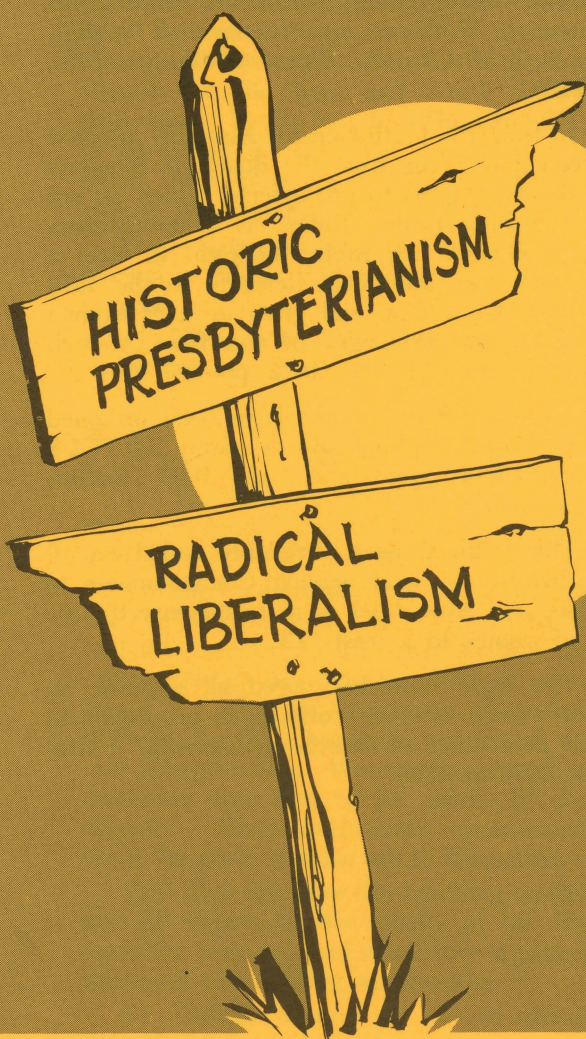


# PRESBYTERIANS



## WHICH WAY?

ORDINATION OF WOMEN



## *The Way of Radical Liberalism*

On May 13, 1964, the 104th General Assembly enacted the following Amendment to the Book of Church Order, Section 9-2 (adding this sentence): "Both men and women shall be eligible to hold Church offices." (Minutes, 1964, p. 110)

In 1972, the 112th General Assembly adopted a recommendation from the Board of Women's Work which gives to presbyteries which do not elect women Ruling Elders as Commissioners to the General Assembly, the right to elect a woman as an additional delegate to the 1973 or 1974 Assemblies, and gives to such woman delegates the privileges of the floor, though without vote. (Minutes, 1972, pp. 167-168)

At least fifteen women have been ordained to the Gospel ministry, approximately 700 PCUS Ruling Elders are women, and 1000 Deacons are women.

The 112th General Assembly called on all presbyteries to send women Commissioners to subsequent Assemblies so as to increase the ratio of women to at least 1/3.

The same Assembly urged all sessions "to elect women as church officers in proportion to their percentage of church membership." (Minutes, 1972, p. 179)

## *The Way of Historic Presbyterianism*

Though Bible-believing Christians acknowledge with thanksgiving the splendid service rendered by women to Christ and His Church, we must be bound always to the Scriptures in all matters of faith and life. Christ governs His Church, by His Spirit and Word, through Elders elected by the people. The Church's guide in all things is the Bible. Our first question, when confronted by any proposed form of church government, must be, "Is it Scriptural?"

Presbyterians believe that the ordination of women to offices in the Church is unscriptural, because:

1) There is no New Testament example of the ordination of women.

(2) In every Apostolic reference to the office of Elder, the masculine form is used; never is the feminine gender used.

3) The Biblical material dealing with ordination includes specific instructions to ordain *men* (I Tim. 3:1-7; 3:8-12; Titus 1:5-6).

4) Paul specifically states that women are not to rule over men. In I Tim. 2:8ff., we are told that wherever Christians worship, the men are to conduct the worship. Women are not to "teach" . . . that is, women are not to be given *authority* in the Church in matters of doctrine and interpretation. Women are not to exercise dominion over men in the sphere of doctrinal disputes. Where authoritative pronouncements are to be made, women are to keep silence.

Paul does not base this teaching on the position of women in the society of his day, but upon the very order of creation — a principle of universal and abiding application.

5) Though women are not to exercise ordained authority in the Church, it is still their privilege to teach women and children (II Tim. 1:5; 3:14-15; Tit. 2:3-4).

6) In Covenant Theology the government of God's people was always by God through *men*.

To be strictly Scriptural, only men may be ordained to office in the Church.

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