee and give them every responsibility in a church, except as the office of a deacon. What makes the office of a deacon so sacred that we argue endlessly and heatedly about who should or should not be “scripturally allowed” to be one?

Women have been tainted with the sin of Eve long enough. If we truly believe that Jesus can wash away our sins, then why are we saying that Jesus cannot forgive women for something that Eve did, which was not even our sin. It is time we accepted the fact that Jesus makes both men and women whole through his saving grace.

She is a former employee of the [Baptist General Convention of Texas](#), and knows most of her denomination’s top leadership is moving away from, rather than toward accepting women into its pulpits. But she is not alone. Enid, Okla., pastor [Wade Burleson](#) recently reprinted on his [blog](#) a persuasive [account](#) by Mimi Haddad explaining the role of women in the growth of South Korean churches.

Burleson, clearly aware of addressing himself to a church which is foundering on growth problems, then invites the theological debate which could lead to the changes [bWe](#) seeks. He

includes with that invitation the example of a very effective Southern Baptist voice who, it is implied, would be far more effective if not barred from the pulpit:

I have two questions: What fault, if any, do you find in Mimi's biblical reasoning? Has [Beth Moore](#) been released within the Southern Baptist Convention?

[Some agree](#) but are pessimistic. [Some](#) Baptist women raise other questions about Southern Baptist Church attitudes toward women. And there are [some](#) who see a failed and Biblically erroneous SBC strategy.

Meanwhile, the volume of Southern Baptists asking their fundamentalist leaders to reconsider the theologies which led them to push women out of and away from a place in the pulpit, is rising.