

Mission/Vision

We value women and their response to God's calling in their lives and will put up no barriers to women serving God in the same capacity as men do.

Special points of interest:

- Make a commitment to help your girls and women
- You can make a difference by joining others
- Create an email cell group to pray for women pastors, and for those who are called to be pastors.
- Pray for the SBC to soften their hearts toward women in the United States.
- Enlist others to help women

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The Next Step

bWe Baptist Women for Equality

Advocate for Women Pastors and Women Deacons

The Next Step

March 2009

Taking on the Great Giant

This letter is a call to action. The Next Step is a journey we will begin which will change minds and allow women the full equality of service in their home churches. While we respect women who are called to the mission field and honor their service, we would like to see our women given the same respect in their own home church.

There is no intent to be divisive to any person's church. I am asking you to start an email cell group of men and women who will commit to praying for those women who are already pastors, those women who feel called to preach, and to pray for the churches of the Southern Baptist Convention to be open to allowing women the fullness of service in the same way they allow men to serve.

We will reach across state boundaries and into every state in the United States.

Each person who has written me has been contacted and asked to find a few people who will make up the email cell group and commit to pray and to start another cell group. The cell groups will be people across the United States and will not be limited to a person's church. No one is being asked to break up their church by calling for women deacons and an openness to women pastors. What we will accomplish is to create a dialogue and get women and men talking about this issue. By talking they can come to a better understanding of why they are against women in leadership. Then more minds will begin to change, and the crack will widen. The people in the pew are already experiencing this change of mind. It is the leadership who are holding fast against women.

Will you be the voice for your daughter?



Shirley Taylor is a life-long Baptist. She was a ministry assistant in the Church Starting Center of Baptist General Convention of Texas (BGCT) and worked in the Field Office in Conroe, Texas for over 14 years. Shirley and her husband Don have been married 47 years and have two sons, and three granddaughters. Since a change of heart in 2000, Shirley is committed to promoting women in leadership roles.

Can one person make a difference?

No, one person can't. Martin Luther did not make a difference when he nailed his 95 *Theses* paper to the church door. Beethoven didn't make a difference when he composed beautiful music. Martin Luther King didn't make a difference when he made his first speech for civil rights, Jonas Salk didn't make a difference when he developed the polio vaccine, Lottie Moon didn't make a difference when she went to

China. The act of doing does not make a difference by itself, just like a tree falling in the forest, no sound is made unless someone hears.

It was the *people* who read Martin Luther's proclamation who made a difference. It was the *people* who listened to Beethoven who made his music live on. It was the *people* who marched with Martin Luther King who brought about the Civil Rights Act. It was the

people who took the medicated sugar cube that helped wipe out polio. It was the *people* who sent money to Lottie Moon and it was the *people* in China who responded to her message that made the difference. *People* who listen, who respond, and who take up the cause make the difference. That is why it is important for us to take action. This is your chance to make a difference. Individual people walking together in the same direction makes a crowd.

Why would I want to get involved in this controversy?

Why would I want to get involved in something that might split my church, and that probably can't be resolved?

Because the stakes are so high.

Read what Dr Wade Burleson, Baptist pastor in Oklahoma, wrote on his blog October 2, 2008. This should convince you that women need to step up, and speak up for their rightful place in service. (<http://kerussocharis.blogspot.com/>) Grace and Truth to You. (the title of the article is "My Prayer for Miss Courtney Tarter: That One Day by God's Grace, You May Recover from Your Recovery")

This is what Dr. Wade Burleson wrote: The issue is *male* authority in the Southern Baptist Convention, or more precisely, females are to always be subordinate to *males*; at all places, at all times, and under all circumstances. The issue in the SBC is not about "women pastors" and don't let anybody continue to blow that smoke in your face - it is about certain SBC leaders who believe that women should submit to men -

period. Again, the issue in our Convention is the attempt to demand everyone believe in *male* authority over women.

A handful of powerful SBC leaders in our Convention are pushing a very bizarre scenario of removing women from leadership positions, all the while attempting to mislead us regarding the reasons for their actions. These SBC leaders, including seminary Presidents, their friends who serve as SBC agency trustees, and other strategically placed SBC leaders believe that there should never be a Southern Baptist woman with any authority over a man. Again, they say they are seeking to protect "pastoral" authority, but it is not about "pastoral authority." Their belief is in *male* authority.

(2). *"Instead of seeing our gender differences as mere cultural constructions we must first admit that there was something far greater going on in the Garden than we now realize, and when Creation fell, it was distorted. In creating man and woman differently, God was pointing to the beauty of the Trinitarian relationship."*
Miss Courtney Tarter

Pointing to the Trinity in order

to establish the "eternal subordination" of the female to the male is a new and growing phenomenon. Yet this heretical [teaching is taking hold among some in our Southern Baptist Convention](#), particularly at our seminaries, as a theological basis to keep women eternally subordinate to men. Southern Baptists best wake up to this growing tendency to use a false understanding of the Trinity to justify the eternal subordination of women to men before the pastors of our Southern Baptist churches begin to accept this doctrine as "the norm." Not only is it not normal, it borders on bizarre. Just because we admire Mohler, just because there is fear that respected seminary administrators like Dr. Moore and Dr. Patterson may torpedo your chances to get a SBC church, you shouldn't be afraid to push back. Loyalty is a major value right now in the Southern Baptist Convention, but following fidelity to the fringe of foolishness will destroy our Convention. (Reprinted by permission)

"females are to always be subordinate to males, and under all circumstances"

The Southern Baptist Convention Is male totalitarian

SBC is male totalitarian

Complementarian: men and women are designed to complement or complete each other on the basis of their gender. The opposing viewpoint is **Egalitarianism.** Maintains that women and men are equal in marriage, religious leadership opportunities and elsewhere.

The current leadership of the Southern Baptist Convention doublespeaks. (Baptist Faith & Message 2000 – "She, being in

the image of God as is her husband and thus equal to him, has the God-given responsibility to respect her husband and to serve as his helper in managing the household and nurturing the next generation." (Is she equal or isn't she?)

But in actuality it is an altogether different word which would be **totalitarian.** (BF&M 2000 "Its scriptural officers are pastors and deacons. While both men and women are

gifted for service in the church, the office of pastor is limited to men as qualified by Scripture" (by their interpretation). There is nothing complementary or equal when you deny women the place God has already given her. A woman cannot be an equal in a home that is ruled by the husband, and being equal, she cannot drop that equality the moment she walks inside the church door. [Women are EQUAL.](#)

What does a deacon do

Each church decides the range of duties of a deacon but generally they have as their primary responsibility the spiritual affairs of the church and provide a servant ministry to the church and community. They institute and provide for a ministry program to the families of the church which includes regular contact with all families of the church. They provide for a minister to preach in case of the absence of the pastor. They participate

in planning and implementation of ministry efforts through involvement in regular meetings and other planning sessions. They prepare and serve the elements for the Lord's Supper and clean-up afterwards.

What does a deacon do that can't be done by a woman?

Women teach, serve on long-range planning committees for the spiritual and numerical

growth of the church. She prepares food and drink to the church family. She tithes and gives of her time and family freely to the service of the Lord. She serves on pastor search committees. If she can help choose a pastor for full-time service, surely she can help choose one for a Sunday or two. Read what Jesus says about the strict interpretation of the law! We strain out a gnat and swallow a camel.

What does a deacon do in the church that can't be done by a woman

6 billion and counting

With a population of over 6 billion people, there are about 3 billion women in the world. One thing is for sure, all those billions of people were birthed by women. It is extreme arrogance to think that women should be less than men in spiritual matters. Inferior gender cannot give birth to a superior gender. We are not claiming superiority – just equality. For 2,000 years

learned men have poured over the meaning of the scriptures. For years it didn't matter because women couldn't read or write, but we send our girls to school today and they can pour over those scriptures for themselves, and through the power of the Holy Spirit, come to a different meaning than was given them. When confronted about equality of women in the church, a common expression

is "Because God says so." That is not an answer. You may think God said so, but when I read Jesus' words about justice, mercy, and faithfulness, I see a new law that gives women freedom to proclaim the gospel in the United States. I see women who do not have to be shipped off to missions. Women who are qualified to serve a piece of bread and cup of juice.

Inferior female gender cannot give birth to a superior male gender.

I got mail

"I see a lot of anger on this website and the fact that you are a lifelong Baptist. What I do not see is humility, love, a Christian testimony or witness, or any Biblical support for your stance. Just an observation"

Ah, Pastor, let me see. I don't question your Christianity, but I join with Paul with this wish when he replied to King Agrippa in Acts 26:28-29 (NIV) - "Then Agrippa said to Paul, 'Do you think that in

such a short time you can persuade me to be a Christian?' Paul replied, 'Short time or long--I pray God that not only you but all who are listening to me today may become what I am, except for these chains.'" I am not sure why my love and humility is at issue here, when it is the lack of love and humility by the Southern Baptist Convention that keeps women from responding to God's call in their lives, which is the problem.

Note:
Thank you all for writing. I sincerely appreciate you taking the time. You may not agree with what is said on this website, and that is all right. The purpose is to get men and women talking, and hopefully by talking, will be able to see that we have nothing to fear in women leading. But we have much to lose if we do not allow our women this freedom in our churches. When women leave, we lose families.

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Individual people walking together toward one goal make a crowd.

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Equality for women is not theirs to give, but ours to claim.

bWe Baptist Women for Equality—advocates for Women Pastors and Women Deacons

How you can help

If you would like to be a part of **bWe Baptist Women for Equality—advocates for Women Deacons and Women Pastors**, which is an endeavor to bring Southern Baptists into the 21st Century, please contact me by email. Only you can bring about the change in your church. It starts with the church By-laws where it is interpreted that women are scripturally unqualified to be deacons. Each Southern Baptist church writes its own By-laws and makes its own decisions. I ask you to join me in helping our daughters, sisters, and granddaughters find the freedom Jesus has promised them and for them to be able to serve a cup of juice and piece of bread in their Baptist church. Change is never easy. But it will be right. Women, we must speak up.

**Please forward The Next Step
To all your Baptist friends and neighbors**

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What do you want for your girls?

Will you hold tightly to your heart the office of 'senior pastor' and deacon and not allow your girls equality before God in your church?

Matthew 23:23-24 (NIV) "Woe to you, teachers of the law and Pharisees, you hypocrites! You give a tenth of your spices – mint, dill, and cumin. But you have neglected the more important matters of the law – justice, mercy and faithfulness. You should have practiced the latter, without neglecting the former. You blind guides! You strain out a gnat but swallow a camel."

We have been arguing over those same scriptures for 2,000 years. If it were clear there would be no argument. The SBC has decided that women cannot be spiritually

equal to a man, and many refuse to recognize the injustice of that. In every case where Jesus is angry with the teachers of the law, it has to do with people, and how people are treated. Women are people. Jesus said that justice, mercy and faithfulness was more important than the strict following of the law. If Jesus himself can allow for justice, mercy, and faithfulness, can't the leadership of the Southern Baptist Convention do the same thing?

What do you want for your girls?

Do you want her to deny her calling? Do you wonder how we can allow a woman to be a missionary and preach in a foreign land, but will not allow

your daughter to stand up in her own church and proclaim the gospel?

Do you want your girls to leave her Baptist church because the Southern Baptist Convention dictates a strict rule over women.

Do you want your girls to live forever in submission?

**Are you willing to take
The Next Step
and speak up
for your girls**