ADAM AND EVE IN MARRIAGE AND MINISTRY:
A CHRISTOLOGICAL AND IRENAEAN REAPPRAISAL

by

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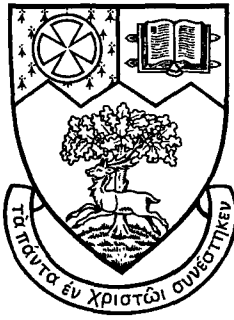
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ABSTRACT

"Adam and Eve in Marriage and Ministry: A Christological and Irenaean Reappraisal"

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Christian theology often determines the roles of women and men based on a particular interpretation of the creation accounts in Genesis 1–3. The interest is to discover what roles God has assigned for men and women in the state before the fall, hence before the entrance of sin. This dissertation argues that Christian theology of roles of women and men should be founded on Christology that upholds Christ as a model and his teachings as a guide. The roles of women and men in the creation story cannot serve as an ideal for current relationships. This argument is based on two major themes: the knowledge of life before the fall, and the conceptual framework of the creation story. Positing that a problem is induced by a particular understanding of the creation story that was proposed primarily by St. Augustine, this dissertation is also a critique of his ideas of the state before the fall and sin.

The knowledge of life addresses four issues. First, God-assigned purposes for men and women are sometimes thought knowable. However, nature as a God-assigned purpose and nature as a current structure and tendency are often confused. Second, although there are various views regarding the genre of the creation account and also about who Adam and Eve are, the consideration and evaluation of these proposed views are often neglected in current discussions of roles of women and men. Third, the creation story is God's revelation that humans understand through special revelation

(scripture) and general revelation (nature, history, reason, and conscience). Nonetheless, the interpretation of the sinless, perfect state before the fall accompanies a methodological difficulty: the world after the fall cannot adequately provide materials necessary for the interpretation of the pre-fall state. Fourth, not only through special revelation of scripture, but also through general revelation, humans encounter a challenge in accessing the pre-fall state. To know the moral perfection of Adam and Eve through reason or conscience is as difficult as to know divine perfection through general revelation.

As to the conceptual framework of the creation story, mainly two views have been proposed: the Augustinian and Irenaean. Unlike the former that depicts the human state before the fall as perfect, the Irenaean view delineates the state as good but not perfect. The examination of human callings in the creation account shows that the latter view is more appropriate than the former. The Irenaean idea of the imperfect state before the fall not only allows contemporary readers to both interpret the story and understand it noetically—so a pedagogical purpose of the creation story is achieved—but also reveals that whatever the pre-fall state of human roles may have been, it was more a starting-point than an ideal for all time.

Humans are not to look to the pre-fall state as the standard for the hierarchical or egalitarian role of women today. What God has revealed of the kingdom of God to come in the second Adam, the perfect bearer of God's image, Jesus Christ, is a clearer and more applicable standard.

DEDICATION AND ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

It is my joy and privilege to introduce this work as the fruit of the invaluable supports and contributions that I received from individuals in three regions: North America, England and Japan. I praise and thank God who has raised these invaluable people and nurtured the present work in such an enriching and empowering community.

In the process of its birth to maturity, this work received the high quality of teachings and guidance from significant professors. I specifically thank Drs. Gordon Heath, Steve Studebaker at McMaster Divinity College, James Peterson at Roanoke College, and Graham Ward at the University of Manchester. My gratitude to their contributions is beyond my words. Many thanks are also for other faculty and staff at McMaster Divinity College, McMaster University who blessed me with an intellectual and supportive environment.

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Throughout my doctoral studies, many other people supported me with their prayers, encouragement and practical help. I would like to thank the librarian, William Badke, and Drs. Dirk Buchner and Kent Anderson at Trinity Western

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Yokich and Nancy Suzuki, Mary Zambrana, and Joy Siemens are my mentors without whom, this work would not have come to an existence. And finally, my warm appreciation always is there for my family—my mother, brothers, sister, and their families. I owe special thanks to my brother, Shigenori, who supported me through the entire years at MacDiv with his gentle spirit and sincere concern for me.

It is my desire that God would use this work for the betterment of the lives of men and women in the church and as the result, his name be praised among his creation. I would like to dedicate this work to each one who contributed to it and express my deep appreciation to them for their kind heart.

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INTRODUCTION

Contemporary discussions of roles of women and men in the church generally

revolve around two contrasting views, the hierarchical and the egalitarian. The

hierarchical view maintains that the Bible affirms (whether voluntary or involuntary)

subordination of wives to their husbands and limits the leadership role of women over

men in the church. In contrast, the egalitarian view emphasizes mutual submission to

each other, denying a hierarchy between wives and husbands or men and women.

Although sincerely debated, it seems that Christian theology on the status of men and

women is far from achieving a consensus.

Traditionally, the hierarchical view has maintained that Paul's instructions on the

role of women, such as 1 Corinthians 11:2–16 and 1 Timothy 2:8–15, are universal

because they are addressed in reference to the creation order, the state before the fall.[1]

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[1] In contrast, many egalitarians do not agree that Paul is referring to the creation order in order to make universal norms but believe instead that these passages should be understood in the light of the cultural context in the New Testament time. For example, in 1 Corinthians 11:2–16, while Paul affirms that men and women have the same origin in God and that there is mutuality between them, he urges that both men and women be thoughtful or sensitive to their cultural norms and expectations, for example, by maintaining a gender distinction. Gordon Fee suggests that Paul refers to the relation between Adam and Eve not to tell the woman's subordination to the man but to emphasize that she is the "glory" of the man, being taken from his side and created for his sake. Hess, "Equality with and without Innocence," 151–52.

Regarding 1 Timothy 2:8–15, many egalitarians interpret Paul's prohibition of women's teaching in light of false teachings and Gnostic teachings in particular at that time. For instance, Richard and Catharine Kroeger suggest that Paul employs the creation account as the antidote for the false teachings on Adam and Eve such as Eve as originator of Adam. Paul is not limiting women's ministry but refuting widespread heresy, for example, Gnostic or proto-Gnostic mythology that glorifies Eve. Kroeger and Kroeger, *I Suffer Not a Woman*, 117–77.

Others such as Craig Keener think that Paul instructs that women should learn the true, Christian teachings first before they teach and in order to teach. Paul uses Eve as an analogy to says that women in Ephesus were easily deceived just as Eve was easily deceived. Paul connects "Eve's later creation to why she was deceived: she was not present when God gave the commandment, and thus was dependent on Adam for the teaching. In other words, she was inadequately educated—like the women in the Ephesian church." Paul is concerned about women in the church and "addressing only the issues in Ephesus." Keener, *Paul, Women and Wives*, 113–21.

Still others believe that Paul's instruction on roles of women is culturally bound because his connotation of Eve, but not Adam, being deceived only reflects women's less privileged educational

However, this argument is more problematic than has been assumed; for contemporary

discussion suggests that the creational order itself does not imply differentiated gender

roles.[2]

Phillis Trible insists that most of the traditional interpretations of male

superiority and female inferiority are "simply not present in the [creation] story itself."[3]

A contested and important point then is what the creation story actually does tell us

about the roles of women and men, in other words, what God has assigned as the right

relationship between men and women in creation. And if the creation story does not

provide us with the ultimate guide for marriage and ministry today, where does the

Bible direct us to seek guidance?

This dissertation argues that Christ and his teachings, not Adam and Eve and

their roles, are the guide for how men and women should relate to each other today—

gender roles worthy for the kingdom of God are to be continually cultivated and

enhanced. The creation story is God's revelation that teaches important truths including

human roles. However, the importance of roles of Adam and Eve in the creation story

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condition in which most women were at their time. Also, women's subordination based on the creation order of Adam and Eve implies primogeniture, which is not necessarily applicable to the situation today. Webb suggests that the fact that the creation story contains some cultural elements such as primogeniture shows that the creation story does not always convey universal norms. Webb, *Slaves, Women and Homosexuals*, 127–131, 134–145, 224–231, 269–273.

 [.] Alan Padgett holds that Paul refers to Adam and Eve not to make a universal role but to employ them typologically. For example, Eve is used as an antitype of some wealthy women at Ephesus in order for Paul to underline the critical situation that they were deceived by the false teachers just like Eve was deceived by the Serpent. Padgett, "Wealthy Women at Ephesus," 26–27. Also Padgett, *As Christ Submits to the Church*, 89–101.

 [2] This dissertation uses the definition of "gender" provided by the *Oxford English Dictionary*: "males or females viewed as a group." "Gender" may be sometimes understood as "the collective attributes or traits associated with a particular sex, or determined as a result of one's sex." In other words, the term may express "social or cultural distinctions and differences, rather than biological ones." For the sake of discussion, however, this dissertation concerns the latter and uses "gender" to mean simply the state of being male or female based on biological distinctions and differences. "Gender," in *Oxford English Dictionary*.

 [3] Trible, *God and the Rhetoric of Sexuality*, 73.

lies in its position as a starting point rather than as the ideal or ultimate goal of the roles.

A reversal of the position occurs when one interprets the creation story and its references in the New Testament such as 1 Corinthians 11:2–16 and 1 Timothy 2:8–15, by applying a particular reading of the story. That is, upon the interpretation, one understands the state before the fall as sinless and pristine as was suggested by St. Augustine (354–430). Despite its wide acceptance among Western churches, however, this understanding of the state before the fall has problems. This theological conceptual framework not only prevents us from interpreting the story with cultural studies and from understanding it noetically, but also potentially leads us to project distorted understandings of roles of women and men or to maintain a double standard for those roles. In contrast, to read about the state before the fall as imperfect, as St. Irenaeus (c.130–c.202) described, not only makes it possible to interpret and understand the creation story but most importantly, points us to Christ and his teachings as a coherent and applicable guide for human roles both for men and women today. The biblical teaching of nature as God-assigned purpose is not essential quality or element of man and woman—or of Adam and Eve—that entails specific functions or roles to each gender. Instead, the Bible points to the only one God-assigned purpose for both man and woman, that is, to become more like Christ, after whose image they are made. The ethics of roles of man and woman should be based on the narrative of Christ and his teaching on his kingdom, not Adam and Eve in the creation story. The kingdom ethic that is founded on Christology provides a coherent, clear and applicable standard for marriage and ministry today. Instructions in reference to Adam and Eve such as 1 Corinthians 11:2–16 and 1 Timothy 2:8–15 should be read through the lens of Irenaeus,

not that of Augustine. Therefore, this dissertation largely concerns a critique of the Augustinian theological framework of the creation story.

It may be claimed that we should not undermine the authority of the Bible by challenging what Paul says. For example, when an attempt is made to interpret Paul's use of the creation story in a manner other than that of the hierarchical view of the role of women, Wayne Grudem insists, "Whether or not we think there is anything significant about the fact that Adam was created before Eve, the apostle Paul thought it significant enough to influence the way men and women should relate to each other in the New Testament church age . . . (1 Timothy 2:12–13)." Therefore, "to object, 'Well that can't be right because . . .' is to object to the reasoning of the Word of God itself. If we are going to remain subject to the authority of Scripture, then we should accept Paul's reasoning as valid."[4] However, the purpose of this dissertation is not to undermine Paul's authority, but rather to understand Paul better. It is our interpretation of what Paul said that needs correction. Seeking different possibilities of interpretation is not to be understood as undermining the authority of the Bible but to be thought as an endeavour for an adequate understanding of the Bible, which is a responsibility for each Christian and the primary task for Christian scholarship.

This dissertation inquires about two aspects regarding the current discussions of marriage and ministry in reference to the creation story—and thus oriented by Augustine's idea of the sinless, pristine state before the fall and subsequent corruption—: if we think of the state before the fall as sinless, can we know the life before the fall?; and, even if we did have such knowledge, is the story an ideal or more like a starting point of human roles? In other words, this dissertation challenges both what is known of

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[4] Grudem, *Countering the Claims of Evangelical Feminism*, 78.

the roles of Adam and Eve (Part II) and their importance as models for how women and men should relate today (Part III). Part I introduces the basic problems regarding gender discussions in reference to the creation story. Under this section, chapter one explores the significance of the creation story in contemporary discussions of roles of women and men. Chapter two states some challenges of the discussions that are founded upon the creation story. These are the challenges that are addressed throughout this dissertation in part of II and III.

Part II invokes some problems concerning the knowledge of life before the fall. Chapter three focuses on the problem of confusion concerning the term "nature" or "natural." Chapter four addresses the questions about the genre of the creation story and about who Adam and Eve are. Chapter five examines the interpretative method to interpret life before the fall, and chapter six investigates the knowledge of life before the fall, through reason.

Part III inquires about the appropriation of life before the fall. That is, it is an investigation of whatever life before the fall may have been, the creation story being either an ideal or a starting point. Chapter seven explores two conceptual frameworks of the creation story. Chapter eight examines the appropriateness of the frameworks in light of "calling." Finally, the dissertation will conclude with a discussion of alternative roles of women and men that are centered around Christ and the ethic of the kingdom of God.

This is a work in systematic theology. All interpretation brings a framework to the text. I openly bring theological insights from other scriptural texts, tradition, and reason concerning the noetic effects of sin, cosmology and literary genre to understand

what can be drawn from the first chapters of Genesis concerning gender relationships. Contested readings of Paul's ambiguity in 1 Timothy 2:13–14 will not be normative for our reading of Genesis. However, expecting Scripture not to contradict itself, our findings in Genesis may help to better interpret what Paul may be arguing in 1 Timothy.

The intended primary audience of this dissertation is evangelical Protestants. This is because Roman Catholic and Orthodox churches primarily limit women's roles in light of the maleness of Christ and his choosing apostles only from among men, using the created order to support their views. In contrast, evangelical Protestants tend to place a significant emphasis on how roles of Adam and Eve may be presented in the creation story for the basis of their views.

This dissertation uses the term "role"[5] to mean the definition given by the Oxford English Dictionary: "a person's allotted share, part, or duty in life and society; the character, place, or status assigned to our assumed by a person"; "the function performed by someone or something in a particular situation or process," among other definitions. I am using the term for humans in a broad sense that includes callings and the responses, the image of God and God-assigned purpose. I use the term "hierarchicalists" for those who hold a "hierarchical"[6] view because the term describes their positions more precisely than "complementarians" or "traditionalists." My primary conversation partners include Wayne Grudem, Gilbert Bilezikian, and Millard Erickson as representatives of contemporary hierarchicalists, egalitarians and systematic theologians, respectively, who hold the Augustinian view of the creation story.

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[5] "Role," in *Oxford English Dictionary*.

[6] Shaw, *God Speaks to Us, Too*, 186. Conservative Southern Baptists embrace gendered hierarchy and complementarianism, which "rests on the parallel ideas of the full equality of women and men and the God-ordained roles assigned to them so that they complement each other."

The benefit of this research is to better recognize on theological grounds what the Genesis story of pre-fall Adam and Eve can and cannot contribute to the systematic theological discussion of current roles of women and men. Alternatively, the research proposes their roles that are revealed of the kingdom of God to come in Christ as a clearer and more applicable standard.

PART I: INTRODUCING A PROBLEM

This section introduces the challenges that current discussions in reference to the creation account may encounter. Chapter one explains how both hierarchicalists and egalitarians value the account and in what manner they interpret it as a methodological tool to understand roles of men and women. Chapter two lists some of the problems of employing the creation story as a guide for how man and woman should relate to each other today.

CHAPTER ONE

THE CREATION STORY IN CONTEMPORARY DISCUSSIONS OF MARRIAGE AND MINISTRY

1. Introduction

Christian churches have suggested various views concerning the roles of men and women in marriage and ministry. Among evangelical Protestants, some hierarchicalists such as Bill McCartney believe in gender hierarchy only in marriages but not in the church. Others believe in women's subordination to men both in marriage and in the church.[1] Egalitarians hold gender mutuality and believe that men and women are equal. Accordingly, contemporary scholars have been actively investigating what an adequate Christian theology might be regarding roles of male and female.

While this investigation is undertaken through many kinds of methodologies, one of the most frequently and assertively employed methods is to use the creation story as an account of exemplary behaviour as a goal rather as a starting point.[2] In this method, the roles played by Adam and Eve are thought of as a standard for roles of men and women today.[3]

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[1] Still other hierarchicalists such as Pope John Paul II believe in equality between husband and wife in marriage but denies women's priestly tasks in the church. Van Leeuwen, "Is Equal Regard in the Bible?," 14.

[2] The creation story includes important teachings of gender roles such as the intimacy of man and woman that the image of nakedness may show. But the question is whether such roles are important as the ultimate goal of gender roles, or as a beginning of the roles and therefore having more to build on them.

[3] Kevin Giles, for instance, suggests that after the 1970s, the two evangelical positions of interpretations on gender roles are "firmly fixed in form and content." On the one hand, hierarchicalists claim their positions based on several reasons. First, "1 Tim 2:11–14 supported by 1 Cor 11:3–16; 14:33–34; and Eph 5:22–23" teach that man's prior creation to woman and her deception by the devil in the creation story affirm that "male headship is the unchanging and unchangeable ideal that pleases God." Second, Jesus appointed only male disciples as the first twelve apostles. Third, the leadership roles in the Bible played by women such as Deborah, Huldar, and Priscilla were "of a subordinate kind under a man." Fourth, the relationship between the Father and the Son in the Trinity is an analogy of a hierarchical relationship between men and women. Further, hierarchicalists sometimes claim that women's

This chapter introduces the significance of the creation story in contemporary discussions of marriage and ministry from hierarchical and egalitarian perspectives. It will first identify the gender role discussions that make reference to the creation story in the context of different methodologies employed by contemporary scholars. This is followed by the examples of how hierarchicalists may argue their discussions based on the creation story and then how egalitarians may do it.

2. Methodology of Contemporary Discussions of Marriage and Ministry

Scholars have been discussing marriage and ministry by employing many approaches. Adam and Eve as a standard is largely absent in theology that considers the account of human creation as an ancient and mistaken anthropology. Thus, the creation narrative is primarily of interest concerning the relationship of males and females if it is authoritative or historical. Still roles of women and men have been involving considerable amount of work with different methodologies.[4]

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subordination to men is their "roles" because men and women have "different roles." Giles instead identifies these roles as "differing power relations" that hierarchicalists refer to the creation story. Giles complains, "God, in creation, appointed men to lead and women to obey, and this hierarchical ordering, because it is God-given, can never change. Women, because they are women, are the subordinate sex. They function subordinately because they lack what God has given only to men, the 'role of headship,' or in plain speech, 'leadership.'" The creation order in the first chapters of Genesis provides important bases for hierarchical views.

On the other hand, according to Giles, egalitarians interpret the Bible differently from hierarchicalists based on various reasons. First, "the right place to begin any study of what the Bible says on the sexes is to begin where the Bible begins—the first chapter of Genesis. Here the primary and fundamental truth is revealed," and in light of which Genesis 2 and 3 should be read. Men and women are both bearers of the image of God, rulers over creation and co-procreators (Gen 1:27–28), and therefore "the subordination of women is explicitly a consequence of the fall (Gen 3:16)." Second, Jesus affirmed "in word and deed the equality" of men and women. Third, the New Testament teaches a "'new creation' (2 Cor. 5:17) where social, racial, and sexual differences are transcended (Gal 3:28)." Fourth, the Bible witnesses to many women leaders because of their spiritual gifts and regardless of their gender. Fifth, Paul "regulates" roles of women in passages such as 1 Cor. 11:3–16; 14:33–34; and 1 Tim. 2:11–12 because of the "exceptional situations where women were doing something to disrupt the life of the church." Thus, Giles's analysis of views of roles of men and women today suggests that among others, the creation story has often been the focal point for both hierarchicalists and egalitarians as they discuss their views. Giles, "Foreword," xi–xii, xiv–xv.

[4] For a more detailed review of the literature among contemporary egalitarians see, for example, Pierce, "Contemporary Evangelicals for Gender Equality."

Contemporary research on Christian theology of women has been invoking one or a combination of roughly six approaches. The first approach is to apply exegetical studies. For example, William D. Mounce, George W. Knight, Andreas J. Köstenberger, Thomas R. Shreiner, H. Scott Baldwin, Ralph Earle, I. Haward Marshall, N. T. Wright, Philip Towner, Richard C. Kroeger and Catherine C. Kroeger, Phyllis Trible, Phyllis A. Bird, Richard Hess, Craig S. Keener, Ben Witherington, Gilbert G. Bilezikian, and Philip B. Payne are the scholars who contribute to discussions of roles of women and men with exegetical studies.[5] With the historical grammatical method, the historical critical method and rhetorical analysis, scholars have illuminated authors' intended original meaning(s) in the text. Yet, difficulties arise primarily due to distance—of time, language, culture, and geography—between authors and readers and thus lead into different interpretations. For example, whether the meaning of κεφαλη (kephale) in 1 Corinthians 11 is "source," or head as "a position of risk," "person in authority over another," or "preeminence" is under debate.[6]

The second approach involves historical reconstruction. Elizabeth A. Clark, Ruth A. Tucker, Karen Jo Torjesen, and Mary T. Malone are some of the scholars who undertake historical research on the roles of women.[7] Through historical studies, egalitarians have revealed how instrumental yet subservient women were in the

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[5] Mounce, *Pastoral Epistles*; Knight, *The Pastoral Epistles*; Köstenberger, "A Complex Sentence"; Schreiner, "An Interpretation of 1 Timothy 2:9–15"; Baldwin, "An Important Word"; Earle, *1 Timothy*; Marshall, *The Pastoral Epistles*; Wright, "The Biblical Basis for Women's Service in the Church"; Towner, *The Letters to Timothy and Titus*; Kroeger, *I Suffer Not a Woman*; Trible, *God and the Rhetoric of Sexuality*; Bird, *Missing Persons and Mistaken Identities*; Hess, "Equality with and without Innocence; Keener, *Paul, Women and Wives*; Witherington, *Women and the Genesis of Christianity*; Bilezikian, *Beyond Sex Roles*; Payne, *Man and Woman, One in Christ*.

[6] Bristow, *What Paul Really Said about Women*, 44–45; Thiselton, *The First Epistle to the Corinthians*, 812–28; Grudem, *Evangelical Feminism and Biblical Truth*, 201–11.

[7] Clark, *Women in the Early Church*; Tucker, *Daughters of the Church*; Torjesen, *When Women Were Priests*; Malone, *Women and Christianity*.

patriarchal cultures in Christian history. Yet, historical arguments tend to have difficulty

in overcoming scarcity and reliability of evidence. Moreover, while both hierarchicalists

and egalitarians agree that culture should not influence the interpretation of the text,

there may be no consensus as to which culture—hierarchical or egalitarian—is

responsible unless it is known whether the message of the text is egalitarian or

hierarchical.

The third is theological. This approach is taken by scholars such as John Piper,

Wayne Grudem, Kevin Gales, Rebecca Merrill Groothuis, Stanley J. Grenz, Kristina

LaCelle–Peterson, John G. Stackhouse, Alan Padgett, and John J. Davis.[8] Scholars argue

based on the canonical context and on how the testimony of Christ's messages and

ministry might inform the roles of women. By evaluating various data available, these

discussions have contributed by providing more coherent views of the roles of women

revealed in the Bible. However, a consensus on the validity of the various interpretations

has been difficult to attain, thus a theological discussion tends to require hermeneutical

examination.

The fourth approach suggests how pastoral, philosophical, psychological, and

socio-cultural studies inform contemporary views of the role of women. James Alsdurf

and Phyllis Alsdurf, Carolyn H. Heggen, Genevieve Lloyd, Mary Van Leeuwen, and

Sally K. Gallagher are some of the contributors.[9] Findings in these areas have been

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[8] Piper, "An Overview Central Concerns"; Grudem, *Countering the Claims of Evangelical Feminism*; Giles, *The Trinity & Subordinationism*; Groothuis, *Good News for Women*; Grenz and Kjesbo, *Women in the Church*; LaCelle-Peterson, *Liberating Tradition*; Stackhouse, *Finally Feminist*; Padgett, *As Christ Submits to the Church*; Davis, "First Timothy 2:12."

[9] Alsdurf and Alsdurf, *Battered into Submission*; Heggen, *Sexual Abuse in Christian Homes and Churches*; Lloyd, *Man of Reason*; Van Leeuwen, *Gender and Grace*; Gallagher, *Evangelical Identity and Gendered Family Life*.

informative in understanding certain readings of the role of women but not necessarily determinative in interpreting the text.

The fifth approach appeals to hermeneutics. Scholars who discuss roles of male and female in terms of hermeneutics include Gordon D. Fee, William J. Webb, Elisabeth Schüssler Fiorenza, Rosemary Radford Ruether, and Satoko Yamaguchi.[10] Fee and Webb argue more from a theological perspective in light of canonical context. Fiorenza, Ruether and Yamaguchi employ historical critical method and reader response criticism and concentrate on recovering and reconstructing the historical reality of women's lives in the Bible. These hermeneutical approaches primarily help distinguish universal norms from culturally relevant instructions of the Bible. Yet "the problem is," Grant R. Osborn complains that yet "few have sought hermeneutical criteria to distinguish the normative from the cultural."[11] The criteria and conceptual framework which this dissertation proposes constitutes this area which is yet to be cultivated.

The sixth one inquires about roles of women and men more specifically in relation to the creation story. This research involves primarily three approaches. The first is exegetical. Scholars such as Thomas Shreiner, William Mounce, Phyllis Trible, Phyllis A. Bird, Letty M. Russell, Bill Arnold, Mary Hayter, Gilbert G. Bilezikian, Claus Westermann, Richard Hess, Carol L. Meyers, David Atkinson contribute insights from their biblical studies[12] The second approach discusses the issue theologically. Scholars include John Piper, Wayne Grudem, Dorothy K. Patterson, John J. Davis, and

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[10] Fee, "Issues in Evangelical Hermeneutics III"; Webb, *Slaves, Women and Homosexual*; Fiorenza, *In Memory of Her*; Ruether, *Sexism and God-Talk*; Yamaguchi, *Mary and Martha*.

[11] Osborne, *The Hermeneutical Spiral*, 421.

[12] Schreiner, "An Interpretation of 1 Timothy 2:9–15"; Mounce, *Pastoral Epistles*; Trible, *God and the Rhetoric of Sexuality*; Bird, "Male and Female He Created Them"; Trible and Russell, *Hagar, Sarah, and Their Children*; Arnold, *Genesis*; Hayter, *The New Eve in Christ*; Bilezikian, *Beyond Sex Roles*; Westermann, *Genesis 1–11*; Hess, "Equality with and without Innocence"; Meyers, *Discovering Eve*; Atkinson, *The Message of Genesis 1–11*.

Michelle A. Gonzalez.[13] The third approach is hermeneutical and David J. A. Clines and William J. Webb,[14] for example, discuss hermeneutical concerns.

Many of these works have contributed to a consensus that both men and women are equally created in the image of God and that they are equally worthy. Through her biblical scholarship, Trible's work in particular became momentous in challenging the traditional understanding of hierarchical roles of women and men. Nevertheless, a theological problem regarding the legitimacy, in both possibility and efficacy, of consulting the creation story on gender roles—which this dissertation addresses—is yet to be examined.

3. Hierarchical Views Regarding the Creation Story

The belief that the creation story is critical in determining roles of women and men today is held by both hierarchicalists and egalitarians. How Adam and Eve related to each other in the pre-fall is a universal principle which contemporary men and women are to follow. Hierarchicalists maintain, for example, that Eve was created after Adam and that she was created from and for Adam; therefore, women's subordination to men is the God ordained order.[15] In contrast, egalitarians may hold that the creation story portrays equality between Adam and Eve because they were equally made in the image of God and equally shared the tasks entrusted to them by God in the Garden of Eden.[16]

For the hierarchical views, the creation story plays a critical role in understanding contemporary marriage and ministry. This is because the passages such as

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[13] Piper, "For Single Men and Women (and the Rest of Us)"; Grudem, *Countering the Claims of Evangelical Feminism*; Patterson, "What Should a Woman Do in the Church?"; Davis, "First Timothy 2:12"; Gonzalez, *Created in God's Image*.

[14] Clines, "What Does Eve Do to Help?"; Webb, *Slaves, Women and Homosexual*.

[15] They are, for instance, John Piper, Wayne Grudem, Dorothy Patterson, Thomas Shreiner, and William Mounce.

[16] Examples include David Atkinson and Richard Hess.

1 Corinthians 11:2–16 and 1 Timothy 2: 8–15 refer to the creation story as Paul instructs

on relationships between men and women. Hierarchicalists generally understand that

this reference to the creation story is the evidence that gender hierarchy was ordained by

God before the fall and therefore is a trans-cultural norm.

Hierarchicalists often believe that the creation story, to which Paul referred in his

letters, contains God's design and a norm for human relations today.[17] For instance,

Köstenberger asserts that the creation story is essential in determining contemporary

marital relationships:

> In exploring the biblical teaching on marriage, there is no more important
> paradigm than God's intended pattern for marriage presented in Genesis 1–3.
> Although the book of Genesis was originally addressed to Israel's wilderness
> generation in preparation for entering the Promised Land, the early chapters of
> this book provide the parameters of the Creator's design for marriage in every
> age. This is reflected in Jesus' and Paul's teaching and applies to our own age as
> well.[18]

Therefore, hierarchicalists may understand that the creation order affirms the leadership

of a husband and wife's submission to the leadership. Köstenberger explains how the

creation account teaches and thus Paul instructs that "the man's ultimate responsibility

for the marriage and the wife's role as his 'suitable helper.'"[19]

> The apostle Paul's comments on Genesis 1–3 repeatedly root the man's primary
> responsibility in the family (as well as in the church) in the fact that he was
> *created first*. Not only does Paul draw attention to the fact that the man was
> created first, but he also notes that it is not the man who was made for the
> woman, but the woman for the man (1 Cor. 11:9; cf. Gen. 2:18, 20) and from the
> man (1 Cor. 11:8, 12; cf. Gen. 2:22). Moreover, the man was the one who
> received the divine command (Gen. 2:16–17), was presented with the woman
> (Gen. 2:22), and named the woman with a name derived from his own (Gen.

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[17] For example, 1 Corinthians 11:2–16; 1 Timothy 2:8–15. All scripture will be taken from NRSV unless otherwise noted.

[18] Köstenberger and Jones, *God, Marriage, and Family*, 22.

[19] Köstenberger and Jones, *God, Marriage, and Family*, 24.

2:23; cf. 3:20), which also implies his authority. There facts follow plainly from a reading of the creation narrative in Genesis.[20]

Many hierarchicalists believe that Paul teaches not only relations between a husband and wife but also relations between men and women in general, based on the creation story. That is, Paul prohibits women from teaching or having authority over men based on the events such as Adam's prior creation to Eve and her being deceived by the Serpent. Therefore, women are not to take leadership in the church. For example, in his commentary on 1 Timothy 2, Mounce states that "Paul sees the prior creation of Adam (Gen 2) as justification for male leadership in the church. He also sees Eve's deception in Gen 3 as a reason for women not to exercise authority."[21] According to Shreiner, "[women] are prohibited from teaching or exercising authority because of the creation order. The creation of Adam before Eve signalled that men are to teach and exercise authority in the church."[22] Patterson also believes that although Adam and Eve shared the same privilege, there were differences between the sexes: man was a leader and woman was his helper.[23] According to Patterson, the reasons why women are prohibited to teach and in 1 Tim 2:9–15 are first, Adam's prior creation to Eve; second, the God-assigned purposes of Adam to provide, protect and lead and of Eve to help and assist Adam to do his responsibilities; and finally, Eve's spoiling creation by usurping Adam's leadership role, in her disobedience to God's command.[24]

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[20] Köstenberger and Jones, *God, Marriage, and Family*, 24; emphasis in original.

[21] Mounce, *Pastoral Epistles*, 46.

[22] Schreiner, "An Interpretation of 1 Timothy 2:9–15" 120.

[23] Patterson, "What Should a Woman Do in the Church?," 160.

[24] In Patterson's words, "(1) the order of creation—the man was formed first (1 Tim 2:13); (2) the purpose in creation—the man was assigned the task of providing, protecting, and leading, and the woman was created to be a helper suitable to assist the man in his vast responsibilities in dominion (1 Tim 2:13; see also Gen 2:15–24); (3) the marring of creation when the woman usurped the man's responsibility in leadership, ignoring the divine directive that must have come to her through her husband

Roles of male and female today are determined by roles played by Adam and Eve before the fall because the state before the fall was pristine without any effect of sin and thereby the God-assigned purpose was revealed. For instance, Piper ensures that the husband's headship was ordained by God before sin affected relationships: "Adam's headship in marriage was established by God before the Fall, and was not a result of sin."[25] How men and women in the church should relate to each other also is determined by the creation order because it is the order before the fall. Grudem also explains that what Paul says about roles of women in 1 Timothy is a universal mandate because Paul bases his instruction on the creation order in the state before the fall:

> When Paul bases his argument on the order of creation of Adam and Eve, it indicates that his command about women not teaching or having authority in the assembled congregation transcends cultures and societies. It applies to men and women as they were created by God at the beginning, and it is not due to any distortion brought on by sin or the Fall. It applies, then, to all churches for all time, and it is a means by which the beauty of manhood and womanhood as God created them can be manifested in the life of the church.[26]

As Grudem states, the state before the fall reveals true manhood and womanhood which should entail the roles of men and women today. Robert Culver also believes that Adam and Eve possessed man-ness or male humanity and woman-ness or female humanity as archetypes. This man-ness and woman-ness, according to Culver, are forever and inescapable aspects of humans and are due to, for example, Eve's creation from Adam.[27]

(1 Tim 2:14; see also Gen 3:6)." Patterson, "What Should a Woman Do in the Church? One Woman's Personal Reflections," 172.

[25] Piper, "A Vision of Biblical Complementarity," 54. Some scholars such as Dorothy Patterson think that this submission of a wife to her husband is voluntary. Shaw, *God Speaks to Us, Too*, 187.

[26] Grudem, *Countering the Claims of Evangelical Feminism*, 36.

[27] Culver, "A Traditional View," 30–31. According to Culver, "Paul treats the first pair, man and woman, as archetypes (or prototypes)—not Platonic forms or some type or antitype in heaven, but as concrete examples of man-ness and woman-ness. The man is not simply Eve's husband, nor she merely Adam's wife, but each as either man-ness or woman-ness forever. This is inescapable. In that case, two

In order to clarify male headship over female in the creation story,

hierarchicalists may list the elements with which the story would indicate Adam's

headship over Eve. For Doriani, the elements are three: Adam is created first, leading to

thoughts of primogeniture; Adam names Eve, and naming is a function of authority; and

God calls Adam, not Adam and Eve, to account for the first couple's rebellion.[28] For

Grudem, there are "at least ten" elements: Adam's prior creation to Eve; Adam's

representative role as the human race; Adam's naming of Eve; God's naming of Adam

for the human race; Adam's primary accountability to the fall; Eve's purpose as a helper

for Adam; their exacerbated relationship as a curse; wife's submission to her husband as

part of the salvation plan; marriage as a symbol of the relationship between Christ and

the church; and the relationship between men and women as a parallel with that in the

Trinity.[29]

Hierarchicalists usually affirm that both husbands and wives are created in the

image of God and therefore the two parties are equal. However, their roles are

distinctively different. This is because God ordained human responsibilities based on the

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features of the Genesis account bear on the relation of male and female humanity in the church. *First,*
female humanity (30) was derived out of male humanity—'for man did not come from woman, but
woman from man' (1 Cor 11:9 NIV). True, as the chapter later says, 'many is born of woman' (v. 12
NIV), but that is how the race goes on, not how it started."

[28] Doriani, "A Redemptive-Historical Model," 34.

[29] In Grudem's words, "1. The order: Adam was created first, then Eve (note the sequence in
Genesis 2:7 and 2:18–23; 1 Timothy 2:13). 2. The representation: Adam, not Eve, had a special role in
representing the human race (1 Corinthians 15:22, 45–49; Romans 5:12–21). 3. The naming of woman:
Adam named Eve; Eve did not name Adam (Genesis 2:23). 4. The naming of the human race: God named
the human race (Genesis 5:2). 5. The primary accountability: God called Adam to account first after the
Fall (Genesis 3:9). 6. The purpose: Eve was created as a helper for Adam, not Adam as a helper for Eve
(Genesis 2:18; 1 Corinthians 11:9). 7. The conflict. The curse brought a distortion of previous roles, not
the introduction of new roles (Genesis 3:16). 8. The restoration: Salvation in Christ in the New Testament
reaffirms the creation order (Colossians 3:18–19). 9. The mystery: Marriage from the beginning of
creation was a picture of the relationship between Christ and the church (Ephesians 5:32–33). 10. The
parallel with the Trinity: The equality, differences, and unity between men and women reflect the
equality, differences, and unity in the Trinity (1 Corinthians 11:3)." Grudem, *Countering the Claims of
Evangelical Feminism,* 72; original emphasis excluded. In this book, Grudem explains the details of the
list.

sexual difference. For example, *The Baptist Faith and Message* states that husbands

have responsibility to lead their families, and wives have a responsibility to submit their

husbands as their helper. Husbands protect their family and wives take care of their

household and nurture their children. These are God-given responsibilities of

Christians.[30]

Equality between men and women as the same bearers of the image of God yet

hierarchy between them is often explained by their ontological equality with functional

differences. That is, man and woman or a husband and wife are equal in essence, being,

or worth, but different in role or function. For example, Schreiner states, "One can

possess a different function and still be equal in essence and worth. Women are equal to

men in essence and in being; there is no ontological distinction, and yet they have a

different function or role in church and home."[31] Grudem also states that "the Bible does

teach that men and women were created with equal value and dignity before God, it also

teaches that they were created to fill different roles in marriage."[32]

For hierarchical views, the creation story often contains significant teachings on

how contemporary men and women should relate to each other. In Mary Kassian's

words,

> An understanding of creation is central to a correct understanding of male and
> female roles, as all Biblical teaching on roles is contingent on this historic event.
> Gender roles are rooted in the created order, and apart from this context, cannot

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[30] "The husband and wife are of equal worth before God, since both are created in God's image.
The marriage relationship models the way God relates to His people. A husband is to love his wife as
Christ loved the church. He has the God-given responsibility to provide for, to protect, and to lead his
family. A wife is to submit herself graciously to the servant leadership of her husband even as the church
willingly submits to the headship of Christ. 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." The Southern Baptist Convention, "Official
Website of the Southern Baptist Convention," XVIII. The Family.
[31] Schreiner, "Head Coverings, Prophecies and the Trinity" 120.
[32] Grudem, *Countering the Claims of Evangelical Feminism*, 20.

be understood. Therefore the Genesis account of creation is the underpinning from New Testament teaching on the role of women.[33]

The creation story is not the only ground for hierarchical views of roles of women and men. Nonetheless, it is one of the critical rationales for their belief in gender hierarchy.

4. Egalitarian Views Regarding the Creation Story

Some egalitarians also believe that the creation story teaches a standard of how men and women relate to each other today. The fact that both man and woman were created in the image of God is specifically the testimony of gender equality. The shared roles between Adam and Eve and Eve's creation of Adam are indications of mutuality, equality and close association between them.

In the discussions of marriage and ministry, egalitarians may also weigh as significant the state before the fall. This is because how Adam and Eve related to each other reveals God's original design. Thus, Gilbert Bilezikian asks, "What was the nature of male-female relations in God's original design of creation?"[34] Paradise is the "destination" according to Bilezikian:

> The term *paradise* is popularly and appropriately used to refer to conditions prevailing at both extremities of history. Paradise evokes the Garden of Eden at the very beginning. It also designates the destination of the redeemed at the very end. With paradise regained, what was lost at the beginning will be reclaimed at the end. The story of humanity's fall and redemption is contained between the polarity of the two paradises.[35]

Judy Brown also thinks that the marital relationship in the state before the fall was "God's original and perfect design" and that the relationship was equal: "God's original and perfect design for a husband and wife to live in unity and equality is quite evident in

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[33] Kassian, *Women, Creation and the Fall*, 13.
[34] Bilezikian, *Beyond Sex Roles*, 14.
[35] Bilezikian, *Beyond Sex Roles*, 14.

both accounts [of Genesis chapter 1 and 2]."[36] For Richard Hess, the creation story

contains important teachings about humans as men and women: "The accounts of

creation, the Garden of Eden and the Fall in Genesis 1–3 may contain more doctrinal

teaching concerning the nature of humanity as male and female, as well as the state of

the fallen world, than any other single text in the Bible."[37] Also because of its canonical

position, the creation story should be a focal point in understanding theological gender

roles, which are equal: "Their position at the beginning of the Torah, and thus of

Scripture as a whole, makes them an important starting point for the study of the biblical

teaching on gender equality."[38]

In contrast to hierarchicalists, egalitarians usually recognize no gender hierarchy

between Adam and Eve. Elizabeth McCabe, for example, asserts that "not a hint of

inequality exists in the creation of man and woman."[39] Instead, egalitarians may refer to

the creation story for equal status of women to men.[40] For instance, David Atkinson

believes that "Genesis 3 gives us a picture of the ruling male and the struggling

female—but that is a description of the distortions caused by sin. Genesis 1 and 2 speak

of sexual equality, mutuality and joy in 'la difference.'"[41] Hess also thinks that the first

chapter sees nothing but "an equality of male and female created together in the image

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[36] Brown, *Women Ministers According to Scripture,* 17.

[37] Hess, "Equality with and without Innocence," 79.

[38] Hess, "Equality with and without Innocence," 79.

[39] McCabe, *Women in the Biblical World,* 3.

[40] Egalitarians may hold that there are no differentiated gender roles expressed in Genesis 1. For example, Bird believes that the author of the creation account does not indicate gender roles, either complementarian or egalitarian. Bird, "Male and Female He Created Them," 155. However, Genesis 2 seems to be seen more decisive for egalitarian gender roles. Bird says that "Genesis 2, like Genesis 1, contains no statement of dominance or subordination in the relationship of the sexes, but its narratively constructed emphasis on the equality of the two is the foundation and prelude to its negation in Genesis 3." Bird, *Missing Persons and Mistaken Identities,* 165. For different views, see, for example, Arnold, *Genesis,* 73–74.

[41] Atkinson, *The Message of Genesis 1–11,* 73.

of God."[42] According to Hess, "the second part of Genesis 2:23 is a chiasm (concentric structure) in which the words for 'woman' and 'man' are positioned at the centre, suggesting a corresponding and equal relationship to one another."[43] For Biezikian, the purpose of the creation order story is "to show that both man and woman were uniquely made of the same human substance and that, as a result, they enjoyed, prior to the fall, a relation of full mutuality and equality."[44]

For equality between Adam and Eve, many egalitarians appeal to the fact that they were both created in the image of and likeness to God. Brown emphasizes that Adam and Eve are the bearers of the same image of God, whatever the image may be.

> The biblical account does not differentiate in any way; in whatever way Adam bore the image of God, Eve bore the image of God. Everything that scholars say about the specialness of man, his intellectual and spiritual capacities, the fact that he represents the crowning achievement of God's creative activities-all of it is equally applicable to woman.[45]

Scholars also show other elements in the creation story that may reveal equality between Adam and Eve. For McCabe, some of the elements are that God blessed both of them; God gave Adam and Eve "equal authority in managing creation"; as well as both of them bore the image of God.[46] Unlike some hierarchical views, the creation order of Adam and Eve is not the evidence of gender hierarchy but rather an evidence of equality. Bilezikian insists that Eve being taken from Adam shows their same constitution and therefore the same humanity without a degree.[47]

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[42] Hess, "Equality with and without Innocence," 82.

[43] Hess, "Equality with and without Innocence," 87.

[44] Bilezikian, *Beyond Sex Roles*, 24.

[45] Brown, *Women Ministers According to Scripture*, 18.

[46] McCabe, *Women in the Biblical World*, 3.

[47] In Bilezikian's words, "God had recourse to a strange cloning operation that demonstrated beyond the shadow of a doubt the essential identity between man and woman. Had Eve been made out of the ground, there might have existed ambiguity about the integrity of her human nature. After all, animals had also been taken from the ground. She might have been human but to a lesser degree than man.

Bilezikian also argues that Adam being formed before Eve is not evidence of his supremacy over her. For example, if being created first designates higher authority, "both Adam and Eve fall under the rulership of animals" because "according to Genesis 1, animals were created before" Adam and Eve.[48] Similarly, for egalitarians, Eve's role as helper is not the evidence of her submission to Adam but rather of mutual help between them for a community. Claus Westermann states that Genesis chapter 2 reflects "the personal community of man and woman in the broadest sense—bodily and spiritual community, mutual help and understanding, joy and contentment in each other."[49]

Just like hierarchicalists, many egalitarians also hold the belief that the state before the fall was pristine before the effects of sin were introduced. For egalitarians, however, God's ordained roles of man and woman were characterized as equal. Adam and Eve were both the bearers of the same image of God and shared between them same blessings, tasks, responsibilities, constitution and mutual help. The creation story is of a great interest and importance for discussions on marriage and ministry among both hierarchicalists and egalitarians.

5. Conclusion

Christians have been seeking how men and women today should relate to each other through different approaches such as exegetical, historical, theological, philosophical, psychological, socio-cultural, hermeneutical methods. Regardless of the difference in approaches, the creation story has often been considered as essential in determining contemporary roles of male and female.

However, since she was taken from Adam, no confusion about her full participation in his humanity was possible. She was made from the same material as his own body. From one being, God made two persons." Bilezikian, *Beyond Sex Roles*, 23.

[48] Bilezikian, *Beyond Sex Roles*, 24.

[49] Westermann, *Genesis 1–11*, 232.

The creation narrative has been appreciated in Christian theology for its teaching on important truths about God, humans and the rest of the creation and God's good plans for them. However, the first chapters of Genesis are often significant for Christian theology on the roles of men and women because of the belief that their God-ordained roles as male and female can be discovered in the relationship between Adam and Eve in the state before the fall and sin. From hierarchical perspectives, God's ordaining of Adam and Eve is hierarchical. For egalitarians, their relation was not hierarchical but equal. Discovering how Adam and Eve may have related to each other has been one of the important means for contemporary discussions in order to determine how men and women should relate to each other today. Yet, there has been no consensus between them.

CHAPTER TWO

PROBLEMS REGARDING THE CREATION STORY AND ROLES OF
WOMEN AND MEN

1. Introduction

The perspective that the state before the fall is sinless is the idea that was suggested primarily by St. Augustine. From this perspective, Christians, both hierarchicalists and egalitarians, sometimes conclude that roles played by Adam and Eve reveal universal principles. However, this claim raises two questions that need to be answered: First, can fallen humans have sufficient access to the pre-fall experience of human roles to guide current behaviour? Second, even if humans did have such access, is the relationship of Adam and Eve in the creation story an ideal for all time that contemporary men and women should emulate? Or is it a God given starting point honoured by further development, not recapitulation?

This chapter introduces inquiries that the present dissertation aims to investigate. These are centered around the above two questions regarding discussions of roles of women and men in reference to Augustine's view of the creation. This chapter first poses the problem of the knowledge of the life before the fall. These problems concern four aspects: confusion between "God-assigned purpose" and "current structure and tendency," genre of the creation story and status of Adam and Eve, interpretative method, and the use of reason to obtain knowledge of conditions before the fall. It then looks at the second problem of whether roles played by Adam and Eve are an ideal for all time or a God-given starting point.

2. Knowledge of the Life before the Fall

Gender role discussions centered around the creation story primarily assume that there are God-assigned roles of man and woman and attempt to determine what these might be by investigating the roles of Adam and Eve. This is because their roles are regarded as ideal and perfect since they were ordained by God in the state before the fall. Nonetheless, it may not be so simple to discover these roles from the perspective of humans who live after the fall and whose life and reason are affected by sin.

A. The Confusion of the Knowledge of "Nature" as God's Assigned Purpose

The hierarchical views sometimes claim that "we are persuaded from Scripture that masculinity and femininity are rooted in who we are by nature."[1] By "nature" the view supposedly refers to God's assigned purpose before the fall. Yet, the term "nature" can convey many distinct concepts such as the natural world or current tendency, which are easily confused among them.[2]

For instance, at first glance it appears that John Calvin's (1509–1564) use of the term "nature" or "natural," simply refers to the creation account, the state before the fall. That is, in his commentary on 1 Timothy 2:12, where Paul addresses women's teaching office and subsequently Eve's account, Calvin explains how woman is not entitled to teach: it is because "woman, who by nature (that is, by the ordinary law of God) is

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[1] Piper, "For Single Men and Women (and the Rest of Us) ", 21.

[2] Scholars understand what the Bible says by "φύσις" (nature) differently. The interpretation of the term "nature" in reference to gender roles in 1 Corinthians 11:14 varies. From a hierarchicalist perspective, it refers to "the objective, ordered structure of reality that faith holds to have been set up by the Creator" or "order of creation." Brown, "The New Testament against Itself," 200–06. From an egalitarian perspective, it means "[one's] culture, in light of what is considered to be honorable behavior." Barker et al., *The NIV Study Bible*, 1750.

formed to obey."[3] Yet, in his application of natural law, Calvin's view appears to be

shaped by his view of nature, which reflects cultural views in his time. This is because

Calvin even affirms the need for a distinction of ranks in society based on natural

reason: "the political distinction of ranks is not to be repudiated, for natural reason itself

dictates this in order to take away confusion."[4] This account indicates the possibility that

Calvin's interpretation regarding roles of women might also include a hermeneutical

problem.

It is then revealing to see how Calvin experienced his confusion in order to

discover the same error people today might make. That is, we need to ask when we

discuss the natures of man and woman, if we really are discerning their natures as God

designed or we merely are identifying our current structure and tendency and believing

them as if they are God-assigned purposes.

B. Genre of the Creation Story and the Status of Adam and Eve

An appropriate interpretation of the creation story requires awareness of its

genre. However, opinions vary as to what is the genre of the creation story. Some

scholars think that the story is pure history,[5] others believe that it contains aspects of

history and myth, therefore containing rich rhetoric.[6] Still others assert that it is

symbolic literature that conveys important truths, without historicity.[7]

Scholars also have different views concerning what Adam and Eve may be.

Among evangelical Protestants, it is often assumed that they are the biological original

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[3] Calvin, *Commentaries on the Epistles to Timothy, Titus, and Philemon*, 68.
[4] Calvin, *Commentaries on the Four Last Books of Moses, Arranged in the Form of a Harmony*, II, 221.
[5] Scholars who hold this view include, for example, Andreas J. Köstenberger, David W. Jones and Mary Kassian.
[6] For example, Howard Wallace and Bill Arnold.
[7] Daniel Harlow, John Walton and John Gibson.

ancestors of all humanity.[8] Nevertheless, this view has been challenged primarily on the archaeological, biochemical, biological, and paleonanthropological bases. Therefore, some scholars think that Adam and Eve are the original spiritual ancestors of all humanity as the first *homo sapiens* to whom God introduced himself.[9] Or for yet others, they are rather symbolic figures of all humanity.[10]

While there have been these contested views of literary genre and of the status of Adam and Eve, depending which view one holds, the message drawn from and thus one's understanding of the roles of Adam and Eve vary. It is necessary then to investigate the legitimacy of proposed views above and examine the impact of these views upon our understanding of roles played by Adam and Eve.

C. The Interpretative Method of the Creation Story

When one attempts to articulate the roles played by Adam and Eve as ideal, it involves the interpretation of the creation story. However, the interpretation is more problematic than is assumed. The discussions on marriage and ministry in reference to the creation story primarily follow St. Augustine's view of the creation story. According to Augustine, the Garden of Eden is a sinless perfect world. But if it is so, how do those who live in the sinful or affected world interpret the life of such a state? Do they have a tool to interpret life in a perfect world? The sinless perfect world is quite foreign to those who live in the imperfect world. One may not be able to determine, for example, the sinless relationship between Adam and Eve before the fall by analyzing the author(s)' explanation of corrupted relationships after the fall.

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[8] Stanley Grenz, George Kufeldt, Andreas J. Köstenberger and Dexter Callender.
[9] H. Wade Seaford, James Peterson and Claus Westermann.
[10] Daniel Harlow, Dietrich Bonhoeffer and Ronald Simkins.

That being the case, one must then ask if the interpretative method that studies the sinful or affected world is necessarily efficacious to interpret such a unique state of perfection. To regard the state before the fall as spotless makes it difficult to interpret the creation story. It is also necessary to know what happens when we apply the cultural studies we normally use for the rest of the Bible to the interpretation of the creation story.

D. The Use of Reason to Obtain Knowledge of Conditions before the Fall

Positing that the discussions of marriage and ministry in reference to Adam and Eve is framed by Augustine's view of sin and the fall, one may wonder how fallen nature through tainted reason adequately understand the sinless nature of Adam and Eve before the fall. Because of the fall, the entire human race is corrupt, including nature and reason. Thus, people have difficulty comprehending sinless human nature as experienced in the Garden of Eden. If it is assumed that Adam and Eve possessed such perfect, sinless nature, how sufficiently is the knowledge of such a nature definable by fallen humans and attainable through limited and corrupt reason? Reading the pre-fall state as sinless makes it challenging to understand the state noetically. One needs to ask also what might happen to understandings of the roles of Adam and Eve if one attempts to attain such knowledge by reason. For example, what might be expected of a description of how a sinless person relates to a sinless person in an ideal world if a sinful person describes it in a distorted world with a limited or even erroneous mind?

Thus, we encounter primarily four problems in relation to the knowledge of the state before the fall: confusion between nature as God-assigned purpose and nature as current structure and tendency; genre of the creation story and the status of Adam and

Eve; the interpretative method of the story; and the knowledge of sinless nature by reason alone without divine self-disclosure of special revelation and revelation through Christ. When discussions on marriage and ministry make reference to the creation story, the issues of the genre of the story and the status of Adam and Eve are, unfortunately, rarely dealt with. Also, the life and nature before the fall is assumed as pristine, sinless, and perfect.[11] But it must be asked if and how such knowledge can be reasonably and adequately attained.

3. Is the Creation Story an Ideal or a Starting Point? Conceptual Framework of the Creation Story

Contemporary views of the role of women that are primarily grounded on the creation story claim that roles in marriage and ministry are instituted and ordained in the state before the fall. For this position, recovering the state before the fall is the way to attain the appropriate roles of male and female. This view is primarily framed by Augustine's view of the creation story, which was further followed by reformers such as John Calvin and many contemporary hierarchicalists and egalitarians. For this view, humans were created initially perfect and then corrupted subsequently. Therefore, the state before the fall delineates the goal, where God-assigned purpose was first revealed.

In contrast, other Christians tend to focus more on the work of Christ and insist that the roles of male and female today should reflect the redemptive work of Christ.[12] Instead of appealing to the creation story, these Christians tend to seek directly for roles

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[11] The idea that the life before the fall is sinless and pristine is an assumption that was suggested mainly by Augustine. It is not necessarily the biblical idea as Pannenberg states: "There is no real biblical basis for the emphasis of the older Protestant dogmatics on a paradisaic perfection and integrity of human life before the fall in consequence of Adam's original righteousness." Pannenberg, *Systematic Theology*, 31.

[12] See, for example, Webb, *Slaves, Women and Homosexuals*, 49–55.

of men and women in the kingdom of God. This future-oriented view is in line with the view of the creation story held by the early Church Fathers such as Irenaeus, Clement of Alexandria (d. 220) and Gregory of Nazianzus (c. 330–91). Instead of the idea that human beings were created complete and perfect from the start, Irenaeus, for example, suggested that humans were created to grow.[13] Therefore, the state before the fall is the starting-point toward the fulfillment of God-assigned purpose, not the finale. Humans today can and should do better than when they started at creation.

If Augustine's view is right, humans should seek roles of women and men in the created order as an ideal. However, if Irenaeus's view is right, the creation story is a starting point, and ideal roles of female and male are found not in the creation account, but rather in the state of the kingdom of God. Then which view is more plausible and why?

A. Irenaean View of the Creation Story

The inquiry concerns what Irenaeus said about Adam and Eve in contrast to Augustine's idea that they were sinless and perfect humans in a sinless world. Unlike Augustine who thought that Adam and Eve were full adults, why did Irenaeus think that Adam and Eve were imperfect children? The related question is how Irenaeus's view that regards Adam and Eve as children and the state before the fall as imperfect has been shared by other important church Fathers in his time and has been maintained to the present day in the Eastern Orthodox Church. Moreover, contemporary scholars in different disciplines and specifically in natural science are discovering the Irenaean view of the incomplete state before the fall as more adequate than the Augustinian view of the

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[13] Irenaeus, "Against Heresies," 3.38.3.

perfect and completed state. It is helpful to explore how compatible Irenaeus's view is to Christian orthodoxy, cosmology, ecology and biblical terms.

What if we read the creation story and the references in the New Testament through the lens of Irenaeus's framework instead of Augustine's? What difference does this make? It can be asked how the former framework might solve the above problems, namely, how the framework makes the access to life before the fall possible and the interpretation and understanding of the creation story available to us.

B. Calling in the Creation Story

Augustine's view of the creation story describes the roles of Adam and Eve as a goal. Irenaeus's view of the story delineates the roles as a beginning. One of the criteria to discover which idea of the creation story—Augustine's or Irenaeus's—is more adequate is to examine the nature of calling of Adam and Eve, for calling, task or vocation is an integral part of human roles. Positing that humans do have knowledge of the pristine state before the fall, are the roles of Adam and Eve, in terms of calling, to be a guide or standard for all humans, as Augustine's view of the creation narrative suggests?

We need to ask: Do Adam and Eve have particular callings specific to their gender?; Is there any observable hierarchy between their tasks?; Are their callings applicable to human beings for all times? It is also important to ask how positively or negatively Adam and Eve respond to their callings. Are the responses positive enough for all men and women today to emulate? The question is does the Bible encourage Christians to follow the example of Adam and Eve or of Christ instead?

C. Marriage, Ministry and the Kingdom of God

If the roles of Adam and Eve are not necessarily the standard of human roles, then, where should Christian theology find its foundation and guide for marriage and ministry? If the Irenaean conceptual framework of the creation story is found to be more adequate than the Augustinian, how might the former help answer this question? It may be asked how Irenaeus's anthropology that is closely related to Christology might inform Christian theology on marriage and ministry.

4. Conclusion

Contemporary discussions on marriage and ministry in reference to the creation story are more problematic than often are supposed. While it may be assumed that woman and man originally had ideal roles as God ordained and while we seek these in roles of Adam and Eve, our assumption may be merely our philosophical views which may be the reflection of our ideology. Yet, no matter what their roles were, it needs to be asked if their roles were ideal and thus applicable today, or if the significance of the roles was more of a starting point. The following chapters examine these questions in order to demonstrate that Christian theology of roles of women and men should find a guide in the narrative of Christ and his teachings, not in the roles of Adam and Eve.

PART II: THE KNOWLEDGE OF LIFE BEFORE THE FALL

This section examines whether fallen humans have sufficient access to pre-fall experience of roles of Adam d Eve to guide roles in marriage and ministry today. To achieve this purpose, the section addresses four primary problems: the use of the term "nature," the genre of the creation story in Genesis, how to interpret the story, and the knowledge of nature before the fall. We will approach these problems first by investigating the confusion that surrounds the term "nature" in contemporary discussions of male and female. Specifically, we will ask whether the phrase "by nature" is used to refer to God-assigned purpose, or to current structure and tendency of human relationships.

CHAPTER THREE

CONFUSION REGARDING KNOWLEDGE OF GOD-ASSIGNED PURPOSE

1. Introduction

When authors say "we are persuaded from Scripture that masculinity and

femininity are rooted in who we are by nature,"[1] what is meant "by nature"? How are

such authors relating their view of nature to their understanding of the role of women?

To obtain some insight, this chapter will examine John Calvin's writing, to whom

contemporary reformed churches and others owe so much for their confessions and

practices. This chapter will primarily examine how Calvin used the argument from

nature to understand the role of women as different from that of men.

At first glance Calvin's uses of the term "nature" appear to refer simply to the

creation account, the state of humanity before the fall. For example, in his commentary

on 1 Timothy 2:12, where Paul addresses woman's teaching office and subsequently the

account of Eve, Calvin explains how women are not entitled to teach: it is because

"woman, who by nature (that is, by the ordinary law of God) is formed to obey."[2] Calvin

appears to suggest that woman is subject to man by nature because the subjection was

ordained in the creation story.[3] Nonetheless, for Calvin, many other things also are

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[1] Piper, "For Single Men and Women (and the Rest of Us)," 21. The statement was given by Piper in explaining his understanding of one's masculine or feminine personhood, in the statement such as "distinctions in masculine and feminine roles are ordained by God as part of the created order, and should find an echo in every human heart." The Council on Biblical Manhood and Womanhood, "The Denvers Statement," 46.

[2] Calvin, *Commentaries on the Epistles to Timothy, Titus, and Philemon*, 68.

[3] Jones highlights the importance of the concept of creation and law in Calvin's thought. She states that when people think of themes that mark Calvinism, they surprisingly and almost invariably fail to include two doctrines that Reformed Christians have long considered foundational: creation, the vast, living world that God has created and continues to sustain; and law, God's intentions for the right-ordering of the world. That these are important themes can hardly be disputed, according to Jones. She

regulated by nature.[4] For instance, the need for a distinction of ranks in society is based on natural reason: "the political distinction of ranks is not to be repudiated, for natural reason itself dictates this in order to take away confusion."[5] Breast feeding, for Calvin, is divinely constituted by nature: "he [God] constitutes nurses; and they who deem it a hardship to nourish their own offspring, break . . . the sacred bond of nature."[6] Nature teaches respect for parents: "the honor of parents, . . . [t]he honor due to the old . . . is dictated by nature itself."[7] Calvin regards these things as ordered by nature, yet they are not parts of the creation story itself. This suggests that, in Calvin's mind, certain things are already determined by nature whether or not they are in the pre-fall creation story. How, then, does Calvin decide certain things are ordered by nature? Why does Calvin use the concept of nature in his theology? What impact does this argument of nature have upon his understanding of the role of women?

The term "nature" can mean many things.[8] In this chapter it is used to mean "God-assigned purpose,"[9] "current structure and tendency," or "the natural world," and

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argues that Calvin's emphasis on these themes is evident in his *Institutes*, in which he devotes length and depth to the discussion of creation and law. Jones, "Glorious Creation, Beautiful Law," 20.

[4] Höpfl, *The Christian Polity of John Calvin*, 180. Höpfl lists extensively the examples of what Calvin thought "nature," "natural sense" or "reason" teaches: "the authority of fathers over wives and children, the sanctity of monogamous marriage, the duty to care for families, breast-feeding, primogeniture (albeit with qualifications) the sacrosanctity of envoys and ambassadors, the obligation of promises, degrees of marriage [that should avoid an incestuous marriage], the need for witnesses in murder trials, the need for a distinction of ranks in society, the duty to award honors only to those qualified, respect for the old, equity in commercial dealings and that religion must be the first concern of governors."

[5] Calvin, *Commentaries on the Four Last Books of Moses, Arranged in the Form of a Harmony*, Num 3:5.

[6] Calvin, *Calvin's Commentaries on the First Book of Moses Called Genesis*, Gen 21:7.

[7] Calvin, *Commentaries on the Four Last Books of Moses, Arranged in the Form of a Harmony*, 19:32.

[8] According to the Oxford English Dictionary, some of the meanings of the term "nature" are "senses relating to physical or bodily power, strength, or substance," "senses relating to mental or physical impulses and requirements," "senses relating to innate character", or "senses relating to the material world." For more definitions of nature, see, for example, *Without Nature?: A New Condition for Theology*. Lisa S. Cahill, one of the authors, states, nature is "polyvalent" and "equivocal." Cahill, "Nature, Change, and Justice," 283.

will be discussed primarily in the light of the first two definitions. This chapter argues

that in his application of natural law, Calvin's view of the roles of women was shaped

by his view of nature, which reflected cultural views in his time about women. For this

purpose, Calvin's view of nature, his use of natural law and his views of women are

examined. The chapter also addresses how contemporary use of "nature" regarding roles

of women may sometimes make the same error as that of Calvin.

2. Nature

The idea that one "should live in accordance with nature" was "one of the most

ancient and pervasive moral ideas," although the concept of nature has changed over

time.[10] Greek philosophers had different concepts of nature. For example, the earlier

Greek philosophers thought that nature was a blind and non-directive force that was

operated by chance. But for Plato, nature, as an intelligent product of God, was

something human reason could understand. For Aristotle, nature was a cause of order,

which humans could not explain. Yet, the Christian approach to nature was to see it as

God's creation.[11]

Calvin often uses the concept of nature in his works. He appeals to nature or

something related to nature in his expressions such as "'order of nature' (*ordo naturae –*

ordre de nature); the 'sense of nature' (*sensus naturae*); the 'voice of nature itself' (*vox*

ipsius naturae), 'nature itself dictates' (*ipsa natura dictat*); and simply 'by nature'

(*naturaliter*), or variant forms such as 'the law engraven (or implanted) on all by nature'

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[9] I use "God-assigned purpose" based on the assumption that one can know and distinguish this from "current structure and tendency" because that is the assumption held by Calvin and people who appeal to "nature" in gender role discussion.

[10] Porter, *Natural and Divine Law*, 64.

[11] McGrath, *A Scientific Theology*, 90–94, 137.

(legem naturaliter omnibus insitam)."[12] Calvin has a high regard for nature: "This, indeed, was the genuine order that the fabric of the world should be the school in which we might learn piety, and thence be conducted to eternal life and perfect felicity"[13] He also comments in his commentary on 1 Corinthians 11:14, "Paul again sets *nature* before them as the teacher of what is proper."[14] Nature teaches certain order and governance:

> We began to handle this point, why S. Paul does in this place namely forbid women to meddle with office of teaching: and it is this, because the Church of God must have a certain order and governance, . . . For it were a great shame for us not to have that honesty at the least which nature teaches the very heathen. And if it be so, . . . have yet notwithstanding some kind of governance amongst them, how much more ought it to be observed amongst us?[15]

For Calvin, nature teaches many other things regarding the roles of women: "Now, the human race could not exist without the woman; as nature itself taught Plato."[16] For him, public office should not be the concern of women: "Natural propriety has been maintained, women have in all ages been excluded from the public management of affairs."[17] It is unnatural for women to govern men: "Now it is certain that women were never received to any public office. And who has let it, or been the stay of it, but that God only has imprinted such a knowledge in *nature,* that although we be not otherwise taught, yet we know that it were an unseemly thing to have women govern men?"[18] Calvin frequently appeals to nature regarding the role of women.

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[12] Hesselink, *Calvin's Concept of the Law,* 60.
[13] Calvin, *Institutes of the Christian Religion of John Calvin,* II.6.1.
[14] Calvin, *Commentary on the Epistle of Paul the Apostle to the Corinthians,* 11:4.
[15] Calvin, *Sermons of M. Iohn Coluin, on the Epistles of S. Paule to Timothie and Titus,* 212. In quoting this translation of Calvin's work, I have modernized the spelling.
[16] Calvin, *Calvin's Commentaries on the First Book of Moses Called Genesis,* 2:18.
[17] Calvin, *Commentary on the Epistle of Paul the Apostle to the Corinthians,* 14:34.
[18] Calvin, *Sermons of M. Iohn Coluin, on the Epistles of S. Paule to Timothie and Titus,* 212.

Calvin uses nature in two concepts: nature before the fall and nature after the fall. The former refers to "created perfection and humanity as an expression of the image of God" and the latter refers to "fallen nature and all that is opposed to God and the law of . . . creation."[19] The distinction is expressed in his commentary on Ephesians 2:3: "For we are not born such as Adam was at first created . . ."[20] Calvin describes human nature after the fall as corrupted:

> We acknowledge man by nature to be blind, darkened in understanding and full of corruption and perversity of heart so that of himself he has no power to be able to comprehend the true knowledge of God as is proper, nor to apply himself to good works. But on the contrary, if he is left by God to what he is by nature, he is only able to live in ignorance and to be abandoned to all iniquity.[21]

Calvin regarded nature as an arena which reflected God's glory. The cosmos reflects "God's wisdom, power, goodness and providence," and "all the beauties of creation are a divine revelation of the nature of God."[22] In his commentaries and sermons on Job, Isaiah, and the Psalms, Calvin continually uses nature imagery to show that the world reflected God's glory.[23] For example, in his commentary on Psalm 104, he says, "That we may enjoy the sight of him, . . . that is to say, we must cast our eyes upon the very beautiful fabric of the world in which he wishes to be seen by us."[24] Pre-fall nature was an ordered world that was ordained by God: "the regularities within nature are not to be thought of as being intrinsic to it, but reflect the ordering imposed upon it by God in creation." The rain does not fall by some blind instinct of nature; "rather, such

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[19] Hesselink, *Calvin's Concept of the Law*, 62, 79 n37.

[20] Calvin, *Commentary on the Book of Psalms*, Eph. 2:3.

[21] Calvin, *Calvini Opera Selecta*, I.419, quoted in Hesselink, *Calvin's Concept of the Law*, 79 n37.

[22] Schreiner, *The Theater of His Glory*, 4.

[23] Schreiner, *The Theater of His Glory*, 4.

[24] Calvin, *Commentary on the Book of Psalms*, Ps. 104:1.

regularities reflect the ordering of the world in creation, and subsequent general influence of God through providence."[25]

However, because of human sin, the cosmos became "subjected to corruption. Everything in the whole cosmos suffers violence against the purpose of nature and in opposition to it"[26] After the fall, nature was not the nature as God intended it to be. Furthermore, not only cosmos but also human nature was affected by sin. In McGrath's words, nature was ontologically, that is in terms of the structuring of the world itself affected: "Disorder is not merely something that the human mind perceives within creation; it is something that exists prior to the human recognition of it." Nature was also affected noetically, that is, it was affected "in terms of the capacities of the human mind in reflecting upon the ordering of the world."[27]

Therefore, the knowledge of God is no longer to be fully realized by fallen human nature.[28] Calvin maintains, "While experience testifies that the seeds of religion are sown by God in every heart, we scarcely find one man in a hundred who cherishes what he has received, and not one in whom they grow to maturity, much less bear fruit in due season."[29] Therefore, although the creation proclaims the Creator's glory, yet it does not lead people to the knowledge of him. The worlds are patterns (*simulachra*) of things invisible which are understood only by faith: "the invisible Divinity was represented by such visible objects, yet that we have no eyes to discern him, unless they be illuminated through faith by an internal revelation of God."[30] Calvin believes that the

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[25] McGrath, *A Scientific Theology*, 174.

[26] McGrath, *A Scientific Theology*, 174.

[27] Stauffer, *Dieu, La Création et la Providence*, 118–19, quoted in McGrath, *A Scientific Theology*, 174–75.

[28] Parker, *Calvin*, 17.

[29] Calvin, *Institutes of the Christian Religion of John Calvin*, I.4.1.

[30] Calvin, *Institutes of the Christian Religion of John Calvin*, I.1.14.

world is a mirror of God's glory, which reveals enough of God's will to stimulate

human beings to praise and glorify God. Calvin, however, does not believe human

beings can attain a reliable, full knowledge of the will of God. Humans are blind

because of sin and therefore fallen human reason prevents humans from perceiving the

work of God in nature. Only by faith can such human blindness be corrected, and human

reason enabled to reclaim creation as a reliable source for the knowledge of God.[31] After

the fall, the cosmos awaits its redemption and resurrection in hope:[32] "No part of the

universe is untouched by the longing with which everything in this world aspires to the

hope of resurrection."[33]

Although creation was in disorder after the fall, Calvin believes that humans still

have two conceivable ways of arriving at the knowledge of God: the universe and

conscience.[34] Although nature was corrupted as the result of pervasive sin, the

providential purposes of God were not changed. So there is the continuation of nature

where the sun continues to shine and the seasons still change, and appointed times

remain for planting and for harvest. God's wisdom is still reflected in the order in

nature. And this order continues to be a mirror of God's glory and a testimony of his

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[31] Steinmetz, *Calvin in Context*, 26–30. Steinmetz compares Calvin's view of revelation of God with other reformers and suggests that Melanchthon, Bucer and Calvin all agree that "the created world demonstrates God's existence and that human beings without exception know by nature that there is a God." Melanchthon asserts that "the natural knowledge of God is implanted in the human mind by God," for "reason would not marvel at the works of God in nature if it did not already have an innate, proleptic knowledge of God." However, while the first two agree that "human beings have a reliable, if rudimentary, knowledge of the will or essence of God," Calvin will not. (Steinmetz, *Calvin in Context*, 28, 30.)

[32] Schreiner, *The Theater of His Glory*, 97–99. Schreiner discusses that, for the present disorder of the creation, Calvin emphasizes the importance of the hope of redemption in Christ. In his exegesis of Romans 8:20, Calvin stresses the need for reordering of the world, and a restoration of the world to its primal ordering. Schreiner, *The Theater of His Glory*, 79–111.

[33] Calvin, *Commentary Upon the Epistle of Saint Paul to the Romans*, Rom. 8:20.

[34] Parker, *Calvin*, 17.

providence.[35] Such natural knowledge, then, encourages humans to establish true

worship of God and leads them to the hope of eternal life. Calvin urges humans to allow

the knowledge to direct them to the God of nature[36] He continues, "Whenever any of us

considers his own nature, let him remember that there is one God who governs all

natures in such a way that he wishes us to look back to him and would have our faith

directed to himself and would be worshiped and invoked by us."[37] At this point, one

might notice that Calvin does not tell how to distinguish what is God-intended nature

from what is corrupt so that actual standard of distinction might be given as a result.

The conscience, according to Calvin, is the awareness of divine judgment, and

the sense of divinity that makes humans aware that there is a Maker who must be

worshiped, honored, and obeyed:[38]

> God, then, has let men run wild, and they are completely plunged into perdition;
> yet there has remained some seed in their hearts, and they have been convicted,
> so that they cannot say, 'we do not know what God is, we have no religion
> whatever'; since no one can be exempt from it; for it has remained engraven on
> the conscience that the world was not formed by itself; that here was some
> heavenly majesty to which we must be subject.[39]

"Hence the godless themselves illustrate the fact that the knowledge of God is always

living in the human heart."[40] For Calvin, all men know God because he has set the

knowledge of himself within their consciousness and keeps it permanently alive.[41]

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[35] Schreiner, *The Theater of His Glory*, 79; Calvin, *Commentary on the Book of Psalms*, Ps 96:10.
   [36] Calvin, *Institutes of the Christian Religion of John Calvin*, I.5.10. According to Niesel, this self disclosure of God in nature and history is "not imperfect or of slight significance" and its goal is pure and true religion, which is bound up with the earnest fear of God. Niesel, *The Theology of Calvin*, 43.
   [37] Calvin, *Institutes of the Christian Religion of John Calvin*, I.5.6.
   [38] Calvin, *Institutes of the Christian Religion of John Calvin*, III, 19, 15; Zachman, "The Awareness of Divinity and the Knowldge of God," 137.
   [39] Calvin, "Sermons from Job: Job 32:1–3," 219–20, quoted in Zachman, "The Awareness of Divinity and the Knowldge of God," 137.
   [40] Calvin, *Institutes of the Christian Religion of John Calvin*, I.3.2.
   [41] Niesel, *The Theology of Calvin*, 43.

In his frequent use of the concept of nature, he distinguishes pre-fallen nature

(God-assigned purpose) and fallen nature. After the fall, the cosmos and human nature

were significantly distorted. It is impossible for humans to comprehend the will of God.

Faith is necessary for humans, and redemption is required for the creation. Nonetheless,

because of God's providential concern and grace for humans, God's disclosure in

creation and conscience was maintained for them to know some knowledge of God: that

is why most ungodly human parents, for example, feed their children. Thus, for Calvin,

it is impossible for humans to attain the knowledge of God with their corrupt nature, yet

certain knowledge of God somehow is still expected to be known through conscience.

3. Natural Law

According to Boyd, contemporary natural law[42] morality maintains that "there

are some basic truths about human nature which requires the prohibitions of some

values and the practice of others."[43] Historically, the first recognition of natural law was

in Greek philosophy. Upon its development by the Stoics, the concept of natural law

was passed into Roman thought and law, and subsequently into the Christian church.[44]

The church in Rome (534 CE) regarded natural law as an essential principle of the

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[42] According to the *Oxford English Dictionary*, the definition of the term "natural law" is "the law as it applied before the Fall of [person], based supposedly on natural reason," or "the law as it is naturally or immediately interpreted; . . . the principles of morality, held to be discernible by reason as belonging to human nature or implicit in the nature of rational thought and action; such principles as the basis for man-made laws."

[43] Boyd, *A Shared Morality*, 11. Natural law theorists, according to Boyd, "believe that they can discern in human nature – and its various inclinations and desires – a basic orientation to the goods that all people pursue. These inclinations, when rightly understood and ordered, direct us to some activities and away from others. There is, on the natural law perspective, a basic desire to seek peaceful coexistence with others since peaceful communal life is a necessary condition for pursuing other goods. Prohibitions on murder, lying, and adultery are all seen as violations of the ideal for 'human nature' since they thwart the peaceful coexistence of humans in community." However, some argue that "natural law does not offer particular norms that are immediately compelling to all rational persons." Mattison, "The Changing Face of Natural Law," 270.

[44] Schreiner, *The Theater of His Glory: Nature and the Natural Order in the Thought of John Calvin*, 73.

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church law, the Corpus *Iuris Civilis*.[45] Stoics believed that "living according to natural law and the supernatural will of God means to live in accordance with nature." So they considered "nature or natural law to be 'the best guide (*optimam ducem*)' for lawful rule" because they related this "not only to legal duty but also to divine piety."[46] Aquinas held that within humans there was the natural law of morality, which could be obscured in particular cases, but never universally. With respect to common principles, natural law is the universal law. For Aquinas, "[t]hough grace is more powerful than nature, nevertheless nature is more essential to man, and therefore more permanent." He believed that natural law can never be obliterated from the human heart although it can be effaced sometimes when the reason is distracted by sin such as "wrong persuasions," "lust," or "perverse customs and corrupt habits."[47]

For Calvin, nature and natural law had a close conjunction: "Before the fall and rebellion of humanity," . . . "the law existed as the 'constitution' of the universe. Nature was not opposed to God" and so "the law of nature was merely one way of expressing God's orderly will for both his creatures and his creation."[48] Calvin, therefore, frequently referred not only to nature but to natural law or law of nature by using

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[45] Schreiner, *The Theater of His Glory*, 73; Moon, *Christ the Mediator of the Law*, 49.

[46] Moon, *Christ the Mediator of the Law*, 49. Bouwsma also discusses the Stoic thought that believes the accessibility of human reason to the divine will: "The Stoic view of [humans] attributed to [them] a divine spark or seed, identified with reason, which gave [humans] access to the divine order of the universe, from which the existece, the nature, and the will of God could be known. Stoicism therefore pointed to natural theology; and since reason was seen as a universal human attribute, which meant that all [people] have some natural understanding of God, Stoic anthropology virtually required a religious syncretism." Bouwsma, "The Two Faces of Humanism." 10.

[47] Aquinas, *Summa Theologiae*, Ia.2æ.94.6. Aquinas synthesized Aristotelian metaphysics and Christian theology. He taught that the world was ordered by God's eternal reason or the law, which was appropriate to the nature of the world God created. Being created in his image, humankind had free will and reason. Order in human life, moral order, was therefore to be dependent on the rational understanding of natural law. The content of natural law derived from an understanding of human nature and of what is good order in humans. Pasnau, *Thomas Aquinas on Human Nature*, 247; Haakonseen, *Encyclopedia of Ethics*, s.v. "Natural Law".

[48] Hesselink, *Calvin's Concept of the Law*, 52.

different expressions such as "the law of nature," "voice of nature," "rule of equity."[49] Höpfl contends that Calvin gave neither serious examination of the idea of natural law nor clear explanation of it. He simply referred to the "heart" or the "intellect" or the "conscience," or "natural sense" or "reason."[50] Höpfl also points out that Calvin's use of natural law was not occasional or peripheral. On the contrary, the use was seen in most of the places where moral questions, such as incest, murder, adultery, slavery, and the rule of one man, were treated.[51]

A. Calvin's Use of Natural Law

Scholars have disagreed on Calvin's use of natural law. Some scholars believe that Calvin's understanding of natural law departed from that of his predecessors. John Hesselink argues that Calvin's understanding of nature was different from the whole Stoic-classical tradition. That is, Calvin understood that the law was ordered by the living will of God the Creator. The law was the Divine justice, which was determined by the conception of God's order of creation. On the other hand, the Stoics, Cicero, and the whole classical tradition saw independent, abstract concepts of eternal law and order.[52] Therefore, although Calvin and Cicero often speak of natural law in a similar way, their concepts of natural law are different.[53] Backus argues that Calvin's definition of natural law was also very different from those of Aquinas and any other Medieval thinkers. For example, Aquinas defined natural law as "participation of the law of God in every

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[49] Hesselink, *Calvin's Concept of the Law*, 57.

[50] Höpfl, *The Christian Polity of John Calvin*, 184.

[51] Höpfl, *The Christian Polity of John Calvin*, 180.

[52] According to Porter, "the idea of a universal reason that is equivalent to universal nature, the law of nature, fate, and even to God, is Stoic in origin. . . . The Stoics taught that [humans] ought to live in accordance with nature or equivalently with right reason or the universal law" However, "there was no room for a transcendent deity in the materialistic Stoic universe, and very little room, if any, for human freedom" To live "in accordance with nature, or with reason" almost meant "willing acceptance of fate or providence." Porter, *Natural and Divine Law*, 68.

[53] Hesselink, *Calvin's Concept of the Law*, 69.

rational creature or the rational guidance of all creature." From natural law, all creatures

were to be able to "derive an inclination to those actions and ends that are proper to their

natures." Natural law for Aquinas also included natural instincts. Aquinas

metaphysically defined natural law and thus allowed human reason a certain amount of

autonomy in the moral realm. However, Calvin's ideal of natural law did not carry this

metaphysical idea.[54]

Niesel believes that Calvin's natural law has to do with the Decalogue: "Those

things which we have to learn from the two tables of the law reflect to some extent and

enable us to understand that inner law which is written and as it were impressed upon

the hearts of all."[55] For Calvin, humans have not merely a dark surmise of the will of

God but by the law of nature, are sufficiently instructed how to live rightly.[56]

Furthermore, instruction is carried out by the voice of conscience. A seed of religious

awareness is implanted in the heart of man so that he may recognize and honour his

Lord; and conscience is given him that he may sufficiently distinguish between right and

wrong.[57] The activity and insights of conscience are the language in which the law of

nature is couched.[58] Niesel believes that for Calvin, the purpose for natural law was

primarily one: "The end of natural law, therefore, is that man may be rendered

inexcusable."[59]

Haas also understands that Calvin's use of natural law is not metaphysical but

biblical. Appealing to Romans 2:14–15, Calvin affirmed that humans have moral law

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[54] Backus, "Calvin's Concept of Natural and Roman Law," 12.
[55] Calvin, *Institutes of the Christian Religion of John Calvin*, II.8.1.
[56] Calvin, *Institutes of the Christian Religion of John Calvin*, II. 2. 22.
[57] Calvin, *Institutes of the Christian Religion of John Calvin*, II. 2. 22.
[58] Niesel, *The Theology of Calvin*, 102.
[59] Calvin, *Institutes of the Christian Religion of John Calvin*, II.2.22.

imprinted upon their hearts. God has sustained the conscience as the faculty that judges

between good and evil, though this knowledge is always imperfect. For Calvin, this

knowledge was only on the second table of the Decalogue, the final six commandments.

Humans could not comprehend the first table, "regarding worshiping God," by natural

reason and conscience. Natural law concerned only the second table, which humans

understood better "because of their natural instinct to foster and preserve civil society."[60]

On the other hand, Grabill suggests that wide-spread influence of the Barth-

Brunner debate in Calvin studies set parameters that have remained relatively

unchallenged until the last several years. The general consensus was that Calvin's use of

natural law only served a negative function—that is, it merely rendered people

inexcusable for breaking the moral law. Scholars regard that Calvin's natural law was

discontinuous with the older tradition. Most recent commentators maintain, however,

that Calvin also espoused an affirmative use of natural law, particularly with respect to

civil, social, and economic affairs.[61]

For instance, Leithart points out the influence of Stoicism on Calvin's thought.

According to Leithart, Cicero, who was widely read in the sixteenth century, contributed

to informing Calvin's monistic cosmology and psychology along the lines that Stoicism

advocated.[62] Calvin insisted that the knowledge of God and his law by the unregenerate

never led them to a life of true virtue. Yet, by closely following the Stoic and Ciceronian

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[60] Haas, "Calvin's Ethics," 94.

[61] Grabill, *Rediscovering the Natural Law in Reformed Theological Ethics*, 86.

[62] Leithart, "Stoic Elements in Calvin's Doctrine of the Christian Life," 33. Leithart, in his thesis, attempts to argue that the influence of stoicism on Calvin's ideas is evident when he insists that flesh or corruption must be mortified.

idea, Calvin assumed that a universal consensus of morality was generally consistent with biblical norms.[63]

Grabill insists that Calvin followed the scholastic tradition in general. It is evident that Calvin emphasized "the conscience as an intellectual habit that grasps and acts upon the precepts of the moral law, either apprehending them inwardly from the law written on the heart (*lex naturalis*) or outwardly from the written law (Decalogue)." For Calvin, conscience was far more than merely distinguishing between right and wrong but carried an immediate awareness of divine judgment for wrongdoing. Despite humanity's corrupted natural endowments, Calvin believed that human nature still functioned competently in matters related to the earthly sphere (such as politics, economics, and ethics). For him, the created order continued to reflect God's wisdom goodness, and power.[64]

Some scholars believe that Calvin's understanding of natural law was distinguished from the Stoic and Ciceronian ideas of natural law or from the idea of Aquinas.[65] Natural law, for Calvin did not concern abstract impersonal power but the living God, who speaks to all people through human conscience. For Calvin, natural law was a "divinely given" law and was "common to all people and [was] engraved by God on the minds or consciences of all human beings."[66] Others insist that Calvin's understanding of natural law still was the continuation of the natural law tradition in the

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[63] Leithart, "Stoic Elements in Calvin's Doctrine of the Christian Life," 44.

[64] Grabill, *Rediscovering the Natural Law in Reformed Theological Ethics*, 96.

[65] According to Pasnau, Aquinas meant by "nature" that "the essential features of human beings, the things that make us human, or (as Aristotle often puts it) what it is to be a human being." But n*ature* has a complex range of meanings such as the following: 1) "the generation of living things; in this sense it serves as the abstract noun for the verb *nascor* (to be born)"; 2) "the inner principle of any generation or birth"; 3) "any inner principle of movement or action"; 4) "the ultimate end of the process of generation, which Aquinas identifies as the essence of the species." Pasnau, *Thomas Aquinas on Human Nature*, 7.

[66] Hesselink, *Calvin's Concept of the Law*, 57.

Middle Ages. In either case, however, Calvin believed that there was natural law, which was not metaphysically but biblically oriented. He was confident that one can know God's ordained order before the fall through "conscience" or "reason."

B. Significance of Natural Law

Hesselink suggests that the opinions of contemporary scholars are divided sharply not only on what is the function and purpose of the law of nature but also whether natural law plays a positive role or negative one in Calvin's thought. According to Hesselink, those who view that natural law plays little role in Calvin's theology are W. Niesel, P. Barth, P. Brunner, M-E Chenevière, F. Wendel. T. F. Torrance, H. H. Wolf, Werner Krusche, T. H. L. Parker, A. Cochrane, and H. Höpel. The scholars who recognize the positive possibilities and results of natural law are G. Beyerhaus, E. Doumergue, J. Bohatec, W. Kolfhaus, E. A. Dowey, R. S. Wallace, D. Little, B. Milner, and W. Klempa. Scholars who regard a significant role of natural law, attributing almost to natural theology, are H. Engelland, G. Gloede and J. T. McNeill.[67]

Höpfl argues that Calvin never allowed for natural knowledge of the moral law any independent adequacy as a guide to moral conduct for Christians. It was always treated as an inferior adjunct to the written divine law and as unreliable. He suggests that the main purpose for Calvin to appeal to natural knowledge for moral law was perhaps to defend the justice of God's reprobating and punishing those who have no access to Scripture: they are condemned in their own consciences in that, knowing what is good, they do what is evil.[68]

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[67] Hesselink, *Calvin's Concept of the Law*, 57.
[68] Höpfl, *The Christian Polity of John Calvin*, 181.

Grabill contends that the commentators who regard the influence of natural law as positive misunderstand Calvin's view of natural law, for Calvin spoke little about "natural" in comparison to his medieval predecessors. Furthermore, he never intended to formulate a systematic doctrine of natural law. Grabill admits that Calvin employed natural law extensively in the realms of law, politics, economics, and ethic;[69] Calvin perceived that both natural law and the Bible might function as legitimate means for discerning the content of morality. Yet he preferred the written law because it provided "a clearer witness of what was too obscure in the natural law."[70]

More recently, Boyd also asserts that natural law was not essential to Calvin's theology. Calvin as well as Luther emphasized God's commands and human love more than a system of natural law. They thought that the fall of Adam destroyed the capacity for human goodness and deeply damaged the *imago dei*. While Aquinas believed that a stained image of God still retained the capacity for one to know the basic precepts of natural law, Calvin thought that the image was too deeply flawed and darkened. It can barely understand even the most basic rules for civic cooperation. Therefore, "Calvin makes little use of the natural law."[71]

In contrast, some scholars believe that Calvin's view is divorced from the traditional natural law theory yet recognize its positive influence on his thought. Those

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[69] Grabill, *Rediscovering the Natural Law in Reformed Theological Ethics*, 91.

[70] Calvin, *Institutes of the Christian Religion of John Calvin*, II.8.1; Grabill, *Rediscovering the Natural Law in Reformed Theological Ethics*, 73. According to Grabill, "Broadly put, Calvin follows the realist tradition in its affirmation of the ontological status of moral knowledge, meaning that moral precepts are objective, universal, and stable, but differs with it epistemologically, meaning in the degree to which unaided reason can adequately apprehend precepts of the natural moral law. In attributing greater weight to the post-lapsarian conscience over the pre-lapsarian reason as the hallmark of his natural law doctrine, Calvin may be attempting to modify the realist tradition to accord more fully with Reformation teaching on the epistemological consequences of sin and the opaqueness associated with the natural knowledge of God."

[71] Boyd, *A Shared Morality*, 132–33.

scholars argue that Calvin refuted the Medieval notion of natural law, which assumed the natural knowledge of divine law by reason. Nevertheless, Calvin's idea shows "a very clear recollection of the Stoic idea of an organic unity in human society"; for he believed there existed a natural solidarity between humans and reason to conceive and administer in the civil life, despite their sinful nature. Although Calvin associates natural law with the Decalogue, the law itself still is foreign to Christian theology and holding such law is unjustifiable.[72] Calvin, as a humanist, appreciated the past and the intellectual legacy of both Greece and Rome, as well as the Church Fathers. Calvin continued the tradition of Christian humanists and tried to use ancient thought in its highest expression if it agreed with the Gospel message.[73]

Little argues that Calvin saw natural law as secondary and "suggestive" to his theology. According to Little, for Calvin, natural law was a companion theory which was seen in relation to, and complementary with the norms of Christian revelation and remained minimal or "vestigial" in Calvin's words. His natural law had a very strong empirical ingredient such as rational, scientific investigation in ethical discourse; for "Calvin's notion of humanity was never . . . simply derived from theological assertions."[74]

Schreiner also suggests that Calvin's theology of the natural order "heavily" rests upon medieval and patristic sources. Schreiner argues that for Calvin, natural law taught humans how to live in a fallen world. By drawing from traditional medieval and patristic arguments, Calvin developed his view of the existence of natural law and his

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[72] Wendel, *Calvin*, 207–08.
[73] Wendel, "Calvin et l'Humanisme," 9, quoted in Marié, "Calvin's God and Humanism," 354. Hesselink also suggests that in Calvin's time, all classical scholars still assumed that "certain standards, values, and virtues were common to all humanity." Hesselink, *Calvin's Concept of the Law*, 70.
[74] Little, "Calvin and the Prospects for a Christian Theory of Natural Law," 197.

view of conscience and natural reason that contribute to the maintenance of the human order.[75] Calvin did not formulate a "doctrine" of natural law but he "used the principle of natural law as an extension of his doctrine of providence."[76]

Still others believe there is a close link between Calvin's use of natural law and his concern for political government. According to McNeill, "natural law theories prevailed in discussions of law and government throughout the West from Augustine to Gabriel Biel (d. 1495)." Natural law theory passed over virtually unchallenged into the sixteenth century.[77] For example, Luther did not hold reason in high esteem but still regarded it as something indestructible of the original divine gift. He believed that natural law was essential to the government of non-Christians by a Christian ruler. Luther consciously and designedly used the theory of natural law to aid the Protestant cause during the years of anxious tension, before the outbreak of the Schmalkald Wars (1546–1547).[78]

Backus also suggests that natural law was very important in Calvin's political thought. Calvin, according to Backus, used the law in order to relativize the importance of the Bible in matters terrestrial and thus to include pagans in God's plans. Calvin believed that natural law was God's love expressed in civil law. Being implanted in the

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[75] According to Schreiner, Calvin believed that, as God's providence, the ordering and controlling power of God protects the human world from the continual threat of chaos and gives stability as continuity of creation. Therefore, Schreiner suggests, Calvin's emphasis on the natural order partly was a reaction to Epicurean tendency that removed God from involvement with the world. Schreiner, *The Theater of His Glory*, 33.

[76] Schreiner, "Calvin's Use of Natural Law," 74.

[77] McNeill, "Natural Law in the Thought of Luther," 215. McNeill states, in Luther's generation, figures such as John Major, Erasmus, Guillaume Budé, François Connan, Christopher St. German and Johannes Oldendorp stood over against Macchiavelli as exponents of the doctrine of natural law.

[78] McNeill, "Natural Law in the Thought of Luther," 227. According to McNeill, whenever Luther uses a theoretical argument for a judgment or for an attitude affecting secular politics, "he confidently makes his appeal to" natural law. McNeil asserts, "Insofar, then as he puts forward any political theory, that theory marches under the ensign of natural law, considered as a part of the law of God, the author of man's reason."

consciences of humans, natural law was understanding of right and wrong, sufficient to

remove any excuse for sin.[79]

Many scholars think that Calvin extensively used natural law or law of nature.

However, the opinions vary as to how significant the role of natural law played in his

theology. Some claim that natural law did not play any significant role. Others argue

that the role and influence were possibly positive. Most scholars believe that Calvin

preferred the written law, the Bible rather than the natural law. Nonetheless, the fact that

Calvin frequently referred to natural law indicates his familiarity with the law and the

credit he gives to it as he consulted it along with the Bible. Calvin studied humanism

until around 1533 in Law Studies.[80] Natural law was widely accepted in the political

code for the orderly government in Calvin's time. It was likely that natural law was a

reliable and influential source to support his interpretation of the Bible, specifically how

he understood the role of women.

C. A Problem of Natural Law

As a part of the tradition and legacy of the Middle Ages, natural law was still

reliable in Calvin's thought. By appealing to conscience, Calvin often used the argument

of nature based on natural law when he interpreted the Bible. Because natural law

affirmed human knowledge of God through conscience, he asserted through his

conscience that certain things are determined "by nature" or as "natural," and that they

are God-assigned purposes. However, this argument has a hermeneutical problem when

it is used in interpretation of a text: natural for whom?[81] What was natural for Calvin and

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[79] Backus, "Calvin's Concept of Natural and Roman Law," 12, 15, 26.
[80] Marie, "Calvin's God and Humanism," 354.
[81] In his natural law critique, O'Connor argues that when a certain "proposition is self-evident, it
must always be self-evident *to somebody.* . . . Propositions will seem self-evident to the skilled

his contemporaries may not be so to the people in a different place and time. While he does not specify whom certain things should be "natural" for, Calvin's application implies that he had either himself or his contemporary readers in mind. When Calvin says that certain things are natural, it must be convincing for his contemporaries. Nonetheless this does not necessarily reflect the universal reality which can be applied for all people, at all times and all places. This hermeneutical tendency of Calvin is also seen in his use of "common sense." For example, he uses common sense[82] in his commentary on 1 Corinthians 11:34 and states that woman's leadership role is not acceptable: "And common sense tells us that the rule of woman is improper and defective."[83] In other places, he also comments, "It is the dictate of common sense, that female government is improper and unseemly,"[84] or "that law of nature which common sense declares to be inviolable."[85] His use of "common sense" again raises the same question as "natural" does: common to whom? Notice how similar Calvin's use of "common sense" is to that of the term "nature" in determining the role of women: "Natural propriety has been maintained, women have in all ages been excluded from the public management of affairs."[86] It appears that "nature" and "common sense" are closely related or almost identical in Calvin's thought.

"Natural" and "common" argument had been long applied by lawyers, specifically by Cicero, as an instrument of legal argumentation. It was also a means to

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mathematician which to the schoolboy are difficult or unintelligible." O'Connor, *Aquinas and Natural Law*, 67.

[82] According to Brauner, Luther also argued that reason is "by no means entirely corrupt. In its natural state, it has two positive components": the common sense for peasants and the divine knowledge for prophets. Brauner, *Fearless Wives and Frightened Shrews*, 62.

[83] Calvin, *Commentary on the Epistle of Paul the Apostle to the Corinthians*, 1 Cor. 11:34.

[84] Calvin, *Commentary on the Epistle of Paul the Apostle to the Corinthians*, 1 Cor. 11:34; 1 Cor. 14:36.

[85] Calvin, *Calvin's Commentaries on the First Book of Moses Called Genesis*, Gen. 1:28.

[86] Calvin, *Commentary on the Epistle of Paul the Apostle to the Corinthians*, 14:34.

convince people and win the outcome.[87] The terms were to be rhetorically effective

when heard by contemporary hearers. While natural, common argument appeals to a

culture, this, in turn, tends to reflect only cultural feelings of the time. Porter, though she

is an advocate for contemporary natural law, believes that nature should not be neutral:

"a neutral interpretation of the natural givens is not possible."[88] Finnis, also a prominent

contemporary advocate of natural law, insists that natural law acknowledges a certain

set of standards, necessary for the human society to function:

> A theory of natural law claims to be able to identify conditions and principles of
> practical right-mindedness, of good and proper order among men and in
> individual conduct. Unless some such claim is justified, analytical jurisprudence
> in particular and (at least the major part of) all the social sciences in general can
> have no critically justified criteria for the formation of general concepts, and
> must be content to be no more than manifestations of the various concepts
> peculiar to particular peoples and/or to the particular theorists who concern
> themselves with those people.[89]

Yet, Finnis also recognizes the limitation of human reason to determine the set standard

when he says, "but one whose knowledge of the facts of the human situation is very

limited is unlikely to judge well in discerning the practical implications of the basic

values."[90]

Boyd suggests the cultural implications of natural law when it is applied. "The

natural law prescribes minimal obligations that all human agents have . . . such as lying,

murder, and infidelity which we find *prima facie* prohibitions in any culture. Yet natural

law requires particular application in specific contexts as what constitutes specific

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[87] Torrance, *The Hermeneutics of John Calvin*, 103.

[88] Porter, *Natural and Divine Law*, 13.

[89] Finnis, *Natural Law and Natural Rights*, 18.

[90] Finnis, *Natural Law and Natural Rights*, 18–19. Buckle also argues that the weakness of natural law "has been the difficulty of showing how . . . most general claims [of right conduct] can be translated into reliable and specific practical maxims." Buckle, *A Companion to Ethics*, s.v. "natural law".

violations of these acts will vary from place to place and time to time."[91] When Calvin

used natural law, he believed that certain things were self-evident, sharing God's will

for humans. Nonetheless his view of nature as God-assigned purpose was destined to

reflect nature as the current tendency or structure of his time. Accordingly, his view of

the role of women resulted in reflecting the cultural view of his time.

4. Roles of Women

A. Roles of Women in Calvin's Time

In the Middle Ages, the theological ideas about the role of women reflected

long- standing misogyny. Thomas Aquinas (c.1225–1274), in his *Summa Theologiae,*

believed that both men and women held the image of God, which was mind and

intellectual nature, in its principal signification. Nevertheless, in a secondary sense, the

image of God existed only in man as a reflection of his creator. Recalling Paul's words,

Aquinas concluded then that man was both the beginning and end of woman, and that

woman was created with the express purpose of serving man.[92] Aquinas viewed woman

as a being which was made for the purpose of the perpetuation of human nature

manifested in man. For Aquinas, woman was naturally subservient because of reason

predominated in man.[93]

John Hus (c.1369–1415) was a contributor to the Protestant movement and was

one of the figures who influenced the thoughts of Luther. Hus's misogyny is revealed in

his understanding of Eve:

> Oh Eve, you faithless rib! What were you doing there at Adam's side? Why did
> you strike down the sons of Adam, stripping from them the garment of virtue?
> Oh children of Adam, why do you chase after this rib, to the destruction of your

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[91] Boyd, *A Shared Morality*, 241.

[92] Aquinas, *Summa Theologiae*, Ia.93.5.

[93] Aquinas, *Summa Theologiae*, Ia. 92.2.

other bones, when you could live as well without it? You let yourself be robbed, destroyed, murdered and eternally damned for its sake![94]

Hus did not have a high opinion of Eve or women. The general views of theologians in the Middle Ages tended to be that women were their husbands' possession[95] and that they were dependent on men for everything.[96] As Aquinas commented, the general status of women was lower than the one of men: the status of women was in some ways below the slave.[97]

The view that women were regarded as having lower status than men and were dependent on men was carried into the Reformation period. Luther regarded man and woman as equal, sharing the same qualities of the body and mind. He regarded a woman's subjection to her husband as due to the Fall. Luther comments on Genesis 2:18:

> But Moses wanted to point out . . . that this sex was to be useful for procreation. Hence it follows that if the woman had not been deceived by the serpent and had not sinned, she would have been the equal of Adam in all respects. For the punishment, that she is not subjected to the man, was imposed on her after sin and because of sin, just as the other hardships and dangers were . . . Therefore Eve was not like the woman of today; . . . she was in no respect inferior to Adam, whether you count the qualities of the body or those of the mind.[98]

Luther continued the idea that women are inferior to men, however. He believed that woman was the weakest part of human nature and that if Adam had been tempted rather than Eve, he would have gained the victory:

> Satan's cleverness is perceived also in this, that he attacks the weak part of the human nature, Eve, the woman, not Adam the man. . . . Just as in all the rest of nature the strength of the male surpasses that of the other sex, so also in the

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[94] Hus, *Jan Hus. Dat Bokeken van Deme Repe, O 1ʳ col. 2, 32–O 1ᵛ col. 1, 4,* quoted in Bast, *Honor Your Fathers,* 76.

[95] Healy, *Woman According to Saint Bonaveture,* i–ii, 46.

[96] Tucker, *Daughters of the Church,* 164. Tucker argues that Aquinas argued that a woman is dependent on the man for everything in life, whereas he depends on her for procreation only.

[97] Durant, *The Age of Faith,* 825–26.

[98] Luther, *Luther's Commentary on Genesis,* Gen. 2:18.

perfect nature the male somewhat excelled the female. Because Satan sees that Adam is the more excellent, he does not dare assail him; for he fears that his attempt may turn out to be useless. And I, too, believe that if he had tempted Adam first, the victory would have been Adam's. He should have crushed the serpent with his foot and would have said: "Shut up! The Lord's command was different." Satan, therefore, directs his attack on Eve as the weaker part and puts her valor to the test, for he sees that she is so dependent on her husband that she thinks she cannot sin.[99]

Although Luther claimed that in all respects, man and woman were equal before the fall, his idea of equality of woman to man was still limited.[100] Bast also believes that this teaching is heavily dependent on the late–medieval catechetical tradition and that there are "the extraordinary parallels between Reformation catechisms and their medieval and late-medieval predecessors."[101]

According to Karant–Nunn, a growing number of scholars today believe that in both theology and social outlook, the Protestant and Catholic Reformations owed much to that which preceded them.[102] In Calvin's time, women were considered of secondary status to men and dependent on them. Women were to be subject to men and were not to play any public roles or leadership roles over men.

B. Calvin's View of Roles of Women

Calvin, like Luther, considered woman equal to man as the image bearer of God in some sense. Woman was a perfect companion to man. She was to be treated with respect and honor to the same degree as man. Compared to Luther, Calvin further

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[99] Luther, *Luther's Commentary on Genesis*, Gen. 3:1.

[100] Mattox, *Defender of the Most Holy Matriarchs*, 19. Mattox argues that Luther read so widely in patristic and medieval theology and exegesis that one could say that he read the scriptures in the company of his predecessors, particularly the church fathers. It is said that Luther appealed to Scripture alone as a theological court of last resort. Yet, the continuity between his exegesis and the ones of his predecessors should not be obscured.

[101] Bast, *Honor Your Fathers*, 87. See Bast for the references which discuss the parallels between Reformation catechisms and the ones in the Middle Ages.

[102] Karant-Nunn, "The Reformation of Women," 176.

emphasized the complementary relationship between man and woman.[103] Nonetheless, just like Luther, he regarded woman as a weaker sex.[104] Woman, for Calvin, was only an image bearer of God "in the second degree"[105] and she was a splendid adornment to the man's life, created for the express purpose of greatly enriching the man's life.[106] Unlike Aquinas, Calvin did not find the meaning of woman only in reproduction. However, like Aquinas, Calvin considered that woman existed not as a fully independent person but as a secondary and dependent sex, a complement to man's life.

Here it is observed that Calvin shared the similar view of women with his precedents and contemporaries holding that women were subordinate to men; and women were to stay in the domestic domain. Because Calvin appealed to nature/natural argument, and the argument tended to reflect one's culture, his view of the role of women resulted in reflecting contemporaneous ideology. It was common to Calvin and people in his time that women are somewhat less than men and so they should not have authority over men.

Respecting parents was natural in Calvin's time, but people today might need to be taught this ethic. Ranks among people in Calvin's time and culture were natural; yet they are no longer applicable, as a rule, in the contemporary western world. In his interpretation of the term "helper" in Genesis 2: 20, Calvin understood the term as Eve's subordinate, secondary role to Adam, while people today may not always interpret it in

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[103] Wright, "Woman before and after the Fall," 128–30.
[104] Calvin, *Commentaries on the Epistles to Timothy, Titus, and Philemon*, 1 Tim. 2:15.
[105] Calvin, *Calvin's Commentaries on the First Book of Moses Called Genesis*, Gen. 2:18.
[106] Calvin, *Commentary on the Epistle of Paul the Apostle to the Corinthians*, 1 Cor. 11:7.

that way.[107] What Calvin thought was nature as God-ordained purpose, was then merely

nature as the current tendency or structure of his time.

Balke argues that the work of the Holy Spirit was so essential in Calvin's

interpretation that he attached great value to experience in his theology. Balke observes

that Calvin repeatedly appealed to experience along with his appeal to the Bible. Thus,

he is committed to continually seeking to "relate truth and reality" so that he might not

detach his theology from actual reality.[108] If this is the case, it appears that Calvin's

nature/natural argument played an important part in supporting his theology with his

"natural" experiences.

Some contemporary natural law theorists assert, "all human societies know the

natural law precepts to be true regardless of particular cultural contexts since they all

require peace as a basic good for communal life . . . specific principles which ground

various prescriptions and prohibitions can be discovered by all people without regard to

cultural or religious diversity."[109] Nonetheless when cultural norm is stripped away, it is

difficult to conceive for what to appeal, for discovering the principles. Calvin regarded

the pre-fallen state as ideal, perfect nature which humans were to strive to recover.

However, such a state of nature may no longer be possible for fallen humans to

perceive. Or, it may be the case that the God intended nature should be yet to be fully

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[107] Trible, *God and the Rhetoric of Sexuality*, 73. Trible argues that most of the traditional interpretations of male superiority and female inferiority are "simply not present in the [creation] story itself."

[108] Balke, "The Word of God and Experientia According to Calvin," 20–21. Balke states, "that which experience would teach us is for Calvin of extraordinary importance." Thus, "Calvin's commentaries are full of such expressions as: *experientia docet, ostendit, clamat, confirmat, demonstrat, convincit, testatur*; also *ipsa experientia satis docemur* or *usu ipso docemur*."

[109] Boyd, *A Shared Morality*, 11.

realized in the process of redemption.[110] According to DeBoer, Calvin did not

compellingly answer if there are "creation ordinances regarding women that are clear

from Genesis."[111] Yet, DeBoer contends, Calvin spoke of the roles of women

confidently, believing that they are "the God-ordained and God-revealed order for life in

this world."[112] It could be the case, then, that apart from a cultural norm, Calvin was not

able to claim sufficiently that God's ordinances of the role of women were in Genesis.

Jeanrond suggests that in interpretation, one needs some questions to which the Bible

can give answers: "without any question [one] cannot structure [one's] own acts of

reading or seeing."[113] Calvin's culture did not seem to challenge him to question the role

of women in his day.

C. Contemporary View of Roles of Women

In contemporary debates, some argue that certain roles of female and male are

determined "by nature." For example, citing 1 Timothy 2:14 that says, "Adam was not

deceived, but

the woman was deceived and became a transgressor," patriarchal interpreters read Paul

as limiting the roles of women because "God's order of creation [that assumes female

subordination] is mirrored in the nature of man and women."[114] When scholars exegete

Paul's use of "nature" in 1 Corinthians 11:14, egalitarians may interpret the term as

"[one's] culture, in light of what is considered to be honorable behavior." Therefore,

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[110] Peterson, *Genetic Turning Points*, 189. Peterson suggests that some early church fathers such as Irenaeus, Clement of Alexandria and Saint Gregory of Nazianzus believed that God intentionally created the world "less than [it] should eventually be."

[111] DeBoer, "Calvin on the Role of Women," 272. DeBoer argues that Calvin does not prove that the creation story speaks of the roles of women because Calvin interprets the roles by using Paul's interpretation of roles of women as a lens. DeBoer argues that Calvin's interpretation appears circular.

[112] DeBoer, "Calvin on the Role of Women," 256.

[113] Jeanrond, *Theological Hermeneutics*, 5–6.

[114] Schreiner, "An Interpretation of 1 Timothy 2:9–15," 145.

Paul is saying, "Believers must be conscious of how their actions appear in their culture."[115] In contrast, a hierarchicalist reads, by nature, Paul refers to "the objective, ordered structure of reality that faith holds to have been set up by the Creator" or "order of creation." From this perspective, nature teaches that "the ministry of the Word and of the sacraments is reserved for men."[116]

When people say "by nature," they intend to determine the nature of Adam and Eve and define nature in terms of God-assigned purposes for all men and women today. However, as Calvin's exegesis suggests, arguing from "nature" or "natural" in this manner runs the risk of confusing nature as God-assigned purpose with nature as current structure and tendency. When we think that certain inclinations are self-evident, these inclinations tend to reflect the structure or tendency that is natural for or normal to us. In fact, there seems to be awareness that these inclinations are not always inherent in all men and women, even among those who insist upon a God-assigned purpose: "In the same way, all men have a responsibility for leadership in their marriages, even though *some* men are not as naturally inclined or gifted for leadership."[117] It is not surprising that a God-assigned purpose—leadership of men—may not be universally observed when it is confused with nature as current structure or tendency.

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[115] Barker et al., *The NIV Study Bible*, 1750.

[116] Brown, "The New Testament against Itself" 200–06. Brown says, "the fact that nature does not teach us all that clearly how we ought to cut our hair, does not mean that nature teaches us nothing about the differences between the sexes. This fact may merely indicate that nature by itself is not always sufficient to establish gender-specific norms." Thus, by "denying nature any validity," people "in effect, polemicize not merely against doctrines traditionally found in Scripture, such as the teaching that the ministry of the Word and of the sacraments is reserved for men, but against the objective, ordered structure of reality that faith holds to have been set up by the Creator. What is at issue is not merely a revolt against the traditional stereotyping of sexual roles. The revolt is a symptom of a very deep and strong resistance to the concepts of both authority and reality. Not only does Scripture not mean what sixty-old generations of Christians thought it meant, but the would is not what human common-sense observation has taken it to be" (p. 201).

[117] Grudem, *Countering the Claims of Evangelical Feminism*, 39 (footnote 7); emphasis added.

Scholars may not explicitly refer to natural law today as Calvin did. Rather they may use the phrase "human heart": "Distinctions in masculine and feminine roles are ordained by God as part of the created order, and should find an echo in every human heart."[118] Thus, human conscience is trusted to determine what nature might teach or what God's will might be, just as in the case of natural law. In this way, a confusion of current structure or tendency with God-ordained purpose may occur. This is an error that Calvin made and many others also may make.

5. Conclusion

Calvin frequently referred to the concept of nature, by which he distinguished pre-fallen nature and fallen nature. According to Calvin, the natural world and human nature were both significantly distorted after the fall to the extent that it is almost impossible for human nature to perceive the will of God. Faith is necessary and redemption of creation is required to attain true knowledge of God. Yet, because of God's providential concern and grace for humans, some orders in creation and conscience in the human heart were preserved for humans. Thus they are left accountable to God for their moral decisions.

Some scholars believe that with his use of natural law, Calvin successfully described nature which was ordained before the fall. God's intended order for his creation was communicated mainly through conscience. Others insist that Calvin's understanding of natural law shares the Stoic, Ciceronian or Thomistic ideas of natural law. Nature and the law carried the metaphysical sense of nature, which could be

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[118] The Council on Biblical Manhood and Womanhood, "The Denvers Statement," 46. I am not denying that humans can attain some knowledge of God through general revelation of conscience and also of the natural world as Romans 1:19–20 and 2:12–15 say. However, general revelation itself is limited for humans to attain the fuller knowledge of God and his will. Without special revelation, human judgment may be at risk of being confused between God-assigned purpose and current structure or tendency.

understood by reason. Yet in either case, whether through conscience or reason, Calvin was confident that one could know God's ordained order before the fall by natural law. Although Calvin preferred the Bible to natural law, he frequently used natural law or law of nature to rule mainly moral affairs. From his legal training and the political code in his time, natural law appeared to have Calvin's confidence. Calvin's exegesis of the Bible was to be in conformity with the orders of natural law.

On the one hand, Calvin thought that both the natural world and human nature are too corrupted to reflect the knowledge of God. On the other hand, he believed that conscience could still discern the knowledge of God. The concept of natural law then appeared to have given him assurance or permission to use the conscience in determining that certain things are by nature or as natural and therefore God-assigned purposes.

Nonetheless, because his argument of nature and natural law tends to reflect one's culture, when Calvin interpreted the role of women, the interpretation inevitably spoke of the view of his culture; that is, women were subordinate to men and were to stay in the domestic domain. When Calvin applied natural law in understanding the role of women, the understanding was shaped by his view of nature, which reflected the cultural views of women in his time. Simone de Beauvoir points out that the natural law tradition has emphasized the inferiority of women since Aristotle.[119] The examination of Calvin's use of nature and natural law may explain how that might have happened. Wiesner suggests that consciousness of gender is a social as well as a biological

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[119] Beauvoir, *The Second Sex*, 22.

construct. "Gender" tends to be considered a biological term but actually it is largely socially constructed.[120] And the case of Calvin may not have been the exception.

A naive trust in nature and an over-confidence in one's knowledge of nature seems to be historically prevalent as Daniel M. Doriani suggests: "Throughout the ages the church has preferred to affirm that God has engraved reflections of his sovereign decree into human nature."[121] Yet, when appeals to nature, natural or naturally, are made—like Calvin's—there may be a confusion of current structure or tendency with God-ordained purpose; thus, the interpretation of certain roles as if they were God-ordained.

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[120] Wiesner, *Women and Gender in Early Modern Europe*, 6.
[121] Doriani, "Appendix 1 : History of the Interpretation of 1 Timothy 2," 265.

CHAPTER FOUR

GENRE OF THE CREATION STORY AND THE STATUS OF ADAM AND EVE

1. Introduction

The creation story is artistic as well as theological. It vividly illustrates the picture of how God creates and acts for the sake of his creatures and draws us to the world of the Garden of Eden even without requiring our detailed knowledge of it. We are affirmed that God loves and cares for his creation and has a good plan for it. Because of this artistic and theological richness, scholars in different fields have been drawing their fruitful insights and discoveries together in order to understand the story more fully. Some of the results concern the genre or literary form of the story and the status of Adam and Eve. Biblical scholars are increasingly aware of the particular manners in which ancient author(s) might present biblical truths in contrast to contemporary scholarship. With advanced research methods, scientists have also been acknowledging how modern people might see and describe reality differently from author(s) of the creation story.

In appreciation of the rhetorical character of the story, scholars have proposed more than one manner of reading the creation story, and therefore Adam and Eve. In contrast, gender role discussion in light of the creation story tends to limit its reading to a specific manner, that is, to read the story as a directly described history of two people. How then is our understanding of roles of women and men informed by these different readings of the creation story? How might the different understandings of who Adam and Eve are modify our views of gender roles today?

This chapter examines the impact different views of the literary form of the creation story and status of Adam and Eve have upon our understanding of the roles of women. The chapter argues that Adam and Eve are more likely types in a rhetorical book than the biological progenitors of all humanity in pure history and therefore, their roles do not always determine universal roles of women and men. This chapter will first explore different views regarding the genre of the creation story and the status of Adam and Eve. It will then examine how these different views might affect our understandings of gender roles. Finally, it will discuss how roles of Adam and Eve might be understood in contemporary discussions of roles of women and men.

2. Different Views of the Genre of the Creation Story and the Status of Adam and Eve

Roles played by Adam and Eve are sometimes considered as ideals for us today because God instituted the roles before sin entered humanity. In this case, the historicity of the creation story is often assumed. That is, gender role discussions based on the creation story often appeal to the events in the story and how they might have exactly happened. For instance, the order of the creation of Adam and Eve, namely Adam's prior creation to Eve, is one of the determinative aspects for men's leadership role:

> The apostle Paul's comments on Genesis 1–3 repeatedly root the man's primary responsibility in the family (as well as in the church) in the fact that he was *created first*. . . . Paul's comments clearly indicate that he considered this account to be historical (rather than mythical or fictional): at the beginning of human history God made the first man, endowed him with life, and placed him in a garden (Gen. 2:7–8, 15).[1]

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[1] Köstenberger and Jones, *God, Marriage, and Family*, 24; emphasis in original.

Thus how to read the creation story—to read it historically—seems presupposed; it also seems assumed that many evangelical Christians consent to such a reading.[2]

Nonetheless, scholars do not necessarily agree regarding their views of the genre of the creation story. Even among scholars who believe that the creation story describes historical facts, opinions differ as to how ancient author(s) might understand and present historical events differently from modern readers.

A. The Form of the Creation Story

Reading the creation story as historical is often regarded as the only way to read it. However, there are different views regarding how to understand the literary form of the story and read it accordingly. For instance, John Collins suggests four possible ways in understanding the literature of the creation story:

> 1. The author intended to relay "straight" history, with a minimum of figurative language. 2. The author was talking about what he thought were actual events, using rhetorical and literary techniques to shape the readers' attitudes toward those events. 3. The author intended to recount an imaginary history, using recognizable literary conventions to convey "timeless truths" about God and humans. 4. The author told a story without even caring whether the events were real or imagined; his main goal was to convey various theological and moral truths.[3]

For the sake of a discussion of the literature, Collins's four options can be re-grouped into three views: option 1[4] as "purely historical", option 2 as "rhetorical," and option 3

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[2] Some scholars believe that Paul treats Adam and Eve as historical people. Others such as Alan Padgett hold that Paul uses Adam and Eve as types, for example, in 1 Timothy. Padgett, *As Christ Submits to the Church*, 89–101.

Understanding how Paul is using Adam and Eve is important in order to know his teachings on men and women. For example, Adam's prior creation to Eve is sometimes said to be the reason of why women should not teach men at all times. This interpretation presupposes that Paul uses Adam and Eve as biological parents of all humanity. However, if Paul is using Adam and Eve as types, either as representatives of their contemporaries or symbols of all humans, no matter what Paul teaches, it won't become a universal rule as this chapter will show.

[3] Collins, "Adam and Eve as Historical People, and Why It Matters," 149.

[4] According to Collins, this view (option 1) is held by two parties. On the one hand, many traditional Christians, especially young-earth creationists believe that "Genesis was telling the truth." On the other hand, scholars who advocate for historical criticism think that Genesis is "largely incorrect in its

and 4 as "symbolic." I categorize options 3 and 4 together because these views envision historical facts as irrelevant to the primary message of the creation story. The "purely historical" view indicates that events in the creation story are historical facts and are stated with little analogy. The "rhetorical" view sees that events are historically true as the author(s) saw them and are presented in a unique manner. The "symbolic" view says that the events are metaphoric. The following shows three primary views: purely historical, rhetorical and symbolic.

i. Purely Historical View

The historicity of the creation story is thought to be important in order for all humans to have a common source and therefore to share the image of God and the effects of sin. Many scholars believe that the creation story is historical, although they recognize symbolic features in some parts. For example, John Stott believes that Adam and Eve are historical figures because Paul contrasts Adam's disobedience to Christ's obedience:[5] Stott is concerned that this might become meaningless if Adam and Eve are not historical but rather analogies. However, Stott is "agnostic about some details of the story like the precise nature of the tree of life and of the serpent." For him, the tree of life and the serpent are symbolic because they reappear in Revelation as symbols and also because the speaking serpent and the tree of life are unusual existences.[6]

For discussions on roles of women and men, the historicity of the creation story also is important. Kassian thinks that how women and men should relate to each other today depends on the historical facts in the story:

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history" but in terms of the value of Genesis, they "commonly resort to something like option 4." Collins, "Adam and Eve as Historical People, and Why It Matters," 149.

[5] Rom. 5:12–21.

[6] Stott, *Understanding the Bible*, 153.

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An understanding of creation is central to a correct understanding of male and female roles, as all Biblical teaching on roles is contingent on this historic event. Gender roles are rooted in the created order, and apart from this context, cannot be understood. Therefore the Genesis account of creation is the underpinning for New Testament teaching on the role of women.[7]

When scholars interpret the events of the creation account as actual facts, they tend to read them as we read a historical article today. The purely historical view might elaborate the life of Adam in a vivid and detailed manner.

> No shrub or cultivated plant had yet grown where Adam was created. He awoke to a barren landscape (Gen 2:5–7). His first sight may have been God planting a garden for him. He could clearly see that all good and perfect gifts come from the Lord God. . . . The most intelligent animal confronted humankind under whose feet he had been placed (Gen 1:28; 3:1). Was Eve selected because she would in some way be easier to deceive? Or was the more difficult subject taken first? . . . It is, however, important to observe that Adam was called first as the one whose position of leadership made him responsible for the act (3:9).[8]

For the purely historical view, events are written in the similar manner in which people report historical facts today. The historicity of Adam and Eve is specifically important to compare with Christ and his salvific work. But this purely historical view attempts to avoid reading the Eden narrative allegorically or analogically.

ii. Rhetorical View

Many scholars are inclined to appreciate various literal devices used by the author(s) in the creation story. They acknowledge the differences between the manner in which ancient Near Eastern people saw and described reality and the manner in which contemporary readers understand and describe it. John Walton, for example, emphasizes the importance of the study of the language and culture of the text. This is because the Old Testament is written not to people today but "to Israel and secondarily through Israel to everyone else" and in order to understand their language, we need to know and

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[7] Kassian, *Women, Creation and the Fall*, 13.
[8] Ferguson, "Adam, 22–23.

enter the culture in which the language operates.[9] According to Walton, then, as God's

revelation story, it tells "deep beliefs" about origins and operations but is presented in a

form of a myth:

> We may well consider some of the literatures of Babylonia and Egypt as
> mythological, but that very mythology helps us to see the world as they saw it . .
> . [F]or the people to whom that mythology belonged, it was a real description of
> deep beliefs. Their "mythology" expressed their beliefs concerning what made
> the world what it was; it expressed their theories of origins and of how their
> world worked. For the Israelites, Genesis 1 offered explanations of their view of
> origins and operations, in the same way that mythologies served in the rest of the
> ancient world and that science serves our Western culture. It represents what the
> Israelites truly believed about how the world got to be how it is and how it
> works, though it is not presented as their own ideas, but as revelation from God.[10]

Similarly concerned about the manner in which the truths are told, many biblical

scholars tend to regard the creation story as a mix of history and myth.[11] Adam and Eve

are an historical couple but they are depicted in the literal form of myth. Claus

Westermann, for instance, explains how closely history and myth might be connected,

for the ancient author(s):

> Myth must be regarded as a reflection on reality, as a presentation of what has
> actually happened. Such a presentation of what actually happened accorded with
> [person]'s understanding of existence and of the world in the early period. To
> oppose myth and history in such a way that history presents what actually
> happened, while myth presents fiction, is utterly unhistorical. It is much more
> perceptive to see that in the early period of man kind it was not possible to speak
> of what actually happened in any other way.[12]

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[9] Walton, *The Lost World of Genesis One*, 9–11.

[10] Walton, *The Lost World of Genesis One*, 14–15.

[11] While there are different definitions available for myth, I use Peter Enns's definition in my discussion. That is, "Myth is an ancient, premodern, prescientific way of addressing questions of ultimate origins and meaning in the form of stories: Who are we? Where do we come from?" Enns, *Inspiration and Incarnation*, 50.

Enns suggests that while Evangelicals tend to think that Genesis should be either myth or history, this is due to wrong assumptions. That is, sometimes we assume that "what is historical, in a modern sense of the word is more real, of more value, more like something God would do, than myth," or that "if [Genesis] is myth, and this proves it is not inspired," or that since the Bible is God's word, it cannot be myth. However, God can and does use "the category we call 'myth' to speak to *ancient* Israelites." Enns, *Inspiration and Incarnation*, 47–48.

[12] Westermann, *Creation*, 13.

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Howard N. Wallace also believes that Genesis 2–3 contains "a blend of mythic [such as background of the garden theme] and historical elements." Eden is an earthly paradise where not only Adam and Eve, the first humans, but also God dwelled, in other words, "the divine dwelling has been 'historicized.'"[13]

Bill T. Arnold thinks that the primeval history is written by using the genre of myth in order to convey the historical origin of Israelites. According to Arnold, the book of Genesis "explains the origins for everything that Israelites believed important for understanding their salvation history," including "cosmic origins and Israelite origins." Genesis is "mytho-historical" in which "themes previously regarded simply as mythological are arranged along as historical time line using cause and effect."[14] The Garden of Eden is a "demythologized" old Canaanite myth.[15]

Some scholars suggest that the creation story is not strictly historical in light of geographical evidence. For example, McEntire points out that the primeval world "lacks a distinguishable geography."[16] While people who hold a purely historical view may explain this simply as "puzzling" or "unknown,"[17] McEntire insists that the Garden of Eden is "a geographical impossibility, lying at the place where the Tigris, Euphrates, and Gihon (Blue Nile) rivers emerge from a common source."[18]

John Collins alleges that "history" should be thought as "a way of referring to events." This is because "historical" does not mean any of the following: that an account

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[13] Wallace, *The Eden Narrative*, 88.

[14] Arnold, *Genesis*, 7.

[15] Arnold, *Genesis*, 63.

[16] McEntire, *Struggling with God*, 46.

[17] McKeown, *Genesis*, 33.

Gordon J. Wenham also believes that "Eden lies somewhere in Armenia near the sources of the Tigris and Euphrates." He says that the insoluble geography may suggest that "the paradise is beyond man's present experience" or may be "a way of saying that it is not inaccessible to, even unlocatable by, later man." Wenham, *Genesis 1–15*, 66–67.

[18] McEntire, *Struggling with God*, 46.

"has no figurative or imaginative elements"; that the account is "complete in detail," or "free from ideological bias"—neither case is "possible or desirable"; or that the account is "told in exact chronological sequence, unless the text claims that for itself."[19] Reflecting this view, many scholars tend to acknowledge rhetorical aspects of the creation story. These scholars are mindful of the manner in which authors perceive and express the reality is more or less different from the manner in which people today understand and describe reality.

iii. Symbolic View

People who maintain the symbolic view of the creation story point out its symbolic and timeless character. For the symbolic view, the creation story is literature that conveys truths such as the sovereignty of God, the goodness of his creation and the human universal condition before God. For instance, Daniel Harlow believes that the contents of Genesis chapter 2 and 3 are symbolic because features in the story "look very stylized—with sequences, events, and characters that look more symbolic than 'real' events and characters in 'normal' history."[20] For Harlow, Genesis 1–11 is about "prehistoric times" at large and contain "no history in the modern sense of that term." In his judgment, "[S]ince Genesis shares the same literary genre as these older works—and even borrows details from them—it should not be taken as historical either."[21]

John Walton suggests that the Garden of Eden symbolizes the temple: Eden proper is the holy of holies, and the garden is the antechamber in the symbolic cosmic temple. The garden is "presented as a real place, but the significance of it is to be found in what it represents theologically and literarily." Walton thinks, for the author(s), the

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[19] Collins, "Adam and Eve as Historical People, and Why It Matters," 151.
[20] Harlow, "After Adam," 181.
[21] Harlow, "After Adam," 184.

Garden of Eden is not simply "a piece of Mesopotamian farmland," but "an archetypal sanctuary" where God dwells, where the life-giving waters flow and where humans worship him. According to Walton, there are many parallels between the garden and the later sanctuaries such as the tabernacle or Jerusalem temple (Isa. 51:3; Ezek. 28:13, 47:1–12; Zech. 14:8; Ps. 46:4, Rev. 22:1–2) and also temples in the ancient Near Eastern worldview.[22]

John Gibson explains that the author(s) skillfully uses the "fantasy and extravagance of the kind of stories he knew his audience were used to" in order to most effectively help them appreciate the message. Gibson believes that "in its style and its structure the story of the Garden of Eden is a typical piece of folk literature, and rather more a story of the common people than the story of Creation in Gen. 1."[23]

Some scholars seem to identify the creation story as myth without any historicity, whatsoever. Ronald Simkins believes that Genesis 2 (2:4b–25) and 3 are myths that are "rich in tradition and symbolism and lend themselves to multifaceted interpretations." Simkins explains that while myths "present an imaginative would that is out of sync with human experience," they function as "vehicles for communicating the fundamental values of ancient Israelite society."[24] Meyers also regards the story as "a true mythos, a parable of the human situation," which seeks to understand "their own present reality rather than of their actual human origins."[25]

Similarly, Frederick H. Stitt thinks that the Eden narrative is myth which is "very rich, most complex, and filled with ambivalence, enigmas, and seeming

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[22] Walton, *Ancient near Eastern Thought and the Old Testament*, 124–25.
[23] Gibson, *Genesis*, 96.
[24] Simkins, *Creator and Creation*, 177.
[25] Meyers, *Discovering Eve*, 79.

contradictions."[26] He then defines myth as "timeless and symbolic" literature for the purpose of conveying truths for all people in all times:

> [I]t attempts to convey universal truths important to its community. Myth chooses its sources, ignoring others; its principal goal is inspiration, not accuracy. Myth is unquestioned and final. All creation myths involve divine action, and tell us of primordial time, which has no relationship to temporal time. That is, these myths cannot be fixed on any calendar or dated at a specific time. For us, the truths conveyed by our creation myths were true then, are true now, and will be true in the future.[27]

The symbolic view emphasizes timeless and symbolic aspects of the creation story. For the people who hold this view, historicity "in the modern sense" is not present in the story.

Scholars have different views regarding what kind of story it is. Some are apt to read it as "straight" history. Others assert that it is history but in the literary form distinctively unique to the ancient author(s). As a result, the story is possibly representing the cumulative history of actual males and females. Still others claim that what the creation story depicts is not actual history but fictional which aims to convey "timeless truths" about God, humans and nature. All these views agree that the creation story conveys important truths about God and humans and his creation. However, in order to discover what message the creation story might convey, it is important to determine the literary form of the story, for is often said: "recognizing the form in which the narrative is presented helps lead us to the author's intended meaning."[28] For the purpose of obtaining an adequate message on roles of women and men, it may be necessary to read the creation story with more appreciation of its artistic characteristics than to read it as historical literature in a contemporary sense.

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[26] Stitt, *Adam to Ahab*, 38.
[27] Stitt, *Adam to Ahab*, 41.
[28] White, *From Adam to Armageddon*, 21.

B. The Status of Adam and Eve

While there is no agreed upon view of the literary form of the creation story, neither is there agreement about the status of Adam and Eve. The gender role discussion in reference to the story tends to assume that they are two historical people in whom all humanity originated. However, scholars disagree regarding who Adam and Eve are. Some say that Adam and Eve do not need to be understood as our biological parents, but rather should be seen as representatives of their contemporaries or as the first historical progenitors of the people of God. Others think that Adam and Eve are symbols of humanity.

Scholars have suggested different ideas regarding the status of Adam and Eve. For instance, according to Daniel Harlow, there are five views about Adam and Eve:

> (1) The traditional view . . . is that Adam and Eve are *recent ancestors* of the human race – actual persons specially created by God about 10,000 years ago. (2) Another view . . . posits that God created humans around 150,000 years ago but then selected a pair of them about 10,000 years ago to represent all of humanity; this would make Adam and Eve *recent representatives*. (3) A third view sees Adam and Eve as *ancient ancestors* – a pair of evolved hominids whom God selected and miraculously modified into the first *Homo sapiens* about 150,000 years ago. (4) A variant of this scenario envisions Adam and Eve as *ancient representatives*: God revealed himself to a large group of early humans around 150,000 years ago, and the biblical Adam and Eve are symbolic of this group. (5) . . . Adam and Eve are strictly literary figures – characters in a divinely inspired story about the imagined past that intends to teach primarily theological, not historical, truths about God, creation, and humanity.[29]

The first and third views understand Adam and Eve as our biological ancestors, however in different times and with different processes. The second and fourth views regard Adam and Eve not as the first humans but as "representatives" of multitudes of people,

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[29] Harlow, "After Adam," 181; emphasis in original. According to Harlow, the first view is held by young-earth creationists, while the second view is maintained by old-earth creationists. The fifth view is believed by "the majority of contemporary biblical scholars, theologians, and Christians working in the sciences," although this view is "largely unknown in evangelical circles."

however in different times. The last view regards Adam and Eve as "symbols"; they are not historical figures.

Stanley Grenz also categorizes the proposed views of Adam in a similar manner to Harlow: Adam as historical, representative and symbolic. 1) The "traditional" view: "Adam was a historical person, a specific human individual who formed the genesis of the human race. . . [He] came into existence through a specific divine creative act at a specific point in time." 2) The "essentialist" view: Adam was "a symbol for humankind as a whole. In this sense, the story of Genesis 2–3 is a type of historical representation. It speaks of the course of events which resulted in the current state of affairs in which we now find ourselves." 3) The "existentialist" view: Adam is "a symbol for everyone. 'Adam' represents each individual human. . . . [T]he creation narrative intends to portray the course of events which occurs in the life of each person. The story of our lives is that of a fall, a move from innocency to sin."[30]

Following the primary three categories suggested by Harrow and Grenz, I use "ancestral," "representative" and "symbolic" views, in the following discussion of roles of Adam and Eve in the creation story.[31]

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[30] Grenz, *Theology for the Community of God*, 144–45.

[31] The ancestral view is the one that has been maintained primarily by the Western churches. For example, Augustine and John Calvin hold this view. According to Grenz, scholars who hold the representative view are Herman Bavinck, Charles Hodge, William G. T. Shedd, and Louis Berkhof. The symbolic view, with the combination of the ancestral view, has been more commonly shared by the Eastern Fathers such as Irenaeus of Lyon. According to Grenz, Friedrich Schleiermacher, Paul Tillich, Søren Kierkegaard, and Water Lowrie also maintain this view. For more detail, see Grenz, *Theology for the Community of God*, 193–198.

Among Protestants, Karl Barth also holds the symbolic view: "Adam's humanity is a *provisional copy* of the real humanity that is in Christ." Barth, *Christ and Adam*, 23; emphasis in original. For Barth, "[The name of Adam] constantly re-enacts the little scene in the Garden of Eden. There never was a golden age. There is no point looking back to one. The first man was immediately the first sinner. . . . [Adam] was in a trivial form what we all are, a man of sin. But he was so as the beginner, and therefore as *primus inter pares*. This does not mean that he has bequeathed to us as his heirs so that we have to be as he was. He has not poisoned us or passed on a disease. What we do after him is not done according to an example which irresistibly overthrows us, or as imitation of his act which is ordained for all his

i. Ancestral View

The ancestral view believes that Adam and Eve are biological parents of all humanity. For this view, the historicity of two individuals is essential in terms of the image of God and salvation history. That is, God made people to reflect his image, but this plan was interrupted by the fall. Or according to Western churches, all humans are now plunged into sin because Adam and Eve sinned and passed on the fallen, corrupted nature—through reproduction—to their descendants, whose status conversely made God's redemptive work applicable to them all.[32] According to the ancestral view, there must have been a point in history when God bestowed value to humans; and "scientific study will never determine conclusively" the possibility of the historical existence of Adam and Eve; instead, various Bible passages suggest that authors considered Adam and Eve to be historical people.[33]

George Kufeldt insists that "the Bible knows nothing at all of any 'pre-Adamic race.'" For Kufeldt, this idea is due to "misguided efforts to reconcile the Bible with science, forgetting that the Bible is not a text book on science and so does not require reconciliation with science." He believes that if the corrupted nature of Adam and Eve after the fall is to be passed on through procreation, and all to experience God's plan of redemption, Adam and Eve must be the parents of us all.[34]

It seems very common that Adam and Eve are assumed as a single historical couple even though it may not be explicitly stated. For example, Köstenberger explains how Eve should have consulted with Adam when Satan approaches the woman:

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successors. No one has to be Adam. We are so freely and on our own responsibility." Barth, *Church Dogmatics*, 508–09; emphasis in original.

[32] Kufeldt, "Were There People before Adam and Eve?," 154–56.

[33] Grenz, *Theology for the Community of God*, 148.

[34] Kufeldt, "Were There People before Adam and Eve?," 153–56.

Thus the man, by his absence, or at least acquiescence (Gen. 3:6: "her husband . . . with her"; cf. Gen. 3:17), shares in the woman's culpability; and she, by failing to consult with her God-given protector and provider, fails to respect the divine pattern of marriage.[35]

Gilbert Bilezikian seems to regard Adam and Eve as primogenitors: "through their harmonious union, man and woman were to fulfill God's command to expand the community of humans that originated with the first couple."[36]

Many biblical scholars regard the creation story as a combination of history and myth. By doing this, they seem to envision Adam and Eve to be more or less a historical first couple. For example, Dexter Callender thinks that Adam exists both in history and in myth. On the one hand, Adam serves as history and as basic etiology. On the other hand, Adam is used ahistorically to express analogies. According to Callender, Adam, as the primal human, is the significant ancestor in ancient Israelite society who stands between deity and humanity: he is a mediating or intermediary figure. He is the one who "established the paradigm for contact with the divine." The following generations are to follow this function of intermediary because Adam "alone is the only one who is not 'born of woman'" and is the "only one" who stood face to face with God and lived in the "'actual' (mythical) divine dwelling."[37]

Phyllis Trible calls the Eden narrative a "myth": "the myth places that culture [from which it comes from the Garden of Eden] under judgment."[38] Yet, she also

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[35] Köstenberger and Jones, *God, Marriage, and Family*, 27.

[36] Bilezikian, *Beyond Sex Roles*, 20.

[37] Callender, *Adam in Myth and History*, 206. According to Callender, Genesis 1: 26–28 and chapter 2–3 present Adam as a king: he "mediates the divine will through just and proper role" and gives oracles. The significance of his physical closeness to God is also described as priest and prophet. In Ezekiel 28: 11–19, as priest, Adam mediates "in his ability to stand before the presence of God and neutralize the encroaching forces of chaos through the cult." In Job 15: 7–8, as a prophet, Adam "stands before God and functions as messenger of divine will through proclamation." He thinks that the scripture mystically describes Adam as a king, as priest, and prophet (p. 206–210).

[38] Trible, "Eve and Adam," 81.

appears to see Adam and Eve as historical first people, when she says, "On the one hand, man is the first creature formed (2:7)"[39] and calls Adam and Eve "the primeval couple from the Garden."[40]

The ancestral view of Adam and Eve does not envision every part of the creation story as historical. Adam and Eve are, nevertheless, often seen as the first couple who became the source of all population. As far as gender role discussions concerned, the ancestral view appears to be prevalent.

ii. Representative View

Some Christians maintain that Adam and Eve are representatives of their contemporaries, rather than two primogenitors of all humanity. Scholars tend to advocate this "representative" view primarily out of their appreciation of the scientific evidence and studies provided in different fields, besides scriptural references.

Daniel Harlow, for example, explains why Adam and Eve should not be regarded as the biological original ancestors of all humans. That is, it is evident that "the genetic diversity of the present human population cannot possibly be traced back to a single couple living in Mesopotamia a few thousand years ago." Further, in rough estimation, while Adam and Eve would have lived in 9,000 to 7,000 BCE of the Neolithic period, the evidence is that the earliest modern people already lived in Africa in 150,000 BCE and also that human religion and culture existed in 40,000 BCE. The studies also indicate that human beings "did not appear suddenly but evolved gradually

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[39] Trible, "Eve and Adam," 74.
[40] Trible, "Eve and Adam," 81.

over the course of six million years."[41] Therefore, Harlow asserts humans originate not

in a single couple but in many interbreeding individuals:

> The best mathematical models suggest, rather, that the ancestors of all modern *Home Sapiens* were a population of about 10,000 interbreeding individuals who were members of a much larger population living in Africa around 150,000 years ago. This genetic evidence corroborates the fossil evidence for the date and location of the earliest anatomically modern human beings.[42]

For C. John Collins, Adam and Eve are "actual persons, from whom all other

human beings are descended,"[43] and this is an important fact in order to make sense of

the world and to explain the common dignity of all people. That is, we need Adam and

Eve as a common source, who were originally good, through whom sin entered, and

who led all people to need Christ's redemptive work. While Collins believes the special

creation of Adam and Eve, he accepts the scenario of "Adam as the chieftain and Eve as

his queen," as a "modified monogenesis." He does this in consideration of the fact that

the most recent discoveries about "the features of human DNA seem to imply that the

human population has always had at least as many as a thousand members."[44]

H. Wade Seaford also asserts that there were already many people before the

setting of the Garden of Eden, based on archaeological, biochemical and biological

evidence. He suggests that if Adam and Eve are to be the progenitors, they had to be

representatives who lived "thousands or millions of years before the setting in the

creation story," which is about ten thousand years ago (the beginning of the Neolithic

Age). This is because since two millions years prior to the Neolithic Age, there had been

already human culture, which continued to develop over the time. Seaford asserts that

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[41] Harlow, "After Adam," 179–80.
[42] Harlow, "After Adam," 189; emphasis in original.
[43] Collins, "Adam and Eve as Historical People, and Why It Matters," 147.
[44] Harlow, "After Adam," 160–62.

"[t]he idea of a single pair of humans procreating an entire species" is also

paleonanthropologically "unthinkable." There is also a biblical evidence in Genesis

4:12–15 which indicates that there were many people by whom Cain, Adam's son, was

afraid of being killed.[45]

Based on the archaeological, biochemical, biological, and paleonanthropological

data, James Peterson also believes that God introduced himself to *Homo sapiens* who

were "continuous with other hominids and the rest of life." However, Peterson is

assured that *Homo sapience* (human being) was distinctively different from preexistent

or any other creatures: humans had capacities to meet God and were able to have a

unique relationship with him and fellow humans. Only humans were capable of bearing

God's image which was to be fulfilled in the process of growth.[46]

It has been pointed out that the Hebrew term *adam* in the form of הָאָדָם is a

generic word for "human being," meaning "humankind," or "humanity." Thus, Claus

Westermann explains,

> [T]he word אָדָם can be used simply for "anyone" or negatively for "no one." . .
> . אָדָם does not mean a person as the exemplar of all, nor primarily the
> individual, but the species, humankind. . . . The use of Adam in the New
> Testament, especially in Paul, with its distinctive meaning in the story of
> salvation, is not Old Testament usage.[47]

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[45] Seaford, "Were There People before Adam and Eve?," 151–63. According to Seaford, that the setting of the creation story is about ten thousand years ago is estimated by comparing the ecological and cultural data found in Genesis 1:11–4:20, and established archaeological knowledge.

Daniel Harlow explains that paleonanthropologically "[t]he ever-growing hominid fossil record unmistakably shows that human beings did not appear suddenly but evolved gradually over the course of six million years." Harlow, "After Adam: Reading Genesis in an Age of Evolutionary Science," 179. For further reading, Harlow recommends Ralph F. Stearley, "Assessing Evidences for the Evolution of a Human Cognitive Platform for 'Soulish Behaviors,'" *Perspectives on Science and Christian Faith* 61, no. 3: 152–74, esp. 154–6., and also for the most authoritative and relatively recent volume, Johanson and Edgar, *From Lucy to Language*.

[46] Peterson, "Home Sapiens as Homo Dei," 17, 22.

[47] Westermann, *Genesis 1–11*, 202.

For Westermann, Adam and Eve are representatives who belong to "primeval time."[48]

Some scholars maintain that Adam and Eve are representatives bearing federal headship. They hold that the traditional framework of human fall and subsequent need of redemption through Christ's work are important. Nevertheless, this representative view also appreciates scientific evidence in the recent research that suggests that the entire population cannot possibly originate in two individuals such as Adam and Eve. This view also appeals to the biblical witness to multiple people beside Adam's immediate family and to the generic terms for Adam.

iii. Symbolic View

Just like the "representative" view of Adam and Eve, this view asserts that Adam and Eve are not the biological parents of all humans, in accordance with the evidence in hominid fossil record, anthropology and molecular biology. But neither does this view believe that Adam and Eve are historical representatives of humanity: instead, they are symbols of a literature which conveys important messages about God, humanity and human condition.

Harlow advocates for the view of Adam and Eve as symbols in literary feature of the story. For him, "Adam ('human') and Eve ('living one') are symbolic titles" rather than proper names for two individuals. Besides, the stories in Genesis 2–3 "do draw their raw materials from myths, and they function in large measure as myths do: to explain humanity's current condition and to articulate a particular conception of the world and of the divine-human relationship." Thus, according to Harlow, Adam and Ever are the symbolic part of the creation story which is not presenting historical

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[48] Westermann, *Genesis*, 5.

revelation but rather retelling "ancient Near Eastern traditions about cosmic, world, and human origins by way of both adaptation and critique."[49]

For Dietrich Bonhoeffer, the creation story is "not a tale about some primeval human being that hardly affects us." We are not to be engaged in the impossibility of imagining the fairyland of the Garden of Eden. Instead, "Adam is a human being like us and Adam's history is our history," although there is the decisive difference, that is, "for us history begins where for Adam it ends. Our history is history through Christ, whereas Adam's history is history through the serpent."[50]

Ronald Simkins also believes that Adam and Eve are "the archetypal man and woman" and not particular people. After all, Simkins says, the Garden of Eden does not depict itself as "the world of human experience."[51] According to John Gibson, Adam symbolizes "each one of us," not the person who actually existed in history.

> There never was such a place as the Garden of Eden, nor was there ever a historical person called Adam who lived in it and conversed with snakes and with God in Hebrew. The garden is a garden of the mind, a garden of "men's" dreams, the kind of place they would like this world to be, the kind of place indeed they know this world ought to be. Adam is each one of us, he is "Everyman". That this world is not what it should be is due to "man's" disobedience of God, to the sinful Adam in us all. Each and every day Paradise beckons us, but each and every day we eat the forbidden fruit and are banished from it.[52]

The "symbolic" view of Adam and Eve believes that Adam and Eve symbolize our current condition and current relationship with God. Based on modern scientific evidence and literary characteristics of the creation story, primogenitor of Adam and Eve is not an option for this view.

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[49] Harlow, "After Adam," 181.
[50] Bonhoeffer, *Creation and Fall*, 92.
[51] Simkins, *Creator and Creation*, 185.
[52] Gibson, *Genesis,* 100–01.

In the contemporary discussions of roles of male and female that are anchored in

Genesis, it is often assumed that the genre of the creation story is purely historical, and

Adam and Eve are historical ancestors. However, the evidence of various aspects such

as hominid fossil records, anthropology, molecular biology, and biblical terms in recent

times reveal that it is difficult to read the creation narrative as a strictly historical record

and perceive Adam and Eve as historical biological progenitors of all people. It is more

conceivable to read the story as an artistic work and Adam and Eve as either

representatives of contemporaries or symbols of humanity. In this sense they may be

more like types of humans than their biological parents.

The rhetorical nature of the narrative also seems to suggest that Adam and Eve

should be read as types: either representatives of their contemporaries or primarily as

symbols of all humanity. Arie Leegwater informs us that the literary form of the creation

story is not scientific, however rich in rhetoric:

> The Bible speaks in pre-scientific language and pictures. It employs the language
> of the day, reflecting the world-picture of the original audience. The language of
> the Bible is accommodated to the cosmological and historical awareness of the
> day. In our eyes, these cosmological and historical world-pictures may seem
> hopelessly scientifically naïve . . .[53]

The creation story may not depict the role of Adam and Eve in a manner that is in

accordance with the contemporary biological, scientific evidence. The author(s) are

likely not aware of these discoveries. Then it may not be fair or reasonable for

contemporaries to read how Adam and Eve relate in the creation story and imagine as if

what author(s) tells is exactly what happened in history. The representative and the

symbolic views challenge our perceptions based on the roles of Adam and Eve, as our

biological primogenitors.

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[53] Leegwater, "A Hard Lesson," 146.

3. Various Views and the Their Implications

As is shown, scholars have been suggesting various opinions of the literary form of the creation story and of the status of Adam and Eve. Then what difference might these varied views make in the interpretation of roles of women and men? When roles of women and men are discussed by consulting the story, interpretation is normally induced under the presupposition that the story is fairly historical and Adam and Ever are the ancestral figures of all humanity. If this is not the case, what happens to the interpretation? If the interpretation sees any difference, what does this difference mean?

A. The Form of the Creation Story and Implied Roles of Women and Men

Scholars take the literary form and device used by author(s) seriously. But the more one discovers authors' unique way of viewing or describing the reality, the more it may require careful studies for one to determine what message is being conveyed, including the message regarding roles of male and female. For instance, the significance of Adam's prior creation to Eve and his leadership role over Eve may become less clear depending on how we understand the kind of creation story.

i. The Order of Creation

When we read the story as pure history, we sometimes believe that how God carried out each event of creation is meaningful. That is, the sequence in which God created Adam first and Eve second is evidence that God granted Adam to have leadership over Eve:

> This idea of male headship in marriage is seen first in the order that men and women were created. Man (Adam) was created first, and woman (Eve) was created second (see Genesis 2:7, 18–23). The order of creation is no minor detail, but instead sets an important biblical precedent.[54]

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[54] Grudem, *Countering the Claims of Evangelical Feminism*, 21.

Or, from another perspective, Eve's later creation is sometimes regarded as her

superiority to Adam because God's creation chronologically progresses, teaching that

Eve's creation is the climax and that Adam is incomplete without Eve.[55] Nevertheless,

the concept of order of events may not be specifically essential or relevant to the story.

For instance, it has been recognized that the order of creation in Genesis 2 differs from

the order in Genesis 1, suggesting the possibility of different authors. In chapter 1, the

sequence of God's creation is vegetation, living creatures of every kind, humankind—

male and female together—, while in Genesis 2, the sequence is Adam, vegetation,

animals and Eve. Furthermore, Adam's creation in Genesis 2 is even before the creation

of plants—his possible food.[56] This suggests that the author or authors are not interested

in the chronological "sequence of creation."[57] Phyllis Bird also asserts that time or

sequence of events in Genesis 2 is unessential to the Yahwist as the author:

> Circular movement [in Genesis 2] marks the narrative structure, in contrast to the
> linear progression of Genesis 1, and dramatic action is employed to describe
> states and relationships. Time has no meaning here and sequence of action no
> ontological significance. . . . Thus "order of creation" and "order of the fall" are
> notions foreign to the Yahwist's conception and composition.[58]

How accurate the sequence of the events in the story is and how significant the idea of

sequence is for the author(s) may be questions for us to ask.

The idea that man's prior creation assumes his authority over woman has been

challenged: if the prior creation determines superior rank, should animals—being

created before humans—assume their rulership over humans; or should plants—being

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[55] See, for example, Stanton, *The Woman's Bible*, 19.

[56] Gen. 2:7–9.

[57] Gibson, *Genesis*, 102.

[58] Bird, *Missing Persons and Mistaken Identities*, 163.

created before Eve—assume the rulership over woman?[59] In response to this, scholars

sometimes answer that the prior creation of animals to humans or of plants to the

woman is not substantial, while Adam's prior creation to Eve is, because "[t]he concept

[of primogeniture (the idea that leadership in a family belongs to the firstborn son)] is a

limited principle that applies within human families."[60] For others, the creation order

suggests Eve's primacy over Adam. Nevertheless, "sequence" itself may be an

unessential, unintelligible or unconventional concept to the author(s), regardless of

where it is applied.

If we assume that sequence might be of symbolic importance to the author(s),

that is, the author is asserting something about males and females with the sequence,

then we may need enough materials to determine what is symbolized with the sequence.

Otherwise, the use of symbolism may open up multiple interpretations. For instance,

when we assume male authority in the order, we are seeing male prior creation as the

symbol of authority. But without sufficient information, establishing a meaning for a

symbol may not be an easy task. It seems difficult even to find a similar analogy: the

relationships between man and woman and between wife and husband are not analogous

to the one between animals (or plants) and humans as the previous author suggests, but

also not analogous to the relationship between siblings—the concept of primogeniture.

Discovering the meaning of a symbol—what ancient authors might symbolize with the

concept of "sequence"—requires due study.[61]

ii. Roles

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[59] Bilezikian, *Beyond Sex Roles*, 30; Belleville, *Women Leaders and the Church*, 24.

[60] Grudem, *Evangelical Feminism and Biblical Truth*, 122.

[61] The interpretation of the life before the fall—including the interpretation of symbols—will be discussed in chapter five.

According to the rhetorical view, the creation story may describe actual history by using the form of myth. When discovering roles of man and woman in the story from this perspective, we may need to be careful in identifying what role each character plays and what the role symbolizes. Some suggest that why Satan approached Eve first is because of her nature: "God's order of creation is mirrored in the *nature* of men and women. Satan approached the woman first not only because of the order of creation but also because of the different *inclinations* present in Adam and Eve."[62] Or others say,

> The idea is that Eve took the initiative and made the decision to eat the forbidden fruit on her own, but in doing this she took a leadership role that belonged to Adam. In this way, Paul is pointing out what happens when women takes the leadership role that God has reserved for men.[63]

Nonetheless, actions of Adam and Eve may not necessarily represent who they are, or their nature. Scholars inform us that the serpent often plays a role as a "symbol of immortality, wisdom or fertility"[64] in the ancient Near Eastern myth. Yet, its role neither reflects zoological accuracy nor reflects its nature or real status. In fact, people who hold the purely historical view of the creation story generally understand that it was Satan, not the serpent that is evil and spoke through the serpent.[65]

In consideration of rhetorical features, and specifically of an art of myth, we may need to be careful in deciding how and what role the serpent, Adam and Eve might be enacting, rather than presenting their real status of who they are or what they really did. Roles enacted by Adam and Eve may be a constitutive part in order to shape the primary message of the creation story, rather than declaring who they truly are or what they really did. The purpose of the story based on their responses to God's command, for

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[62] Schreiner, "An Interpretation of 1 Timothy 2:9–15," 61; emphasis added.
[63] Grudem, *Countering the Claims of Evangelical Feminism*, 37.
[64] Wallace, *The Eden Narrative*, 144.
[65] Grudem, *Evangelical Feminism and Biblical Truth*, 114.

example, may be to teach about human freedom to chose or not to chose God's will and also about fragility of the choice by using a man and woman as representatives of humans, but not to teach the essential natures of Adam and Eve.

iii. The Creation Story as Symbolic

If the creation story is not regarded as historic but as symbolic, it would teach God's good and affirmative design for humans. However, roles played by Adam and Eve do not necessarily serve as ideal models for people today. That is, gender role discussions based on the creation story appeal to the ideal state before the fall when the first couple played ideal roles of male and female. For the symbolic view, however, the creation story is about the story of our current state, which is already tainted by sin. The symbolic view then demands that contemporary theology seek the teaching of ideal roles of women and men elsewhere than in the creation story.

In summary, the above different understandings of the literary form of the story appear to modify our views of roles played by Adam and Eve. Some scholars interpret the creation order of Adam first and Eve second as revealing Adam's leadership role over Eve as God-ordained. For others, the order suggests Eve's preeminence over Adam. Nevertheless, as an aesthetic and ancient literature, the concept of "sequence" may be unessential to the story or unconventional to the author(s). Or if the creation narrative is to be read as an art of myth, our important task would be to see what message ancient author(s) attempts to convey with performing characters rather than to discover who is behind the mask. The essential natures as their God-assigned purposes of performers as man and woman may not be an issue for the author(s). Furthermore, if the creation story is about our current status as the symbolic view suggests, the roles of

Adam and Eve are not models of how contemporary men and women should relate to each other.

B. The Status of Adam and Eve and Implied Gender Roles

Scholars have suggested primarily three different views of who Adam and Eve might have been: Adam and Eve as the biological original ancestors of all people, the representatives of multiple of people and symbols of current human condition. Just as different views of the literature form of the creation narrative adjusts the interpretation of roles of woman and man, different views concerning the status of Adam and Eve also tend to modify our understanding of roles played by them.

i. Eve's Creation from Adam

Roles of women and men are sometimes said to hinge on how Adam and Eve, humanity's first parents, were created. "Primary responsibility of Adam in the family (as well as in the church)" is assumed because "[n]ot only does Paul draw attention to the fact that the man was created first, but he also notes that it is not the man who was made for the woman, but the woman for the man (1 Cor. 11:9; cf. Gen. 2:18, 20) and from the man (1 Cor. 11:8, 12; cf. Gen. 2:22)."[66] However, according to the representative view, when God introduced himself to Adam and Eve, there already existed many other people via procreation. Then, even though Eve was created from Adam's rib, this was not the only God-ordained purpose. The procreation which took place before the fall was also a God-ordained purpose. No matter how unique the creation of Eve might have been, it is no longer instructive for roles of women and men today. Therefore, Westermann, who thinks that Adam and Eve are representatives, insists that "[t]he creation of the woman from one of the man's ribs is not intended to be a factual

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[66] Köstenberger and Jones, *God, Marriage, and Family*, 24.

description, and must not be so understood. The narrator wishes to ground the intimate relationship between man and woman in the process of creation itself."[67]

ii. The Roles of Adam and Eve as God Assigned Purpose

According to the view that Adam and Eve are symbols of people today, they are neither the perfect people in Paradise nor our biological parents. From this view, then, the roles of symbolic Adam and Eve are no longer the models for roles of women and men today. It is beneficial to study what the creation story might say with the symbolic Adam and Eve on an existential level, but not on a prototypical one. That is, it is pointless to attempt to discover the essential natures of Adam and Eve as their God-assigned purposes and entailed roles because they are not goals or ideals of human conduct. The symbolic view as well as the representative view suggests that the role model is not Adam and Eve but somebody else—Christ—as is discussed in chapters seven to nine.

While there have been various views proposed regarding the genre of the status of Adam and Eve, the message drawn from and thus one's interpretation of the roles of Adam and Eve alter. If Adam and Eve are considered as types, either representatives of their contemporaries or as symbols of all humanity, Adam and Eve are not always the models of marriage and ministry today.

4. The Roles of Adam and Eve and Contemporary Discussions of Roles of Women and Men

Discussions on marriage and ministry in reference to the creation story tend to assume the creation narrative as purely historical and Adam and Eve as biological primogenitors of all human beings. However, such discussions tend to not only assume

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[67] Westermann, *Genesis*, 21.

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but also require that Adam and Eve be read in that manner for many interpretations and specifically for hierarchical views of interpretations. That is, both representative and symbolic views of Adam and Eve seem to make their creation order irrelevant to gender roles as a guide. While the historicity of the genre and the status of Adam and Eve as primogenitors are highly important for many discussions of roles of men and women, as is discussed above, these conditions appear less plausible or tenable. Appreciation of the rhetorical aspect of Genesis is not only possible but necessary to understanding its message accurately. Contemporary science increasingly suggests that Adam and Eve are more likely types than biological ancestors of all people.[68]

The fact that there are different ways to read the creation story is not a new issue. According to Reuling, within the Christian tradition there was no strict consensus as to the interpretation of the creation story. For example, while the Antiochene school understood Adam and Eve's fault as primarily an example of common human failure, the Alexandrian school took it "as a falling to the human body . . . as a change in the bodily condition of mankind." Nonetheless, Reuling declares that there is a general consensus on the interpretation of Eden among all Christians. It is a "Christ-centred understanding" and "the underlying vision of salvation history in which Adam and Christ are pivotal figures." Reuling states that it is traditionally believed that "the ultimate significance of Christ can only be fully grasped against the background of the first creation. Christ is the typos, Adam the *anti-typos*."[69] Brueggemann also suggests

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[68] For example, Dennis R. Venema suggests that genomics, which uses gene mapping, nucleotide sequencing, and other techniques, "continues to support the conclusion that humans, as a species, are descended from an ancestral population of at least several thousand individuals. . . . [T]he hypothesis that humans are genetically derived from a single ancestral pair in the recent past has no support from a genomics perspective, and, indeed, is counter to a large body of evidence." Venema, "Genesis and the Genome," 175.

[69] Reuling, "The Christian and the Rabbinic Adam," 65.

that the creation account prepares the way for "redescription or the restoration and mending of a scarred, broken creation to the intent of the Creator. . . . In God's own way God negates recalcitrant power present in creation to bring human creatures to obedience that makes the world liveable."[70]

Biblical studies of mythical aspects in the creation story show that this salvation message is presented in the manner in which the story compares the God of Israel with other idolized deities who were worshiped by contemporaries. Biblical scholars generally understand that the creation story was to show how different the Hebrew God was in contrast to other gods in neighbouring nations. Wenham states that Gen 1–11 is "best read as presenting an alternative world-view to those generally accepted in the ancient Near East. Genesis 1–11 is a tract for the times, challenging ancient assumptions about the nature of God, the world, and mankind."[71] McKeown also believes that Genesis was written "at least to combat what the writer saw as the errors of other religions. . . . The theological teaching of Genesis is fundamentally different from anything else that has been discovered."[72] According to Walton, the creation story reveals that God, having no needs, nevertheless desires to have a relationship with people. This is in contrast to the belief in the ancient Near East that people were "created as slaves to the gods" to meet their needs.[73] Appreciation of the rhetorical feature enriches our understanding of the preeminent character of God and the salvation message.

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[70] Brueggemann, *An Introduction to the Old Testament*, 33.
[71] Wenham, *Genesis 1–15*, xlv.
[72] McKeown, *Genesis*, 12.
[73] Walton, *The Lost World of Genesis One*, 149.

The messages of the creation story are not to be threatened or affected by scientific discoveries. The heliocentric worldview and all cosmological discoveries only insure and testify to the might, wonder, love and eternity of God. Similarly, genuine knowledge through scientific studies enhances our appreciation of the biblical truth. J. I. Packer emphatically states this:

> Biblical accounts of reality and scientific accounts of reality cannot be contradictory . . . but are, rather, complementary, and are to be integrated in a way that preserves and indeed highlights the integrity of both without either seeking to rubbish the other. Our task is to bring them together, not keep them apart. *Sola scriptura* does not mean Bible-without-science.[74]

Theology and science are mutually informing. While science can be fallible, applying our scientific knowledge to the creation story is not only the way of respecting the integrity of the story but also the way to enhance an appreciation of the messages of the story.

It is safe then to gain the knowledge from the creation narrative about God, and his relationship with humans and creation, which is to be fully realized in the incarnated Christ. These messages are true regardless of the literature of the story, whether it is historical or symbolic and the status of Adam and Eve, whether they are biological parents, representatives of contemporaries or symbols. Scientific evidences only testify that these messages are true. Although the writers of the Scripture such as Psalmists and Paul would have presupposed geocentricity and Adam and Eve as biological primogenitors of all humanity as truthful reality, their messages in Psalms and Romans, for example, remain unaffected regardless of scientifically informed understandings of the reality. Nor would their theology of roles of woman and man.

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[74] Packer, "The Bible in Use," 77–78.

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Christians generally understand that the creation story teaches truths about

Creator and his creatures. Unlike other religions in the ancient Near East, God in

Genesis created his people to be in loving relationship with him. Theologically, the

creation story plays an important part by giving the backdrop for the salvation story yet

to be accomplished. Christian theology generally maintained and shared the common

understanding of Adam and Eve regardless of the different views of genre: to read

Adam in light of Christ. In this sense, understanding roles of Adam and Eve without

relating them to Christ is all too common and needs to be corrected. The interpretation

of Adam and Eve without considering their relationship to Christ may be erroneous.

4. Conclusion

While Christians often discuss contemporary marriage and ministry in reference

to roles played by Adam and Eve, there has been no unanimous consensus achieved as

to the genre of the creation story, and status of Adam and Eve.[75] At first glance, for

example, how one understands the literature of the creation story does not appear to

make a difference in understanding the messages it contains or the messages about roles

of women and men. In fact, all views believe that the creation story teaches important

truths: essential truths about God, his good creation and human current condition of

alienation from God and his plan to restore it. Furthermore, people generally are aware

that the manner how the story describes is more or less rhetorical. However, different

kinds of literature and the status of Adam and Eve suggested by scholars lead to

different understandings of the roles of Adam and Eve.

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[75] In a local level, there has been consensus and enforcement among certain groups such as the statement of faith at Wheaton College and the explanatory note of the statement of faith at Biola University.

Scholars have seen the literary form of the creation account differently. For some, it is more like a straight history while for others, it is history in a rhetorical literature or in a form of myth. For still others, it is not history but a fictional literature to tell truths. Considering how the ancient author(s) and people today might present the reality differently, however, the order of creation between Adam and Eve may become less relevant to their hierarchical relations. If history is written in the literary form such as myth, what Adam and Eve are enacting may be a constituent part of the story, rather than expressing who they truly are and what they truly did. Still from the perspective of envisioning the creation story not as historical but as symbolic, the story is about the current human condition. The creation story unlikely instructs how men and women should relate today.

The views of the status of Adam and Eve also are more complicated than it is often assumed. Some scholars see them as the biological original ancestors of all humanity; others as the original spiritual ancestors of all humanity as the first *homo sapiens* to whom God introduced himself; hence the first fully human beings; and still others regard them as fictional figures in literature conveying important truths about humanity and the human experience. If one is to see Adam and Eve as representatives of a multitude of people—whether in ancient time or in more recent time—the order of creation of Adam and Eve may be irrelevant to their assigned purpose. If one is to regard Adam and Eve as symbols of the current human condition rather than a historical couple, no matter how Adam and Eve may have related, their roles are not God ordained roles that we are to model ourselves today.

Discussions that determine contemporary marriage and ministry based on the creation story critically hinge on the historicity of the genre and the status of Adam and Eve as the biological original ancestors of all humanity. However, this understanding of the genre and of who Adam and Eve are appears to be less conceivable. Their roles as types will not always teach how contemporary men and women should relate to each other. Christian theology of roles of women and men less likely finds a reliable guide in roles of Adam and Eve. In contrast, reading Adam and Eve as types tends to be more consistent to the reading traditionally agreed: to read Adam and Eve in the salvation context, and perhaps points to Christ as a role model.

CHAPTER FIVE

THE INTERPRETATIVE METHOD OF THE CREATION STORY

1. Introduction

Discovering the genre of the creation story and the status of Adam and Eve is an important task to undertake if one is in any way to ground roles of women and men upon the story. There are, however, still other challenges to address and overcome before seeking a guide for marriage and ministry in the creation story. One of them is an interpretative method that might help comprehend the story adequately.

Appealing to the creation story for an ideal relationship between Adam and Eve is the corollary of a particular theological framework primarily taught by St. Augustine.[1] Regardless of its wide acceptance among Western churches, this framework seems to cause some difficulty in the interpretation of the creation story. That is to say, on the one hand, the picture of the Garden of Eden portrayed by Augustine is a sinless perfect world, which is quite foreign to those who live in an imperfect world. On the other hand, the prevalent method of interpreting the Bible is to understand the cultural context of the passage. But if the state before the fall is pristine or unaffected by sin, how does one undertake its cultural study? For instance, can the sinless relationship before the fall be determined by analyzing author(s)'s corrupt relationships after the fall?[2] Is the interpretative method that studies the sinful or affected world necessarily efficacious? The method to interpret such a unique state of perfection is not incontrovertibly

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[1] In contrast, Eastern orthodox churches, as we will see in the following chapters seven to nine, do not see the state before the fall as perfect. Adam and Eve are like innocent children who are to grow into maturity over time.

[2] This can be questioned even when the state is not a perfect world because alienation from God affected human relationship with God and fellow humans.

established. Then what happens when one applies the cultural studies normally used for the rest of the Bible to the interpretation of the creation story?

This chapter argues that because of the presupposed character of the Garden of Eden as sinless or unaffected by sin and lacking an interpretative method of such a state, the interpretation of human roles of the creation story is at risk of insidiously projecting into the story affected relations of the culture after the fall. This does not mean, however, that the creation story has no applicable interpretative method and thus loses its role as God's revelation. Quite the contrary, as is shown in chapters seven to nine, the Eastern Orthodox view that portrays the state before the fall as imperfect does make it possible to interpret the creation story applying the same method for the rest of the Bible.

This chapter will first explore the theological framework provided by Augustine that the human relationship was ideal before the fall but corrupted subsequently. Then the interpretative method which is normally employed for interpretation of the Bible will be examined. Finally, the difficulty of the method when applied to the creation story as a sinless state will be discussed. For the sake of argument, this chapter will primarily treat the creation story as historical literature, and Adam and Eve as historical progenitors of all humanity, because these are the presuppositions often assumed by those who discuss gender roles in reference to the creation story from Augustine's theological framework.

2. Augustine's View of the State before and after the Fall

The creation story is essential for Christian theology because it conveys truths about God and his relation to creation. But the story also becomes important when the state before the fall is regarded as sinless where the God-assigned purpose for humans is

found. It is often believed that the state before the fall was a pristine and sinless

Paradise,[3] where Adam and Eve lived a righteous life. For such a theological framework,

roles played by Adam and Eve often are thought as God ordained roles, which Paul

refers to and all people should emulate.

A. Ideal Human Relations before the fall and Subsequent Corruption

The idea of original sin and the fall existed in the early centuries of the Church.[4]

Nonetheless, Augustine in the fourth and fifth centuries developed this idea more fully

in Christian teaching. The subsequent churches, and Western churches in particular,

have continued to embrace this conception of original perfection and maintained that the

state before the fall was a sinless, perfect world before every aspect of it was affected by

sin. In such a state, Adam and Eve lived ideal lives and had an ideal relationship.

The state before the fall was such a happy realm of Paradise: God "placed them

in a certain place of perpetual bliss, which Scripture calls Paradise."[5] It was an ideal

state where the climate was perfect and there was nothing which humans had to fear or

desire: "As in Paradise there was no excessive heat or cold, so its inhabitants were

exempt from the vicissitudes of fear and desire."[6] There were no creatures that were

harmful to humans: "The supposition that they [poisonous and dangerous animals] were

made as harmless creatures is not unreasonable" primarily because "there had been no

reason for inflicting fear or punishment on sinful man or for testing and perfecting his

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[3] Augustine, *The City of God*, xiv. 10.

[4] Tennant, *The Sources of the Doctrines of the Fall and Original Sin*. Tennant says that there had been definite theories of Original Sin in the earliest Christian centuries. For example, "Tertullian may perhaps be regarded as the founder of the Church's doctrine of hereditary sinfulness of nature derived from Adam" (p. 328), and "Ambrose, in the first place, supplies Augustine with suggestions for his exaltation of the original estate of Adam before the Fall" (p. 338).

[5] Augustine, *The First Catechetical Instruction*, 2.18.30.

[6] Augustine, *The City of God*, xiv.26.

virtue."[7] The Garden of Eden was a happy, secure world if sin did not bring it to an end:

God "placed him in the happiness of Paradise, in a life of security, as it were, whence, provided he preserved his innocence, he was to rise to better things."[8]

Adam and Eve were blessed with perfect health, afflicted by neither death nor disease. They maintained their mental and physical health. Their relationships with God and with each other were flawless:

> And what could [Adam and Eve] fear or suffer in such affluence of blessings, where neither death nor ill-health was feared, and where nothing was wanting which a good will could desire, and nothing present which could interrupt man's mental or bodily enjoyment? Their love to God was unclouded, and their mutual affection was that of faithful and sincere marriage; and from this love flowed a wonderful delight, because they always enjoyed what was loved. Their avoidance of sin was tranquil; and, so long as it was maintained, no other ill at all could invade them and bring sorrow.[9]

The state before the fall was a sinless one: "there was no sin."[10] Adam and Eve demonstrated a sinless relationship: "The honest love of husband and wife made a sure harmony between them."[11] "In such happy circumstances and general human well-being," they related to each other "without the seductive stimulus of passion, with calmness of mind" and without "corrupting of the integrity of the body."[12] Without perishable bodies, the relationship between Adam and Eve was not to involve a lustful desire:

> [God] made woman to be his helpmate, not for carnal concupiscence—since at that time before mortality, the penalty of sin, came upon them, they did not have perishable bodies—but that the man also might have glory of the woman when he went before her to God and might offer himself to her as an example for her

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[7] Augustine, *The Literal Meaning of Genesis*, 3.15.24.
[8] Augustine, *Faith, Hope and Charity*, 8.25.
[9] Augustine, *The City of God*, xiv.26.
[10] Augustine, *The City of God*, xiv.10.
[11] Augustine, *The City of God*, xiv. 26.
[12] Augustine, *The City of God*, xiv. 26.

to follow in holiness and godliness; even as he himself should be the glory of God, in following His wisdom.[13]

Adam and Eve dwelled in the sinless place and lived holy, godly lives.

Nonetheless, Adam and Eve disobeyed God's command that they should not consume the fruit from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. This was the fall that led them to an exile from Paradise along with all devastating consequences. Among them was an impact on relations. Augustine says that upon this fall, "sin had created a wide rift between the human race and God."[14] The ideal relationships Adam and Eve had with God and with each other were corrupted. The effects of the fall extended to the following generations because Adam's original sin affected the subsequent generations through the physical union: "Through the bad will of that one man all sinned in him, when all were that one man, and on that account each individual contracted from him original sin. . . . I say quite clearly that they are under the power of the devil on account of sin."[15] All human relationships after the fall were no longer the ones in Paradise.

Contemporary Western churches that hold this view of the original perfection and the fall also take the effect of sin on human relations seriously. For example, Graham McFarlane identifies the seriousness of the sin and its effect on relationships because "human identity is fundamentally a relational issue."[16] He insists that the fall primarily affected human relationship with God and also relationships with fellow humans:

> The fall created alienation in relation to God and in relation to her fellow humans. After being alienated from God we are not only alienated from God but also from ourselves and from others. Being enlightened with the knowledge of

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[13] Augustine, *The First Catechetical Instruction*, 2.18.29.

[14] Augustine, *Faith, Hope and Charity*, 28.108.

[15] Augustine, "Marriage and Desire," 2.15.

[16] McFarlane, "Atonement, Creation and Trinity," 196.

good and evil, human beings now judge good and evil solely based on their own interests. Humans seek to be like the Creator rather than creation. This relational dysfunctionality is catastrophe.[17]

Human relationships with God and with fellow humans were no longer identical to the ones they once enjoyed in the Garden of Eden. Every relation became sinful and more or less distorted.

In Augustine's teaching, the pre-fall is regarded as a perfect state, where every aspect of the environment and human body operated without any disorder. Without lacking anything, humans related to each other in a sinless manner. Their disobedience to God's command, however, brought their alienation from God and from each other. All generations after Adam and Eve have since lived in a foreign corrupt world, exiled from the ideal of Paradise.

B. Adam and Eve as Ideal in Contemporary Discussions of Marriage and Ministry

Western churches generally followed Augustine's theological framework of the original perfection and the subsequent corruption. Consequently, when evangelical Protestants discuss roles of women and men in reference to the creation story, this framework is presupposed.

Discussions today sometimes suggest that how Adam and Eve related to each other is the basis of Paul's teaching in 1 Corinthians 11:2–18 and 1 Timothy 2:11–20. Before the fall the state was pristine where nothing was stained by the effects of sin, and where God's assigned purpose for humans is found. It is often maintained, therefore, that roles played by Adam and Eve were the ideal ones that are to be emulated by the church universally.

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[17] McFarlane, "Atonement, Creation and Trinity," 196–197.

From a hierarchical view, Mary Kassian also states, "In Eden, Adam and Eve

lived in a world unmarred by the effects of sin. Their relationship was perfect and was

characterized by unity and harmony. Here in the Genesis account of creation we see a

prototype of the roles God had created for man and woman, and here we see the

intended outworking of those roles."[18] Egalitarians also believe that one can discover a

God-ordained purpose in the state before the fall: "[God's] original purpose for

humankind is reflected in the institutions of creation as they are described in Genesis 1

and 2. However, the introduction of sin through the fall of Adam and Eve disrupted

God's creation order (Gen. 3–11)."[19]

Augustine's idea of the original perfection and the subsequent fall was embraced

by theologians in the Western church to the present day. When scholars argue about

roles in reference to the creation story, it usually is done within the framework of

Augustine's understanding that Adam and Eve shared a sinless relationship in a sinless

state, but that after the fall, this ideal became foreign to any human lives.

3. Interpretative Methods of the Bible

The Bible is the revelation of God, and its interpretation is the primary task of

Christians in order to know God and his will for his creation.[20] Protestant churches have

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[18] Kassian, *Women, Creation and the Fall*, 14.

[19] Bilezikian, *Beyond Sex Roles*, 13.

[20] Ferguson defines the revelation of Scripture as "the record of God's self-disclosure and of the responses by the people of God to that self-disclosure." He categorizes God's revelation in two: 1) The view "held firmly by the conservative tradition of the larger church, is to the effect that the Scriptures themselves have become a part of the revelation. The basic assumption behind this point of view is that God inspired the writing of the Bible in such a way as to make it free from error. It constantly is in a state of becoming the divine Word spoken to the people of God." 2) The view "asserts that the Bible is witness to and testimony of God's revelation. As the divine presence has been made known, individuals have recorded there self-disclosures. The Bible, then, becomes a record of human observation and experience of God's revelation rather than a part of the revelation itself. In this view (or set of views) the critical question about the record becomes its trustworthiness and the way in which God's Word is heard through it" Ferguson, *Biblical Hermeneutics*, 31–32.

specifically appreciated the grammatical-historical method as an invaluable tool for the

exegesis of the Bible. In order to interpret the creation story and to understand how

Adam and Eve might have related before the fall, the grammatical-historical method has

been also employed. Underlining the importance of the cultural context, however, this

method may become problematic for the interpretation of the state before the fall, when

the state is considered as sinless or ideal.

A. Significance of the Grammatical-Historical Method

According to W. Tate, the grammatical-historical method is the "practice of

interpreting or explicating a text or passage by a careful analysis of the original language

of the text and the historical context in which the text was written." The emphasis of the

analysis is due to the concern that "[b]oth the languages of the Bible and the historical

and cultural contexts differ from those of modern readers."[21]

The grammatical-historical method emerged in the Middle Ages but recognized

as a primary tool for an exegesis through the Reformation. In the Middle Ages,

theologians maintained the interpretive methods that were developed and carried over

by the early Church Fathers in the Patristic Period. They used *catena, interpretive gloss*

and *Glossa Ordinaria* as the methods for interpretation.[22] While the dominant

interpretive method was allegorical, four senses—historical, allegorical, tropological

and anagogical—were to be sought in every text. As opposed to allegorical

interpretation, historical or literal interpretation was maintained by only some

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However, the discussion on the gender roles in the creation story does not normally concern innerancy of the Bible.

[21] Tate, *Interpreting the Bible*, 154.

[22] Klein, *Introduction to Biblical Interpretation*, 39. *Catena* was "a chain of interpretation compiled from the commentaries of the Church Fathers." *Glosses* were "Scripture annotations or commentaries from the Fathers that were written in the margins or between the lines of the Bible." *Glossa Ordinaria* were "the compilation of glosses from individual biblical books" (p. 39).

theologians. With the emergence of Scholasticism, which aimed to harmonize the

Christian faith and human reason, the literal meaning of Scripture came to be regarded

more highly. Toward the end of the Middle Ages, scholars began to appreciate the value

of historical studies and objectivity in interpretation.[23] Through the rise of the

Renaissance and humanism, reformers in the sixteenth century came to emphasize

reading the Bible in the original language and to pursue a historical-grammatical method

as an ideal tool for interpretation.[24] This method was to discover the intended original

meaning in the text and to examine the passage in light of the grammatical and

syntactical aspects, the historical background, the literary genre as well as theological

(canonical) considerations. The grammatical-historical method also was to distinguish

between the one original meaning and the significance of the text which included the

ensuing use of text, or application.[25]

Since Friedrich Schleiermacher and Wilhelm Dilthey, there has been

development of hermeneutics to "span the gap between past and present." This

development has influenced contemporary interpretative methodology immensely. Yet,

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[23] Grant, *A Short History of the Interpretation of the Bible*, 83–91.

[24] Calvin, for example, was introduced to exegetical models through Chrisostom, Erasmus, Melanchthon, Bucer and Luther. (Gamble, "Brevitas Et Faciltas," 54–55.) Calvin acknowledged linguistic knowledge and appreciated literal context and also literal sense opposed to allegorical one. His word study was to examine its use by the same author elsewhere and by other authors and to give the historical background and philosophical concepts. He included cultural-historical research in his search for the author's intention as the interpretive goal and formed simple and concise commentaries. See Haire, "John Calvin as an Expositor," 2–6.

However, this is not to say that reformers employed only the grammatical-historical method in interpretation. For example, no matter which method was used, it was essential not to violate the Rule of Faith, as standard. That is, truth was to be found only within the church and was preserved in churches in the apostolic succession. See Grant, *A Short History of the Interpretation of the Bible*, 50. The Rule of Faith was to hold "together theologically God the Creator and Jesus Christ, and hermeneutically the Old and New Testaments." Green-McCreight, *Ad Litteram*, 6.

Another method was called analogy of faith, which insisted that the prophet is to speak in accord with previously revealed truth which is found in the Word of God. See Kaiser, *An Introduction to Biblical Hermeneutics*, 194.

[25] Haire, "John Calvin as an Expositor," 2–6.

following the Reformation tradition, Protestants have continued to use grammatical-historical hermeneutical rules for exegesis. The emerging critical biblical studies in the nineteenth century even emphasized the essentiality of "the literary context and the wider situation in which it appeared."[26] The historical-critical method further insisted on the importance of the historical background along with other elements.[27]

Klyne Snodgrass suggests that exegesis is "a search for past meaning" and that it focuses "on historical context and grammatical relations to determine what the text meant at its origin. . . . Valid exegesis will always involve an attempt to understand the historical and cultural context in which the communication arose."[28] According to David Ferguson, a refined historical method has been the "standard tool box" for well over a century. Biblical scholars understand that an adequate knowledge of the history and culture of biblical times is vital for one to avoid the risk of imposing an alien point of view onto the text and thus distorting its message. Today, fair and accurate interpretation is to require a general historical awareness which involves the working knowledge of geography and archaeology of the area. The location where the events took place and a life style people had are some of the basic information to increase the

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[26] Ferguson, *Biblical Hermeneutics*, 5.

[27] The other elements are the structure and idioms of biblical language, the type of literature represented, the geographical conditions, and the life setting. (Ferguson, *Biblical Hermeneutics*, 5.)
Osborn explains that Historical-cultural exegesis differs from historico-critical study in that it applies background data to a passage in order to understand better its meaning, but it does not use it in order to determine the authenticity or editorial expansion of that text. Osborne, *The Hermeneutical Spiral*, 158.

[28] Snodgrass, "Exegesis," 203–05. Snodgrass emphasizes the importance of historical, cultural and literary studies of the text: "Learn as much as possible about the historical, cultural, and literary context of the passage. Broadly conceived, this means learning as much as possible about the world in which the document emerges and is a never-ending task. We bring to the text an assumption—sketchy as it may be—of what its world was like, whether ancient Israel or first-century Palestine and the Greco-Roman world. The more we learn about these entities and the primary sources revealing them, the more opportunity we have to understand the text. . . . More narrowly conceived, the concern is to learn as much as possible about the specific context and content of the entire work and then of the specific context of the passage being studied."

probability of the accurate interpretation: "Without a knowledge of the history and culture of biblical times, the interpreter may inadvertently impose an alien point of view onto the text, distorting its meaning."[29]

Grant Osborne suggests that the stories and discourses in the Bible are always connected to real life: "Every one was written a concrete cultural milieu and written to a concrete situation. It is socioscientific background studies that unlock the original situation that otherwise would be lost to the modern reader." For the purpose of these studies, Osborne proposes six research areas: geography, politics, economics, military and war, cultural practices and religious customs. With the geographical research, "[t]he movements of peoples and topography of the land can add marvellous insights to the study of a passage." Politics is "very helpful when studying the historical accounts (such as the history of Israel or the life of Jesus) to know something of the political developments behind the accounts." Studying economics is also helpful because "[e]very culture may be defined somewhat on the basis of its socioeconomic situation." War in the Old Testament was "a good part of the imagery dealing with divine succor (God as our 'refuge,' 'strength' or 'present help') stems from military metaphors." Cultural practices include family, material and everyday customs, athletics and recreation, music and art, and cultural anthropology. Finally, religious customs "controlled every aspect of the daily life of the people. Every activity carried religious overtones, and the modern dichotomy between religious and secular simply did not exist."[30]

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[29] Ferguson, *Biblical Hermeneutics*, 5, 71.
[30] Osborne, *The Hermeneutical Spiral*, 158–67. Osborne provides more details as to "cultural practices": Family customs are "such as marriage ritual or educational practices"; "Material customs (homes, dress) can also provide valuable information"; "Everyday customs affect far more passages in

In order to interpret the Bible, the grammatical-historical method has been an invaluable tool specifically since the Reformation. Protestants today appreciate the method in exegesis and study the cultural context as the integral part of the method. To discover the background of the text such as geography, politics, economics, military, cultural practices and religious customs is considered as essential for the adequate knowledge of the biblical messages.

B. A Problem in Interpreting the State before the Fall

In the interpretation of the creation story, scholars also apply the grammatical-historical method. It is an invaluable tool to discover the message conveyed by the story. Studying the cultural context of the passage is also an essential part of the exegesis. However, when the state before the fall is understood as pristine and sinless as Augustine suggests, the interpretation with this method sometimes induces theological difficulties.

This is specifically so in the interpretation of roles played by Adam and Eve. For instance, it is suggested that the reason why Adam takes leadership over Eve is because of the order of creation and that this is supported by the ancient custom of primogeniture:

> The fact that God first created Adam, then after a period of time created Eve (Gen 2:7, 18–23), suggests that God saw Adam as having a leadership role in his family. . . . The creation of Adam first is consistent with the Old Testament pattern of "primogeniture," the idea that the firstborn in any generation in a human family has leadership in the family for that generation.[31]

Scripture than one would think. Even daily hygiene was more a religious custom than a personal one"; "Athletics and recreation form an important part of the leisure time of any people, and this is true in biblical times as well"; "Music and art are among the noblest of human endeavors, expressing the deep sensibilities of the soul"; Cultural anthropology means "the cultural matrix for biblical ideas is essential for understanding what is behind the text, especially in ideas of honor-shame or purity-pollution in the ancient world that are so foreign to Western ways."

[31] Grudem, *Systematic Theology*, 461.

However, the question may be whether the practice after the fall can always and adequately be realized in the sinless culture. Should the cultural norm after the fall be necessarily the same as the one in the state before the fall? Or, how possible may it be to find an innocent relationship comparable to Paradise in this present fallen world? The custom of primogeniture supposedly belonged to the author's (authors') culture, while it may be foreign to the pre-fall world. It seems difficult to apply the corrupt human dynamic of the post-fall to the sinless human dynamic in the pre-fall and regard primogeniture as part of it, unless primogeniture is God's consistent character and will whether before or after the fall.

It also is maintained that Adam's naming of Eve should be understood as the basis of his authority and leadership over her.

> [T]he fact that Adam gave names to all the animals (Gen 2:19–20) indicated Adam's authority over the animal kingdom, because in Old Testament thought the right to name someone implied authority over that person (this is seen both when God gives names to people such as Abraham and Sarah, and when parents give names to their children) . ... Therefore when Adam named Eve by saying, "She shall be called Woman, because she was taken out of Man" (Gen 2:23), it indicated a leadership role on his part as well.[32]

This interpretation seeks to understand the authority structure in the state before the fall by employing the authority structure that may be realized in the rest of the Old Testament. Again, the authority through naming[33] may have been the experience of the Patriarchs; yet this experience need not reflect experience in the pre-fall. The culture in the Garden of Eden is considered to be sinless and spotless. Then the practice there could be quite different from the one after the fall.

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[32] Grudem, *Systematic Theology*, 462.

[33] Ramsay suggests that "naming" in Gen 2:23 is "an act of discernment rather than an act of domination." Ramsey, "Is Name-Giving an Act of Domination in Genesis 2:23 and Elsewhere," 34–35.

Further, it has been proposed that the term *help* in Gen 2:18 is evidence that

Adam was made superior to Eve:

> [T]he word *helper* is used in the Old Testament of God himself who helps his
> people. But the point is that whenever someone "helps" someone else, whether
> in the Hebrew Old Testament or in our modern-day use of the word *help*, in the
> specific task in view the person who is helping is occupying a subordinate or
> inferior position with regard to the person being helped. That is true even when I
> "help" a young boy in my neighborhood to fix his bicycle—it is his
> responsibility, and his task, and I am only giving some assistance as needed; it is
> not my responsibility.[34]

This interpretation also attempts to determine how the term *helper* might be understood

in the context of the ancient Near East and also of the contemporary worldview.

Nonetheless, given that the pre-fall is spotless, why should sinful human relations reflect

the sinless ones?

Furthermore, it can be said that the Christian message makes quite a different

association between ideas of authority and of "helper" from the one suggested earlier.

The books of the New Testament tell the account of Christ correcting his disciples who

argued for a worldly authority: "[W]hoever wishes to become great among you must be

your servant, and whoever wishes to be first among you must be slave of all."[35] Also,

Christ himself modeled servant leadership: although he was God, Christ "came not to be

served but to serve, and to give his life a ransom for many."[36] He taught that leadership

belongs to one who serves, not one who is served. Christ served humanity by taking full

responsibility for humans. One's order of birth or ability to name another is not the

criterion for determining authority. Authority comes from God, not from a human birth

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[34] Grudem, *Systematic Theology*, 461–62. This is partly a response to Trible's view that the
superior God also helps humans. Trible, *God and the Rhetoric of Sexuality*, 90.

[35] Mark 10:43–44.

[36] Mark 10:45.

or agency.[37] Could the sinless pre-fall world have a lesser standard than the kingdom ethics that Jesus taught?

As a tool of the grammatical historical method, cultural analysis is regarded as invaluable in scriptural interpretation. At first sight, the cultural context of the creation story seems to provide us with the reasonable understanding of the state before the fall. Nonetheless, when we regard the state as sinless and study the culture before the fall by using historical-grammatical method, the reading tends to contradict Christian theology and ethics.

4. The Difficulty of the Grammatical-Historical Method When Applied to a Sinless State

God discloses himself and his will to humans through the Bible. In order to interpret the Bible and to obtain the messages of God, Christian churches have employed the grammatical-historical method and emphasized the importance of studying the cultural context of the text. As Tate says, the church is primarily confident in gaining the knowledge of the context: Despite their recognition of an interpreter's hermeneutical difficulties, "most biblical scholars do not deny the value of an understanding of the language and culture of the biblical texts to the extent that such an understanding is possible."[38] However, when the method is applied to the sinless state before the fall, the cultural analysis becomes more complicated.

According to the theological framework of Augustine, the state before the fall is sinless and pristine state, where Adam and Eve related to each other in a spotless manner. Such Paradise and the relationship are no longer available in the context of later generations. Yet, interpretation of roles of Adam and Eve in the pre-fall may still be

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[37] Rom. 13:1.
[38] Tate, *Interpreting the Bible*, 154.

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done by using exegetical methods, examining the cultural context of the author(s) of the

book of Genesis, and analyzing the author's (authors') language, culture, and world

view. Nevertheless, data of the fallen world unlikely reflects the state before the fall. If

the Garden of Eden is a sinless, perfect state, where does one obtain the knowledge of

the socioscientific background—for example, geography, politics, economics, military

and war, cultural practices and religious customs life, language, culture and relations[39]—

parallel to the one of the Garden of Eden? Osborne suggests that discovering shared

information between the author(s) and the original readers serves interpretation of the

text.

> Biblical literature has two dimensions: historical intentionality, in which the
> author assumes certain shared information with the original readers; and literary
> intentionality, in which he encodes a message in his text. . . . [T]here are 'shared
> assumptions' between the author and the original readers, information not found
> in the text, data that they knew but we do not. . . . [B]ackground study is
> necessary in order to uncover that deeper level of meaning behind the text as
> well as within it.[40]

However, there would have been not many shared experiences or assumptions between

the author(s) and original readers if experiences of author(s)'s in the Garden of Eden

belong to a pristine, perfect state. With these difficulties, how much can we reconstruct

the relations of Adam and Eve by using the dynamics which the ancient Hebrews might

have had?

The outcome of the cultural analysis of the text becomes our lens through which

one reads how Adam and Eve might have related in the state before the fall. However,

the lens is stained by the strangled relationship of the fallen world. Therefore, when one

attempts to interpret the roles played by Adam and Eve in the creation account by using

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[39] Osborne, *The Hermeneutical Spiral*, 158–67.
[40] Osborne, *The Hermeneutical Spiral*, 158–59.

exegetical methods, interpretation may well be projecting fallen relationships in the fallen world, rather than actual roles in the pre-fall. The grammatical-historical interpretative method primarily is the legacy of the Reformers. It is not that grammatical-historical method is inadequate in order to interpret the creation story, but that it becomes less adequate when the state before the fall is supposed to be sinless, ideal and perfect state. As Werner Jeanrond and many others may point out, grammatical-historical method has an ideological limitation.[41] Preunderstanding and assumptions accompany interpreters in the hermeneutical level. Their given information, attitudes and ideology may all affect their interpretation of texts even more seriously when the methodology is not adequate.

William Webb thinks that there are "quiet overtones of patriarchy" such as Eve as helpmate, Adam's naming of Eve, God's addressing Adam first, and the creation order (primogeniture) as cultural component in the pre-fall.[42] These are, according to Webb, "the social categories that the audience of Moses' audience would have been familiar with," and this patriarchy may be described as an anticipation of the world after the fall, but not the actual event before the fall. Webb explains that it is accommodation for God to communicate the message so that the original reader can understand the message. However, rather than God anticipating the fallen world or accommodating his message to the reader by using the fallen world, contemporaries may be the one who projects the fallen world into the creation story. Or it may be the case that the state

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[41] Jeanrond, *Theological Hermeneutics*, 3–11. According to Jeanrond, an ideology is "a rigid attitude over against any object of understanding. Due to personal or social reasons, ideological interpreters defend their particular 'readings' at all cost and remain hostile to all calls for a change of attitude, perspective or world-view. Ideological attitudes may be deliberately or unconsciously adopted. In any case, it is essential for any reader who is keen to proceed to a more adequate understanding of a text to become aware of the possibility of distortions in the act of reading. Thus, hermeneutics and the critique of ideology are very closely related" (p. 6).

[42] Webb, *Slaves, Women and Homosexuals*, 127–31.

before the fall is not a sinless perfect state,[43] and therefore might contain the social

categories of the author(s) and his audience, as Webb points out.

We may be aware that bliss or perfection is supposedly the unique character of

the pre-fall, which is free from cultural ideology. Wayne Grudem, for example, objects

that Webb defines the practice of primogeniture in Genesis 2 as culture because for

Grudem, cultural influence should not exist in the state before the fall:

> Webb agrees that "the practice of primogeniture in which the first born is
> granted prominence within the 'creative order' of a family unit" is found in the
> narrative in Genesis 2. . . . But Webb sees this primogeniture theme in Gen 2 as a
> "cultural component" in that text. But how could there be changing cultural
> influence in the pre-Fall Garden of Eden?[44]

Nonetheless, our interpretation still seems to result in projecting concepts of the fallen

world by attempting to fill the immediate context of the state before the fall, with the

context given by "the rest of the Bible:"

> [I]t is the nature of narrative to *report* events, even though the immediate context
> does not always provide specific interpretation of those events. The way certain
> actions and events are treated in the rest of the Bible gives us the larger context
> in which these events such as (1) Adam naming the animals and then naming
> Eve, or (2) Adam being created before Eve, or (3) God speaking to Adam first
> before creating Eve, or (4) God speaking to Adam first after the Fall, or (5) God
> naming the human race "Man." . . . [T]here is significant evidence that these
> things all indicate a leadership role for Adam before the Fall.[45]

The Bible may give us the "larger context" to understand the text but the character of the

larger context may need clarification. Fallen dynamics provided by the rest of the Bible

may not always or necessarily be informative for the knowledge of the actions and

events in the pristine state before the fall. If we follow the view proposed by Augustine

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[43] As we will see in the later chapters, some early Church Fathers did not think that the state before the fall was equivalent to the original perfection.

[44] Grudem, *Evangelical Feminism and Biblical Truth*, 113–14.

[45] Grudem, *Countering the Claims of Evangelical Feminism*, 24–25; emphasis in original. This is Grudem's response to Richard Hess's argument that male headship is not explicit in Genesis 2. Hess, "Equality with and without Innocence," 85, 87.

and if we suppose that the state before the fall is pristine, sinless and ideal, care is

necessary: the interpretation may be at risk of reflecting the reality after the fall.

In the reference to the creation story,[46] Christ affirmed the instituted union

between man and woman as standard.[47] Being God incarnate, Christ can freely show us

what the creation story teaches. But caution is needed when we, as humans, attempt to

determine what the messages of the story may be. If we are to discover God-ordained

purpose, it must be consistent to God's unchanging character and will. Most

importantly, it must be in conformity with the teachings of Christ.[48]

The roles of women are sometimes limited based on the God's law perceived in

the creation order:

> Women may be highly gifted teachers and leaders, but those gifted are not to be
> exercised over men in the services of the church. That is true not because women
> are spiritually inferior to men, but because God's law commands it. He has
> ordained order in His creation—an order that reflects His own nature and
> therefore should be reflected in His church. Anyone ignoring or rejecting God's
> order weakens the church and dishonors Him.[49]

Nonetheless, it seems not so easy to interpret what "God has ordained in His creation" in

terms of gender roles as it might appear. There is a need to start from establishing an

interpretative method to interpret a sinless state. "[A]n order that reflects His own

nature" should be consistent to God's will expressed throughout the Bible and certainly

should not be less than the kingdom ethics Jesus taught.

5. Conclusion

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[46] Gen. 2:24.

[47] Matt. 19:3–9.

[48] This is not to mean that what Christ teaches differs from what New Testament writers such as Paul say. Rather, it is argued that because Paul's teachings are as authoritative as Christ's teachings, the teachings between them should not contradict. What Paul teaches, what God reveals as his will in the entire Bible, and what Christ says should be consistent.

[49] MacArthur, *Divine Design*, 148.

Augustine proposed that the state before the fall is a pristine, perfect state where our original parents had an ideal relationship with each other in an ideal Garden of Eden. After the fall, humans were alienated from God and from each other, and relationships between men and women also were corrupted. Western churches primarily followed this framework and maintained that the state before the fall was an ideal state that Christians should strive to attain. When Paul addresses marriage and ministry in reference to the creation story, the roles played by Adam and Eve are often considered as standard which Christians today should strive to emulate.

In order to understand this ideal relationship between Adam and Eve, Christians have been employing the grammatical-historical method as a primary tool to interpret the Bible. This method underlines the importance of the cultural analysis of the text. Studying the cultural context of the author(s), however, is not necessarily efficacious if the Garden of Eden was a sinless state where perfect relationships were practiced. The concept of power, structure of authority and expression of right relationships should be different between before and after the fall. Any dynamics after the fall were corrupt and will not be comparable to the ideal dynamics before the fall. We may not be able to analyze the corrupt structure and think of it as reflecting the state before the fall. When we attempt to do so, the interpretation is at risk of casting the image of a fallen world. If certain roles played by Adam and Eve are to be ideal, the roles need to reflect God's consistent character and will and to be in conformity with teachings of Christ.

The contemporary discussion of roles of women and men, specifically from a hierarchical perspective, often involves interpretation of the creation story. This is based on the belief that in his letters, the Apostle Paul refers to Adam and Eve in order to

voice that certain roles are God-ordained. However, understanding roles played by Adam and Eve is not an easy exercise. Our interpretation should admit uncertainty because of the lack of materials necessary to delineate the sinless state. Recognizing that this discussion is framed by Augustine's view of sin and the fall, one needs to answer how a sinless structure can be accessed by a fallen structure.

Needless to say, the creation story should be interpreted and understood to serve as God's word. The alternative to the Augustinian view of the creation story is that of Irenaeus. Unlike the former, the latter delineates neither the state before the fall as sinless and pristine nor the state after the fall as corrupt. Both states before and after are an imperfect environment, where the interpretation of the pre-fall is achieved by analyzing the context of the state after the fall. In this framework, however, not Adam and Eve but Christ is the role model. The Irenaean view of the creation story, marriage and ministry posited by this view is discussed in more detail in chapters seven to nine.

CHAPTER SIX

THE USE OF REASON TO OBTAIN KNOWLEDGE OF CONDITIONS BEFORE THE FALL

1. Introduction

Previous chapters noted that the genre of the creation story as well as the status

of Adam and Eve calls for further examination. Also, the actual interpretation of the

story requires careful discernment concerning what can be said about human relations in

the story. Determining roles of female and male in the creation story seems more

complicated than it may appear. Nonetheless, the further challenge is a noetic one: can

fallen humans have access to pre-fall knowledge by reason and thereby determine

gender roles? This question will be examined by focusing on knowledge of nature

before the fall. Previously it was noted how John Calvin may have confused nature as

God-assigned purpose and nature as a current tendency. He sought to define the former

but resulted in arriving at the latter. This chapter will identify a similar experience

contemporaries have and why this is the case.

The idea that the nature of Adam and Eve was "perfect" before their corruption

was proposed primarily by Augustine. However, a question may be raised: having

corrupt nature now, do humans have access to the perfect nature before the fall? Can we

know the state before the fall by reason? How does this use of reason affect our

understanding of roles played by Adam and Eve? The following is an investigation into

the manner in which contemporary Christians follow the theological framework

proposed by Augustine, and thereby attain the knowledge of nature of Adam and Eve or

God-assigned purpose for humans.

This chapter argues that in their Augustinian view of the creation story, contemporary Christians are confronted by the difficulty of determining roles of man and woman in the story because a post-lapse perspective cannot gain sufficient access to a pre-lapse state, apart from God's special revelation and most clearly from revelation in and through Christ. The previous chapter examined the similar predicament in terms of interpretation of human relations before the fall. This chapter will focus on the noetic means to know human nature or God-assigned purpose for the first people. It will first examine Augustine's view of original righteousness and perfection. Then it will explore his view of the fall and its effect on reason, and the difficulty this view might cause in terms of the knowledge of gender roles before the fall. Not all Augustinians would agree, but in my opinion, this is a logical outcome of the Augustinian interpretation of the creation story. Finally, it will discuss how this difficulty may be understood in light of Protestants' view of revelation.

Contemporary Protestants generally maintain that revelation is categorized into two kinds: general revelation, which is "nature [the natural world], history, reason, and conscience" and special revelation as Scripture.[1] This chapter will explore how general revelation relates to the knowledge of God expressed in the creation story and more specifically, the knowledge of his assigned purpose for Adam and Eve. This chapter will use the term nature to refer to God-assigned purpose, and also treat Adam and Eve as primogenitors of all humans.

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[1] Henry, "Special Revelation," 1021. Henry defines the term revelation as follows: "revelation means intrinsically the disclosure of what was previously unknown. In Judeo-Christian theology the term is used primarily of God's communication to humans of divine truth, that is, his manifestation of himself or of his will . . . [This revelation is] further discriminated as general or universal (i.e., revelation in nature, history, reason, and conscience) and special or particular (i.e., redemptive revelation conveyed by wondrous acts and words) . . . Despite the distinction of general and special revelation, God's revelation is nonetheless a unity, and it must not be artificially sundered."

2. Augustine's View of Moral Perfection in Adam and Eve

The previous chapter portrayed Augustine's views of an ideal living environment

and relationship in the state before the fall. It is a realm of bliss where no dangerous

creatures, harsh climate, disease or death threatens the lives of Adam and Eve. In such

Paradise, they maintained unstained relationships with God and with each other. This

chapter, in turn, focuses on Augustine's understanding of the perfect nature or God-

assigned purposes of Adam and Eve.

A. Perfection in Adam and Eve

Western churches have maintained the conception proposed by Augustine that

Adam and Eve possessed original perfection or moral perfection. Augustine taught that

the state before the fall was an ideal world where Adam and Eve not only related to each

other ideally but also possessed ideal nature.

According to Augustine, Adam's pre-fallen state was an exalted condition of

original righteousness:

> With greater reason, then, and in a fuller sense, man was happy in Paradise
> before he sinned, although he was uncertain about his future fall. He was happy
> in this hope of reward, the promised transformation of the body; and his hope
> was such that there was no tribulation for patience to endure in combat. He was
> not filled with vain presumption, like a fool being certain about the uncertain,
> but he was strong in faith and hope.[2]

Augustine believed that Adam and Eve lived in "Paradise,"[3] where "there was no sin."[4]

Adam and Eve, along with all other creatures, were sinless and possessed perfection in

the state before the fall: "when creatures remain in the state in which they have been

created, possessing the perfection they have received, whether they have abstained from

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[2] Augustine, *The Literal Meaning of Genesis*, 11.18.24.
[3] Augustine, *The First Catechetical Instruction*, 2.18.30.
[4] Augustine, *The City of God*, xiv.10.

sin or were incapable of sin, they are good individually, and all in general are very good."[5] Adam was morally infallible and righteous: Adam "was made upright . . . that he might do [God's] will but not his own."[6] The nature of Adam and Eve had "power to control a forbidden pleasure that may arise."[7] "[T]heir love to God was unclouded";[8] and they were "agitated by no mental perturbations, and annoyed by no bodily discomforts."[9] Adam and Eve "decayed not with years, nor drew nearer to death."[10] Adam was good, peaceful, and happily in a right relation with God. He was healthy and immortal, living in the ideal secure world:

> In Paradise, then, man . . . lived in the enjoyment of God, and was good by God's goodness; he lived without any want, and had it in his power so to live eternally. He had food that he might not hunger, drink that he might not thirst, the tree of life that old age might not waste him. There was in his body no corruption, nor seed of corruption, which could produce in him any unpleasant sensation. He feared no inward disease, no outward accident. Soundest health blessed his body, absolute tranquillity his soul.[11]

According to Augustine, the state before the fall was "Paradise" where Adam and Eve as spotless people lived with spotless bodies in the spotless world. Adam and Eve were presented as if they were the Divine or Christ in the sense that they shared morally spotless, perfect nature.

B. Original Perfection of Adam and Eve in Contemporary Theological Views

Augustine's idea of the perfect human nature before the fall became essential to Christian thought among Western churches. The churches upheld the belief that Adam

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[5] Augustine, *The Literal Meaning of Genesis*, 3.24.37.
[6] Augustine, *The City of God*. xiv.4. See also xiv.27.
[7] Augustine, *The Literal Meaning of Genesis*, 140.
[8] Augustine, *The City of God*, xiv.10.
[9] Augustine, *The City of God*, xiv.10.
[10] Augustine, *The City of God*, xiii.20.
[11] Augustine, *The City of God*, xiv.26.

and Eve were the ones who possessed "original righteousness" or "original perfection," living in the bliss of Paradise, in traditional terminology.[12]

Contemporary Christians may also argue that the original humans were good because the Scripture says so:

> After God made man and woman, He commented on all of His creation. His statement is found in Genesis 1:31: "And God saw everything that he had made, and behold, it was *very good.*" The way God created men and women—each one made in His image, each one equal in status, and each one differing in roles—God said was "very good."[13]

This goodness of humanity may be argued from the nature of God: since God is good, his creation is good. For Erickson, human nature is essentially sinless: if it is not, God becomes "the cause of sin and the creator of a nature which is essentially evil."[14]

The idea of the original righteousness or original perfection of the first people also is critical to some role discussions of women and men today. That is, the Garden of Eden was a sinless state as Augustine suggested, where God-ordained purpose was demonstrated. The roles played by Adam and Eve are roles that should be emulated by all people:

> When Paul bases his argument on the order of creation of Adam and Eve, it indicates that his command about women not teaching or having authority in the assembled congregation transcends cultures and societies. It applies to men and women as they were created by God at the beginning, and it is not due to any distortion brought on by sin or the Fall. It applies, then, to all churches for all time, and it is a means by which the beauty of manhood and womanhood as God created them can be manifested in the life of the church.[15]

The roles of women today are said to be limited because Paul refers to the creation order as the foundation of roles of male and female. The state before the fall was a sinless

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[12] Hick, *Evil and the God of Love*, 220.
[13] Grudem, *Countering the Claims of Evangelical Feminism*, 28–29.
[14] Erickson, *Christian Theology*, 737.
[15] Grudem, *Countering the Claims of Evangelical Feminism*, 36.

state where the nature of Adam and Eve was God-assigned, and their roles were God-ordained. God demonstrated his will or ideal in Adam and Eve and in the manner in which they relate to each other. Contemporary churches are encouraged to strive for the ideal of the original righteousness and perfection which the first people maintained.

Western Churches seemed to have held that, unlike humans today, Adam and Eve possessed moral perfection like the Divine: "True humanity created by God has in our case been corrupted and spoiled. There have been only three pure human beings: Adam and Eve (before the fall), and Jesus. All the rest of us are but broken, corrupted versions of humanity."[16] Adam and Eve are thought to be sinless, righteous and perfect in their nature just as Christ is. The righteousness and perfection were thought to be their nature or God-ordained purpose, which is our standard for gender roles.

3. Affect of the Fall on Nature and Reason—Corrupt Perfection after the Fall

According to Augustine, the perfect divine-like nature of Adam and Eve was subsequently to experience the tragedy of the fall. After they disobeyed God's command that they should not consume the fruit from the tree of the knowledge, their nature was corrupted. This fall affected the entire humanity in the following generation.

A. Augustine's View of Impact on Human Nature and Reason

According to Augustine, because of the disobedience of the first people, not only their relationships with God and fellow humans but also their nature, reason and the natural world were affected. The original perfection of Adam and Eve became corrupt.

Augustine teaches how human nature was altered after the fall becoming subject to corruptions of her inclination, apprehension or perceptions:

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[16] Erickson, *Christian Theology*, 737.

> If any one finds a difficulty in understanding why other sins do not alter human nature as it was altered by the transgression of those first human beings, so that on account of it this nature is subject to the great corruption we feel and see, and to death, and is distracted and tossed with so many furious and contending emotions, and is certainly far different from what it was before sin, . . .[17]

Human nature is soiled, and no person can escape this affect of the sin committed by the first people: "Our nature was already present in the seed from which we were to spring. And because this nature has been soiled by sin and doomed to death and justly condemned, no man was to be born of man in any other condition."[18] The fall caused mortality, guilt for the first sin, and all its consequences for the following generations.

> Man [Adam], wilfully depraved and justly condemned, gave birth to descendants equally depraved and condemned. We were all in that one person, and we all were that one person, who fell into sin through the agency of the woman, the woman who had been made out of him before the sin. . . . [W]e were there in our seminal nature from which we were to be generated. That was spoilt by sin, bound by the chain of death, and therefore justly condemned; yet of it man after man was to be born. Thus the whole course of calamity started from the evil use of free will. This fate leads the human race, corrupt from the beginning, like a tree rotten at the root, through one misery after another (with the sole exception of those who are set free by the grace of God) right up to their final destruction in the second death, which has no end.[19]

For Augustine, the image of God resides in one's mind: "It was this image [of his Creator], impressed on the spirit of our minds, that Adam lost by his sin."[20] The human mind or reason was to be renewed after the image was lost: "*We are renewed*, therefore, *in the spirit of our minds* according to the image of Him who created us, the image which Adam lost when he sinned."[21] The human mind was corrupt upon the fall. Humans no longer possess sound reason that is capable of representing the image of God.

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[17] Augustine, *The City of God*, xiv.11.

[18] Augustine, *The City of God*, 13.14.

[19] Augustine, *The City of God.*, xiii.14.

[20] Augustine, *The Literal Meaning of Genesis*, 6.27.38.

[21] Augustine, *The Literal Meaning of Genesis*, 6.24.35; emphasis in original. Eph. 4:23.

B. The Effect of the Fall on Reason in Contemporary Theological Views

Many evangelical Protestants in the Western orthodox tradition often follow this theological framework: perfect human nature and its subsequent fall. The fall was to have a significant effect upon human nature. By citing Ryrie, Enns defines the results of original sin as follows:

> First, man is totally depraved. "Total depravity does not mean that everyone is as thoroughly depraved in his actions as he could possibly be, nor that everyone will indulge in every form of sin, nor that a person cannot appreciate and even do acts of goodness; but it does mean that the corruption of sin extends to all men and to all parts of all men so that there is nothing within the natural man that can give him merit in God's sight." Second, man has an innate sin nature. "The sin nature is the capacity to do all those things (good or bad) that can in no ways commend us to God." Every part of man is affected: intellect (2 Cor 4:4); conscience (1 Tim 4:2); will (Rom 1:28); heart (Eph 4:18); and the total being (Rom 1:18–3:20).[22]

Stackhouse suggests that, unlike Roman Catholics, Protestants are more apt to emphasize human fallenness. Human nature is stained by sin after the fall: "The purposes intended by God are contorted, garbled, or made ambiguous in the actual operation of things." Further, Protestants believe that what humans study as "'natural' is what is distorted, incomplete, or contingent, even if it bears traces of God's grace in its capacity to be reformed toward order, purpose, and reliable relationship."[23]

Contemporary Western churches generally understand that Adam's sin affected more or less all human faculties including reason. For instance, Cornelius Plantinga states that sin has its effect on the human mind, words and actions: "[Sin is] the power in human beings that has the effect . . . of corrupting human thought, word, and deed so

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[22] Enns, *The Moody Handbook of Theology*, 319–23. Enns gives this definition quoting Ryrie, *Survey of Bible Doctrine*, 1989).

[23] Stackhouse, *Covenant and Commiments*, 21. Van Leeuwen paraphrases this: "the Reformed tradition in Christianity emphasizes that because what we call 'nature' is fallen, we cannot directly argue from 'what is' to 'what is best'" Van Leeuwen, *My Brother's Keeper*, 110.

that they displease God."[24] Millard Erickson agrees with Louis Berkhof and explains

that total depravity means that "sin is a matter of the entire person," in a positive sense.[25]

That is to say, the body (Rom. 6:6, 12; 7: 24; 8:10, 13), the mind or the reason (Rom.

1:21; 2 Cor. 3:14–15; 4:4), the emotions (Rom. 1:26–27; Gal. 5:24; 2 Tim. 3:2–4), the

will (Rom. 6:17; 2 Tim. 2:25–26), motives (John 5:39–42) are all affected. This does not

mean that humans cannot show any altruistic actions; they can and do demonstrate

kindness, generosity, and love. Yet these actions are "not in any way meritorious"

enough for their salvation. According to Erickson, human nature is totally "corrupt" or

"depraved" (Ps. 14:3; 53:3; Rom. 3:12), and the entire faculty is affected although their

conscience to tell right and wrong can be still sound (Rom. 2:15).[26]

Augustine proposed that Adam and Eve before the fall possessed original

perfection or moral perfection but they lost this perfection after the fall: their nature was

depraved and reason was corrupt. The Western churches that followed this theological

framework continued to maintain that nature and reason which humans currently

possess are depraved. When sin entered humans, their nature became depraved; God-

assigned purposes for them have been lost; and reason was affected or corrupt.

C. A Problem of Corrupt Nature in Knowing Adam and Eve

Contemporary theologians who refer to the roles played by Adam and Eve as

ideal construct their arguments upon the theological framework of the pristine state

before the fall and subsequent corruption of human nature and reason, suggested by

Augustine. The righteous nature of Adam and Eve is regarded as the standard for nature

of man and woman today. This tendency is true from an egalitarian perspective: "The

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[24] Plantinga, *Not the Way It's Supposed to Be*, 13.
[25] Berkhof, *Systematic Theology*, 247, quated in Erickson, *Christian Theology*, 628.
[26] Erickson, *Christian Theology*, 643–48.

accounts of creation, the Garden of Eden and the Fall in Genesis 1–3 may contain more doctrinal teaching concerning the nature of humanity as male and female, as well as the state of the fallen world, than any other single text in the Bible."[27] However, to attain the knowledge of nature or God-assigned purposes for Adam and Eve is not as easy as it may be assumed.

Following Augustine's idea of the original perfection and subsequent corruption of nature and reason, we often attempt to investigate and to understand the perfect nature of Adam and Eve. For example, in the interpretation of 1 Timothy 2:14, a patriarchal interpreter states that one of the major interpretations of verse 14 is that "Paul is saying something about the nature of men and women as God created them." That is, "while God made men and women (in general) with equal intellectual abilities, there are still differences in preferences and inclinations, and those differences are consistent or 'congruent' with God's purposes in entrusting leadership in the church to men."[28]

This seems to indicate that it is possible to argue about the nature of Adam and Eve or that there is sufficient knowledge of their nature to state that there is in it a difference in preferences and inclinations, which should qualify or disqualify leadership. But if Adam and Eve are spotless, could human reason be sufficient to know their nature? How much of perfection in Adam and Eve can be known by our corrupt reason? In fact, this difficulty of knowing is reflected in our interpretation of the nature of Adam and Eve engraved by God:

> Throughout the ages the church has preferred to affirm that God has engraved reflections of his sovereign decree into human *nature*. This has had an ugly side,

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[27] Hess, "Equality with and without Innocence," 79.
[28] Grudem, *Evangelical Feminism and Biblical Truth*, 70.

in denigrations of woman's mind and character. But we can also recognize variety in human nature, without labelling anything inferior or superior. In this view, because women generally focus on relationships more than abstract rational analysis, enmeshment in relationships could compromise a woman's willingness to uproot heresy in the church.[29]

While these varieties of human nature are supposed to be present, why could perfect nature be strong in relationships but weak in rationality to the extent that the nature is unfit to combat heresy in the church?

It also is said that the perfect nature of Eve could have inclination toward deception. That is, in 1 Timothy 2:14, "Paul understands the kinder, gentler, more relational nature of women as something that made Eve less inclined to oppose the deceptive serpent and more inclined to accept his words as something helpful and true."[30] Also, Eve's nature is said to be incompetent to discern false teaching.

> God's order of creation is mirrored in the nature of men and women. Satan approached the woman first not only because of the order of creation but also because of the different inclinations present in Adam and Eve. Generally speaking, women are more relational and nurturing and men are more given to rational analysis and objectivity. . . . Appointing women to the teaching office is prohibited because they are less likely to draw a line on doctrinal non-negotiables, and thus deception and false teaching will more easily enter the church.[31]

Nevertheless, one might wonder why perfect nature or God-assigned purpose can be inclined to yield to deceptiveness and to accept falsehood as true, or be less resolute against doctrinal error and thus brings deception and false teaching into the church. Besides, the relational and nurturing nature which Christ demonstrated has nothing to do with an inclination of succumbing to deceptiveness or falsehood. Relationality and

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[29] Doriani, "Appendix 1 : History of the Interpretation of 1 Timothy 2," 265.

[30] Grudem, *Evangelical Feminism and Biblical Truth*, 72.

[31] Schreiner, "An Interpretation of 1 Timothy 2:9–15," 145.

nurturing characters themselves cannot be identified as weakness or a source of falsehood.

This seems to indicate that while it is supposed that the nature of Adam and Eve is God-assigned, it is not easy to comprehend and articulate their un-corrupt nature. Reason alone has difficulty in accessing the state before the fall and thereby gaining accurate knowledge of sinless, righteous nature of Adam and Eve. By attempting to access this by reason, we may rather project merely our ideas of, or current tendency of nature of man and woman. Dietrich Bonhoeffer's comment on the knowledge of Paradise and human thought is insightful. He points out the difficulty in knowing the state of Paradise and how the mind can be limited to a reflection of one's own experiences:

> What is important to understand, however, is that this [creation] story claims us . . . as human beings who, no matter how much they stretch their imaginations and all their other mental or spiritual powers, are simply unable to transport themselves to this paradise "beyond good and evil", "beyond pleasure and pain"; instead, with all their powers of thinking, they remain tied to this torn-apart world, to antithesis, to contradiction. This is so because our thinking too is only the expression of our being, of our existence, which is grounded in contradiction. Because we do not exist in a state of unity, our thinking is torn apart as well.[32]

If our mind is corrupt, the mind may only opt to image corrupt reality; or the clouded mirror of our mind may not give clarity of vision;[33] or at least it is not easy for the mind to picture the un-corrupt. It seems that when we attempt to know the original perfection of the first people, it is as if we strive to attain the knowledge of the Divine by reason,

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[32] Bonhoeffer, *Creation and Fall*, 92.
[33] The analogy of mirror is taken from the description of Adam's sinless mind by B. B. Warfield: "not being a sinner, man in Eden, as he contemplated the works of God, saw God in the unclouded mirror of his mind with a clarity of vision, . . ." Warfield, *The Inspiration and Authority of the Bible*, 76.

which is imperfect or in Augustine's idea, corrupt. It is as if we believe that we have

knowledge of the Divine by general revelation alone.[34]

Embracing the Augustinian theological framework, contemporary Evangelicals

tend to regard roles played by Adam and Eve as ideal and attempt to determine their

roles. However, this task does not appear to be as easy as we might suppose: we may be

even at risk of projecting our own ideals instead. When we conceive of the nature of

Adam and Eve as perfect and seek to gain the knowledge by our imperfect reason, it is

as if we attempt to access the knowledge of the divine perfection by general revelation

alone, an impossible task as described by many contemporary Evangelicals.

4. Revelation and Knowledge of God

The concept of revelation is essential to Christian theology. B.B. Warfield

states, "[T]he religion of the Bible presents itself as distinctively a revealed religion"

and "the only revealed religion; and sets itself as such over against all other religions,

which are represented as all products, in a sense in which it is not, of the art and device

of [person]."[35] So while the term revelation is "the disclosure of what was previously

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[34] This is not to say that humans have no understanding at all due to their imperfect reason. Even with imperfect reason, people could still interpret and understand the Bible reasonably as long as the passages refer to the imperfect world. Humans are given the capacity of reason that is far greater than that given to other creatures. The issue here is the claim that the state before the fall belongs to sinless, pristine perfection, yet, humans can still freely interpret and understand such a state with imperfect reason. In other words, the question is whether or not the experience for limited reason to know a perfect condition, and the experience for the reason to know an imperfect condition are the same. The Christians' answer is that in their finite, limited existence, humans need the revelation from God in order to know the divine perfection. Further, if reason is corrupt, as assumed by the Augustinian thought, the challenge is even greater. With corrupt reason, how could humans understand the divine perfection without God's revelation?

The creation story is God's revelation that humans understand through special revelation (Scripture) and general revelation (nature, history, reason, and conscience). Nonetheless, as is discussed in chapter five, the interpretation of the sinless state before the fall is difficult. This chapter intends to argue that not only through special revelation of the Scripture, but also through general revelation, humans encounter a challenge in accessing the pre-fall state.

[35] Warfield, *The Inspiration and Authority of the Bible*, 72.

unknown" in a general sense, for Judeo-Christianity, it primarily means "God's communication to humans of divine truth, that is, his manifestation of himself or of his will."[36]

This revelation is being further categorized into general or universal revelation and special or particular revelation. B. B. Warfield gives a helpful definition of the two. He identifies the former as natural or general revelation and the latter as supernatural, special or soteriological. The former "is communicated through the media of natural phenomena, occurring in the course of Nature or of history; [the latter] implies an intervention in the natural course of things and is not merely in source but in mode supernatural." Natural or general revelation is "addressed generally to all intelligent creatures, and is therefore accessible to all men." Supernatural, special or soteriological revelation is "addressed to special class of sinners, to whom God would make known His salvation." While the former "has in view to meet and supply the natural need of creatures for knowledge of their God," the latter has in view "to rescue broken and deformed sinners from their sin and its consequences."[37]

Both revelations presuppose human inaccessibility to the Divine. Leon Morris emphasizes that "revelation is knowledge that comes to us from outside ourselves and beyond our own ability to discover." "[A human] as [human] has no access to the inner life of God, no knowledge of God's essential being" unless "God has taken initiative in disclosing himself."[38] The idea of revelation is that God's perfection is beyond our comprehension so he reveals himself to humans if he is to be understood by them at all.

A. Perfection of God

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[36] Henry, "Special Revelation," 1021.
[37] Warfield, *The Inspiration and Authority of the Bible*, 74.
[38] Morris, *I Believe in Revelation*, 42–43.

Among many attributes of God, his moral perfection is essential to the divine nature. God is morally perfect, that is "God is totally upright, fair, just, and righteous in his treatment of his creatures."[39] God is "distinct from and transcendent to all his creature," or he is "morally spotless in character and action, upright, pure, and untainted with evil desires, motives, thoughts, words, or acts. God is holy, and as such is the source and standard of what is right."[40] Moral perfection and spotless, sinless nature are the attributes of God.

The one who most clearly demonstrated God's moral perfection is Christ. The Christian church has universally embraced the conviction that Christ was sinless (John 8:46; 2 Cor. 5:21; Heb 4:15; 7:26; 1 Pet 1:19; 2:22; 3:18; 1 John 3:5). This teaching of Christ's sinlessness was untouched even by "heretics in the early centuries and during the later period of rationalism (1650–1920) who attacked the orthodox Christology of Nicaea and Chalcedon." This means negatively, "Christ was kept free from all transgression of the law of God," and positively, he was holy (Luke 1:35; 4:34; John 6:69; 10: 36; Acts 3:14; 4:27, 30; Heb 7:26), in the sense that he wholeheartedly committed himself to his Father (John 5:30; Heb 10:7) and to his mission for the world (John 17:19).[41] Christ was tempted and tested (Mark 1:13; Heb. 4:15) yet remained obedient (Luke 22:42; Phil 2:8; Heb 5:8). Perfect righteousness, holiness and sinlessness distinctively and uniquely belong to divinity. If the attribute was to be shared with a human form, it was only incarnated Christ, who also was God. Being God, only Christ possessed this moral perfection of perfect humanity.

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[39] Grenz, *Theology for the Community of God*, 93.
[40] Lewis, "Attributes of God," 496.
[41] Osterhaven, "Sinless of Christ," 1109.

B. Insufficiency of General Revelation for the Knowledge of God's Perfection

Bruce Demarest defines general revelation as "the divine disclosure to all persons at all times and in all places by which humans come to know that God is and what he is like."[42] The views of general revelation are not unanimous. Nonetheless, evangelical Protestants and specifically those who follow Augustine's proposal of the pristine pre-fall and the subsequent fall, generally maintain that general revelation informs us of some knowledge of God but not the full picture of who God is and what he wills. The knowledge of God through general revelation is not denied but is regarded insufficient because of human limitation and the affects of sin.

Among Protestants, there have been different positions as to how much of the knowledge of God general revelation can convey and how the revelation is recognized. Some scholars maintain relatively positive views of general revelation and agree with Reformers such as Martin Luther and John Calvin that all people can have elementary knowledge of God through general revelation although the knowledge is inferior to and cannot supersede special revelation. Others hold that the knowledge of God through general revelation is available but only to those who have been illuminated through regeneration. Still others think that the revelation scarcely gives humans any knowledge of God.[43] Granted that human nature and reason are corrupt or affected, contemporary Evangelicals tend to hold the second or third view.

For example, Demarest thinks that general revelation is biblical but the revelation itself is not fully reliable for post-fall humans. For Demarest, general revelation is categorized into four: the natural world, reason, history, and conscience.

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[42] Demarest, "General Revelation," 1019.
[43] Demarest, "General Revelation," 1020.

Natural phenomena, the created order, and "interrelationships among the animal

kingdom" witness to the existence and the power, majesty, goodness, sovereignty and

glory of God (Job 36:24–37:24, 38:1–39:30; Psalm 19). "Human mind is divinely

illuminated" to perceive God (John 1:4, 9). History attests that God is "the providential

provider of life's necessities" (Acts 14:17; 17; 22–31). God implanted moral law,

attested to the heart by the conscience (Rom. 2:14–14). Demarest suggests that although

Adam and Eve had "specially revealed statutes" from God, because of "the subsequent

corruption, any one-sided reliance simply on general revelation [after the fall] would be

all the more arbitrary."[44]

For Erickson, God is beyond human comprehension, and human knowledge of

God is limited: "God always remains *incomprehensible*. It is not that we do not have

knowledge of him, and genuine knowledge at that. Rather, the shortcoming lies in our

inability to encompass him within our knowledge." According to Erickson, the cause of

the inability is twofold: human finitude and the affect of the fall: "This knowledge [of

God] had to go beyond the initial or general revelation which was still available [for

humans], for now in addition to the natural limitation of human finiteness, there was

also the moral limitation of human sinfulness." Erickson maintains that we do have some

knowledge of God: in fact, we have ability to study scientific reality quite well.

Nevertheless, general revelation, according to Erickson, is incapable of taking place of

special revelation: [45]

> There is a possibility of some knowledge of divine truth outside the special
> revelation. . . . This [general revelation] should be considered a supplement to,
> not a substitute for, special revelation. Sin's distortion of man's understanding of
> the general revelation is greater the closer one gets to the relationship between

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[44] Henry, "Special Revelation," 1012.
[45] Erickson, *Christian Theology*, 201–06; emphasis in original.

God and [person]. Thus, sin produces relatively little obscuring effect upon the understanding of matters of physics, but a great deal with respect to matters of psychology and sociology.[46]

Alister McGrath also urges our careful use of reason in perceiving God's revelation, due to finitude and fallenness of human mind:

> Now, let us agree that evangelicals, of all God's people, cannot allow revelation to be imprisoned within the flawed limits of sinful human reason. Whatever the extent to which the human mind is noetically compromised by sin, it is imperative that those finite and fallen human minds would not be permitted to be the judges of what is and what is not divine revelation on account of its supposed or perceived "rationality."[47]

While Protestants may maintain different understandings of general revelation, however, there is an agreed consensus that general revelation itself does not provide humans with sufficient knowledge of who God is and what he wills. God is infinite and the human mind is finite.

Christians who advocate Augustine's understanding of the original sin generally agree that the human mind is corrupt. God's nature is sinless and human rationality is stained by sin. The human mind is too flawed to gain the knowledge of divine truth by reason. Without special revelation, knowledge of God is limited, arbitrary and may be at risk of corruption.

C. Revelation through Christ

In order for humans to attain the knowledge of God, general revelation is not sufficient. People who hold different beliefs and religions look at the same nature but interpret differently and receive different messages from Christians do.[48] For the fuller knowledge of the Divine, scripture is necessary as special revelation. Scripture guides

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[46] Erickson, *Christian Theology*, 198–199.
[47] McGrath, "Evangelical Theological Method," 33.
[48] Henry, *Revelation and the Bible*, 27.

Christians as to how to interpret the handiwork of God.[49] Special revelation is "redemptive revelation conveyed by wondrous acts and words."[50] Yet, revelation through Christ still is the clearest revelation of God. Christ is the way in which corrupt humans come to grasp what the Divine perfect character and will might be.

That Christ is the ultimate revelation of all other forms of revelation is the conviction of evangelical Protestant churches. He was the clearest revelation of God. Christ was the one who removed the veil from human hardened minds so they might finally reflect God's glory and transform to his image.[51] Christ both spoke God's word and demonstrated his attributes. According to Erickson, "the need for special revelation became more acute" when "sin diminished [person's] comprehension of general revelation, thus lessening its efficacy. Therefore, special revelation had to become remedial with respect to both man's knowledge of and his relationship to God."[52] Yet, the clearest revelation is given in and through Jesus Christ: "God has taken the initiative to make himself known to us in a more complete way than general revelation, and has done so in a fashion appropriate to our understanding" so that "lost and sinful humans" can attain and grow in the knowledge of God.[53]

As the one who created all that the world holds,[54] Christ reveals heavenly things[55] and the Father because Christ was with the Father and was sent from him.[56] James Dunn states that Christ is the capitulation of all revelation including God's purpose: the revelation of Christ "sums up in itself all the other forms of revelation." It is "the climax

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[49] Morris, *I Believe in Revelation*, 43.

[50] Demarest, "General Revelation," 1021.

[51] 2 Cor. 3:14.

[52] Erickson, *Christian Theology*, 202–03.

[53] Erickson, *Christian Theology*, 223.

[54] John 1:1–3.

[55] John 3:11–13.

[56] John 6:46.

of all previous revelation," and "the key to making sense of all other revelation." God

has primarily spoken through Christ in place of all the previous revelations through

prophets and in various manners.[57] God's people in both Old and New Testaments

would want "to recognize revelation of God in creation, in providence, in the moral law

within, in the wisdom of tradition, in the law and the prophets." Nevertheless, Christians

always seek "the still clearer, more definitive and normative revelation of Christ"; for he

is the one who unveils "God's purpose" as well as "the meaning of the earlier

scriptures" making "visible the invisible God."[58] Christ shows what God's purposes for

humans and clarifies what scriptures say about them.

Christ is the only mediator between the Divine and humans. He is the one who

revealed God, whom no one has ever seen.[59] Being God, Christ never succumbed to sin

but became "genuinely" human in every respect.[60] According to Mark Thompson, this

identity of Christ "determines the character and accessibility of his revelation of God. . .

. Jesus genuinely and uniquely makes God known because he alone *is* God as he

presents himself to us amidst all the frailty of our human existence."[61] Gunton suggests

that Christ alone is the mediation that bridges God and humans. He argues that theology

is different from pursuits of truth in other disciplines in the respect that Christians are

"concerned with the basis of truth in the one—or rather three-in-one—who is essentially

other than those things which he has made" and whom humans may know only through

Christ.[62] Revelation, according to Gunton, is "God's personal interaction with the world

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[57] Heb. 1:1–2.
[58] Dunn, "Biblical Concepts of Revelation," 17–21.
[59] John 1:18.
[60] Heb. 4:15.
[61] Thompson, "The Uniqueness of Christ as the Revealer of God," 103; emphasis in original.
[62] Gunton, "The Truth...And the Spirit of Truth," 348.

through his Son and Spirit." Whereas there are parallels between the uncreated rationality of God and the created rationality of humans, Christ is the ladder and mediation between the two rationalities, in the incarnation "within the structures of worldly being." For Gunton, therefore, Christ is "the focus of all that we have to say," and his glory is "mediated in all kinds of ways: through the Bible, church traditions and confessions; through the creation that is from and to Christ; and even sometimes through the propositions of theologians."[63]

McGrath insists that any idea about God should be constantly oriented based on the character and teachings of Christ:

> If the ideal of revelation is taken seriously, however, we must be prepared to revise, even to abandon, such [ready-made] prior ideas of God, and to refashion them in the light of who and what Jesus of Nazareth is recognized to be. . . . Christology may thus be regarded as a permanent irritant to concepts of divinity, a theological corrective which obliges us to place question marks against even our most confident assertions concerning the nature and identity of God.[64]

Humans sense that there is higher wisdom and reality than human experience, and search this reality through various kinds of general revelation; yet, "it is beyond their reach."[65] Christ revealed to humans the knowledge of God in the clearest and most concrete form. He was the summary of all kinds revelations: he "even dared to place his message over against what was written in the Scriptures, not as contradicting, but as going beyond or fulfilling them (Matt. 5:17)"[66] As the mediation between God and humans, Christ alone can accomplish this task of revealing what God is like and what he wills for humans. He continues to reveal himself through the Holy Spirit upon the union

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[63] Gunton, *A Brief Theology of Revelation*, 63, 125.
[64] McGrath, *The Genesis of Doctrine*, 175.
[65] Dunn, "Biblical Concepts of Revelation," 8.
[66] Erickson, *Christian Theology*, 215.

with Christ. Our knowledge of God is to be appropriated persistently in accordance with teachings of Christ and the guidance of the Spirit.

D. Knowledge of the Perfection of Adam and Eve by Reason

On the one hand, Christians believe that sinless and entirely righteous nature belongs only to God, and that by reason alone humans have difficulty in accessing the knowledge of the perfection of God. Reason as general revelation is limited. God's special revelation, and, more importantly, revelation through Christ are necessary. On the other hand, by agreeing with the theological framework proposed by Augustine, Western Christians sometimes designate the divine attribute of perfection to Adam and Eve, which belongs to the Divine alone. To regard Adam and Eve fully developed and perfectly sinless and righteous is nearly to regard them as the Divine.

Just as humans cannot attain the full knowledge of perfection of God, however, they cannot gain the knowledge of perfection of Adam and Eve by the same means. This is because perfection of the divine nature demands the revelation of Christ, the mediator, and so does perfection of the nature of Adam and Eve. Human reason is limited and so is human knowledge of God, Adam and Eve. And if reason is corrupt, it is even more difficult for a corrupt reason to access their original perfection.[67]

For Augustine, Adam and Eve would have been human beings who had not sinned. But this sinlessness is attributed to them by Augustine only as the transcendent beings who live in the otherworldly celestial space, which contemporary humans cannot hope for: for Augustine, Adam and Eve experience no disease or death in the Paradise of

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[67] In contrast, if we see Adam and Eve as imperfect humans like us, by reason we will be able to study the context of the creation story and interpret how they might have related to each other, just as we do, for example, with Abraham and Sarah. This is how some early church Fathers before Augustine envisioned Adam and Eve, as we will see in the following chapters.

the perfect climate and security, having nothing to fear or desire. The sinlessness or moral perfection that Augustine attributes to Adam and Eve is not that of ordinary humans of this world. Augustine's idea of Adam and Eve appears to presume that they possess divine nature of moral perfection. However, corrupt human reason, as Augustine would suggest, will have difficulty in gaining access to this divinity. It is difficult to attain sufficient knowledge of the state before the fall and nature of Adam and Eve if they are assumed to be sinless, perfect figures. By attempting to attain the knowledge by reason alone, we may only result in projecting our corrupt human nature upon the nature of Adam and Eve. By making Adam and Eve as a divine-like entity, Augustine's view makes our access to their nature—by reason alone—implausible and is at risk of making our perception of Adam and Eve corrupt. In order to understand the perfect nature of Adam and Eve, a special revelation of the Bible may not be helpful as was discussed in the previous chapter five. In this case, we will end up interpreting them by reason alone, which itself is at risk of corruption.

This may explain the error to which John Calvin, who followed Augustine's view of the sinless Adam and Eve and their subsequent fall, also succumbed. Chapter three explored Calvin's view of nature and roles of women. While he thought that subordination of women was God-ordained nature, Calvin's view reflected the views of women—along with the views of social rank and attitudes toward elders—in his time and culture. He used natural law that was written on every human heart and thus appealed to conscience (i.e. general revelation). By appealing to general revelation, Calvin was at risk of defining the current tendency as God-assigned purpose for women. In the similar manner, by appealing to reason alone in gaining the knowledge of Adam

and Eve, contemporary Christians also are at risk of being bemused between current tendency and God-assigned purposes. For Bonhoeffer, the reference to the tree of the knowledge in Genesis 1–3 even warns us of pitfalls of human dependence on their conscience. He believes that "the conscience is to be identified with the knowledge of good and evil. . . . This knowledge leads to self-justification. God alone can be 'like God.' Ethic may therefore never seek to base itself on conscience."[68] In pursuit of a guide for Christian life, conscience or reason needs to be aligned with God's word.

This is not to say that Augustine suggested that Christians should emulate Adam and Eve, instead of Christ. Augustine taught that God wills Christians to model Christ: "[I]t pleased God to deliver man from the devil's authority . . . so that men too might imitate Christ by seeing to beat the devil."[69] Lydia Schumacker says, "Christian perfection", "righteousness" or "uprightness" is found in the works of Augustine, especially in his *De Trinitate*, which was "written for an audience of exceptionally committed and erudite Christian readers."[70] In this sense, Augustine may have only wanted to emphasize God's perfection and wished to encourage devoted Christians to strive for perfection, as image bearers of God. However, by emphasizing the divine-like character of Adam and Eve, Augustine may have resulted in implying double standards of humanity: Christ, and the first people.

Gunton explains how we might know God through Christ. We know things as far as "God is revealed in the humanity of the incarnate Lord," and this means that "we know God only as knowledge of him is *mediated* to us by what which is not God." And it is the work of the Holy Spirit who leads us to the truth and thus makes known Christ's

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[68] Bonhoeffer, *Creation and Fall*, 151.
[69] Augustine, *The Trinity*, 13.4.17.
[70] Schumacker, "Augustinian Reflections on Christian Perfection," 550.

glory and the fact that in his humanity, Christ was sent by the Father. That is, "the Word of Truth is mediated in the present by the Spirit of Truth. The one who realizes—mediates—the truth of the gospel is the Spirit who enables Jesus to be known for who he is, the crucified, risen and ascended mediator of reconciliation with God."[71] God made himself known through Christ: "Whoever has seen me has seen the Father."[72] Through his words and deeds, and more specifically through his humiliation and cross, Christ revealed God, the Father.[73] And the Spirit helps us understand how a Christ-like, sinless person should treat fellow humans. Jesus came into our world that is full of imperfection, and showed us how to relate to imperfect humans. And this knowledge is our ultimate concern. It can be difficult for us to know how a sinless person might treat a sinless person in a sinless world, by our corrupt reason alone. Whether this knowledge—of how a perfect person should treat a perfect person in a perfect world—is helpful for us may be another question, if it is possible at all.

5. Conclusion

It is often claimed that Christians should know how Adam and Eve might have related to each other and emulate their relation as a model for marriage and ministry today. Nevertheless, if their nature is perfectly righteous, the claim appears to be untenable. Human corrupt reason has difficulty in gaining access to the uncorrupt nature before the fall. To attempt to know the perfection of Adam and Eve by reason is similar to an attempt to know the Divine by general revelation. Even if we suppose that reason is not corrupt, our reason—general revelation—is still limited. In order to attain the divine nature, it is necessary for us to have divine self-disclosure of special revelation

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[71] Gunton, *A Brief Theology of Revelation*, 123–24.
[72] John 14:9.
[73] Gunton, *A Brief Theology of Revelation*, 123; emphasis in original.

and most importantly, revelation through Christ. In the theological framework of

Augustine, our corrupt reason—general revelation—is not sufficient for us to attain the

full knowledge of nature or of God–assigned purpose of Adam and Eve.

PART III: THE CREATION STORY AS A STARTING POINT: CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK OF THE CREATION STORY

Previous chapters explored the possibility of the knowledge of human roles before the fall. It was suggested that such knowledge may not be readily accessible; for people may confuse current structures and expectations with God-assigned purpose instead. Views of literary genre of the creation story and those of status of Adam and Eve vary. These variant options imply different understandings of roles of Adam and Eve. Further, Augustine's view of the creation story that life before the fall belonged to pristine perfection confronts contemporary readers with two problems: it is implausible that humans after the fall would fully understand what the text of the creation story describes before the fall, and only God knows perfection. Gender roles described before the fall are not likely to serve as a sufficient guide for how men and women should relate to each other today.

Even if the knowledge of the life before the fall was accessible, however, there is still another question to ask: What is the intended nature of life before the fall—an ideal for all-time or a starting point? If roles in the creation story are a starting point rather than an ideal, roles played by Adam and Eve are not models for marriage and ministry today. Part III argues that even if humans did have the knowledge of Adam and Eve, and no matter what their roles might have been, human roles in the creation story are a starting point rather than an ideal. Roles of women and men today should not be determined after the creation story, but rather after the kingdom of God.[1]

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[1] Roles of women and men and the kingdom of God will be discussed in chapter nine.

Contemporary views of Christian marriage and ministry sometimes are grounded on the creation story.[2] For these positions, the state before the fall reveals appropriate roles of women and men. Even if one considers Adam and Eve not as historical individuals, but "rather archetypal representatives of the first human beings," it could still imply that what "Paul draws from these accounts are of transcultural validity precisely because they are drawn from *prelapsarian creation* texts."[3]

In contrast, many egalitarians tend to focus more on the work of Christ and insist that the roles of male and female today should reflect the redemptive work of Christ.[4] The status in the new creation is where one finds the gender roles intended by God. Kristina LaCelle-Peterson explains that what Paul means in Galatians 3:26–29 is that "[b]elievers come into Christian community on the same basis: through Christ they are children of God, and offspring of Abraham." Therefore, in the redeemed community, "male and female believers are marked equally as being in Christ and in the family of God."[5] Those who hold this view may not necessarily argue that the creation story is a goal nor may they argue that a hierarchical order between woman and man existed in the creation story. Instead of appealing to the creation story, these egalitarians seek directly for gender roles in the kingdom of God.

The former view is primarily framed by Augustine's view of the creation story, which was further followed by reformers such as John Calvin and many contemporary hierarchicalists.[6] For this view, humans were created initially perfect and then corrupted.

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[2] See, for example, Schreiner, "An Interpretation of 1 Timothy 2:9–15," 105–11.

[3] Davis, "First Timothy 2:12," 6; emphasis in original. This is part of his critique of the hierarchical view that makes a reference to the creation story.

[4] See, for example, Webb, *Slaves, Women and Homosexuals*, 49–55.

[5] LaCelle-Peterson, *Liberating Tradition*, 70.

[6] They include hierarchicalists such as John Piper and Wayne Grudem.

Therefore, the state before the fall delineates the goal where God-assigned purpose was first revealed. The idea is that "we must return to Eden."[7]

The latter view is identified in the view of the creation story held by the early Church Fathers such as Irenaeus (c.130–c.202), Clement of Alexandria (d.220) and Gregory of Nazianzus (c.330–91). Instead of the idea that human beings were complete from the start, Irenaeus suggested that they were created to grow. Therefore, nature before the fall is the starting-point, not the finale. Humans can and should do better than they did at the start.

If Augustine's view is right, humans should seek the gender roles as provided in the created order as an ideal. However, if Irenaeus's view is right that the creation story is a starting point, then roles of women and men are to be sought not in the creation account, but rather in the state of the kingdom of God.

Thus, Part III argues that the creation story is more a starting point as Irenaeus proposes than an ideal as Augustine suggests. For this purpose, chapter seven will first explore the Irenaean view of Adam and Eve in contrast to the Augustinian view. Chapter eight will evaluate the plausibility of these two views in terms of human calling.[8] Finally, chapter nine discusses marriage and ministry in relation to the ethic of the kingdom of God.

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[7] Watson, "Strategies of Recovery and Resistance," 79.

[8] This has been discussed from different perspectives. John Hick, for example, argues in light of theodicy. See Hick, *Evil and the God of Love*.

CHAPTER SEVEN

IRENAEAN VIEW OF THE CREATION STORY

1. Introduction

Previous chapters explored Augustine's view that Adam and Eve possessed the

original righteousness and perfection of fully developed adults made in God's image.

According to Augustine, upon their first sin, all humans lost this perfection, having their

nature corrupted. Thus, human state and roles before the fall are now the ideal for all

humans to strive to attain. In contrast, early church Fathers such as Irenaeus, Clement

and Gregory of Nazianzus had different ideas regarding Adam and Eve. Those Fathers

held that Adam and Eve were innocent children and were still imperfect as persons. It

was God's purpose that they would be brought into their perfection at a future time. This

view of Adam and Eve has been traditionally maintained by the Eastern Orthodox

Church and further supported by contemporary scholars in different areas.[1]

This chapter will explore the Irenaean conceptual framework that understands

that the creation story as a starting point, as opposed to the Augustinian theological

framework that delineates the creation story as a goal. First, Irenaeaus's view of

humanity in the creation story will be examined as a starting point. What follows is an

exploration of how his view is shared with other Eastern Church Fathers, and how

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[1] Despite its view of Adam and Eve as children, the Eastern Orthodox church currently does not grant women priestly roles. The reason is that the church limits the roles not because of the status of Adam and Eve but because Christ appointed male disciples only and the Apostles also maintained this appointment. See Turcescu, "Eastern Orthodox Reactions to the Ministry Section of the Lima Document," 339–42; Fahey, *Eastern Orthodoxy and the Ordination of Women*, 107.

As discussed in chapter one, many scholars who maintain the Augustinian understanding of Adam and Eve reject a hierarchy between women and men. Thus, one's idea of Adam and Eve, whether the Augustinian or Irenaean, does not automatically determine one's view of the roles of women and men, either hierarchical or egalitarian. In fact, Eastern Orthodox churches are Irenaean in their outlook but hierarchical in their approach to ministry.

Irenaeus's view of the creation story is appreciated and used by contemporary scholars in different disciplines.

Although much of his life is not known,[2] Irenaeus has often been counted as the most important Greek Father in the second century.[3] As bishop of Lyons in Roman Gaul, Irenaeus is also "an important link between East and West" that "enhances his potential for insight and influence, as well as his important principle of the universality of the church." Irenaeus is essentially "a vital heir of the apostolic tradition."[4] Having listened to Polycarp, the disciple of the Apostle John, Irenaeus lived not long after the Apostolic age.[5] While the second century was the formative time for Christian identity and thought,[6] Irenaeus played an important role in this period. He defended Christian orthodoxy against heresies,[7] appropriated the authoritative books of the Bible and buttressed the unity between the Old and New Testaments.[8]

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[2] Minns, *Irenaeus*, 1. "Very little is known of the life of Irenaeus. He tells us that his youth he had heard Polycarp preach, and the memory remained vivid for him. As Polycarp was bishop (Izmir, in what is now Turkey) and was martyred there, most probably in the letter half of the 150s, it is generally assumed that Irenaeus was himself a native of Asia Minor, if not of Smyrna itself."

[3] Quasten, *Patrology*, 287. "Irenaeus of Lyons is by far the most important of the theologians of the second century. The exact year of his birth is not known, but it was probably between the year 140 and 160."

[4] Shelton, "Irenaeus," 16–18.

[5] Quasten, *Patrology*, 21. "His native city was in Asia Minor, and most probably it was Smyrna, because in his letter to the Roman presbyter Florinus, he tells us that in his early youth he had listened to the sermons of Bishop Polycarp of Smyrna. His letter reveals such an accurate knowledge of this martyr and bishop that . . . From these words it is evident that through Polycarp Irenaeus was in touch with the Apostolic age."

[6] "Many historians and theologians consider Irenaeus to be the most important figure in the second-century church. He receives more attention than any other figure in the development of early Christianity, because he verbalizes an advanced, articulate theology in a formative era and a geographical location that offer us few voices." Shelton, "Irenaeus," 15.

[7] Irenaeus was a peacemaker to his diocese in mediation of the question of Montanism. He also "dedicated himself to the task of refuting the Gnostic heresies by means of his extensive writings. His writings were lost at an early time. Only two of the many works which he composed in his native Greek are extant. One of these two is his most important work, and is preserved not in the Greek original but in a Latin translation, which is very literal." Quasten, *Patrology*, 288.

[8] Shelton, "Irenaeus," 51. According to Allert, there was no simple distinction between "canonical" versus "non-canonical" in Irenaeus's time. Allert, *A High View of Scripture?*, 50. Thus, Shelton suggests that Irenaeus's contribution that is "perhaps most important is his treatment of scripture, which was not yet in canonical form throughout Christian communities. Irenaeus successfully appeals to a

2. The State before the Fall as a Starting Point in Irenaeus's Thought

The popular understanding of anthropology in the Western church is that

although Adam and Eve possessed original righteousness and perfection, they disobeyed

God's command that led them and all humanity to the state of alienation with God and

corruption of human nature. Irenaeus, however, considered that Adam and Eve still were

undeveloped children[9] who were to grow into maturity. Their disobedience brought

alienation and definite death but not corruption of human nature. Just like Adam and

Eve, current humans still need this development toward God's perfection which is yet to

come in the future. This development is possible only through union with Christ and the

work of the Holy Spirit, which God has planned from the very beginning.

A. Adam and Eve for Irenaeus

Irenaeus suggested that Adam and Eve were child-like creatures. He writes in his

Proof of the Apostolic Preaching that Adam was a child who was to grow into

perfection in future time:

> So, having made the man, lord of the earth and everything in it, He [God] made
> him in secret lord also of the servants in it. They, however, were in their full
> development, while the lord, that is, the man, was a little one; for he was a child
> and had need to grow so as to come to his full perfection.[10]

As is stated, Irenaeus says that Adam was the lord of God's creation but was still a child

who did not hold full perfection. Adam and Eve were children who were not ashamed of

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notion of catholicity, that most churches everywhere in the late second century see a certain collection of
writings to be Scripture. He helps to prove that churches were not in disarray, uncertain of authoritative
texts of the faith, but generally united in agreeing on most books and especially not agreeing on an
entirely different and threatening genre of books: Gnostic writings" (p. 51).

[9] For early Greek Fathers, Adam and Eve are νήπιοι (children). According to General Greek
usage, νήπιος often means a "small child." In the medical use, the term refers to the age of "the infant,
the small child up to 5 to 6, or even the child up to the time of puberty." In general use, it is used for
"small children from 1 to 10." Although the term in the Fathers' works sometimes is translated as an
"infant," in this chapter, I interpret it as a "child" as the ability of the monologue of Adam and Eve
(Genesis 2:23 onward) seems to indicate. *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament*, 912.

[10] Irenaeus, *Proof of the Apostolic Preaching*, 12.

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being naked and were still under the age of procreation.[11] According to Steenberg,

scholars have been interested in the meaning of Irenaeus's use of the term νήπιοι

(children) to refer to Adam and Eve. Steenberg suggests that since the precise meaning

remains unclear, "It is safe to say that the larger theme of childhood as indicative of

growth and maturation in the human person in general is taken up with more directness

by Irenaeus than the childhood-status of Adam and Even in particular."[12] Adam and Eve

were still learning about life and justice from Christ. As a child, Adam was vulnerable to

deception and thus both he and Eve succumbed to sin:

> [T]he Word of God was constantly walking in it [the garden]; He would walk
> round and talk with the man, prefiguring what was to come to pass in the future,
> how He would become man's fellow, and talk with him, and come among
> mankind, teaching them justice. But the man was a little one, and his discretion
> still undeveloped, wherefore also he was easily misled by the deceiver.[13]

For Irenaeus, Adam and Eve were children who were to grow into perfection. Adam was

imperfect because only God is perfect.

As a created being, the human state is less than that of the Creator and cannot

possibly possess the perfection of God:

> If, however, any one says, "What then? could not God have exhibited man as
> perfect from the beginning?" Let him know that, inasmuch as God is indeed
> always the same and unbegotten as respects Himself, all things are possible to
> Him. But created things must be inferior to Him who created them, from the very
> fact of their later origin; for it was not possible for things recently created to
> have been uncreated. But inasmuch as they are not uncreated, for this very
> reason do they come short of the perfect.[14]

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[11] In Irenaeus's words, "And even as she [Eve], having indeed a husband, Adam, but being
nevertheless as yet a virgin (for in Paradise 'they were both naked, and were not ashamed,' inasmuch as
they, having been created a short time previously, had no understanding of the procreation of children: for
it was necessary that they should first come to adult age, and then multiply from that time onward), . . ."
Irenaeus, "Against Heresies," 3.22.4.

[12] Steenberg, *Irenaeus on Creation*, 142.

[13] Irenaeus, *Proof of the Apostolic Preaching*, 12.

[14] Irenaeus, "Against Heresies," 4.38.1.

It is important for Irenaeus to ensure a clear distinction between God and human Adam.

"[S]ince Adam was molded from this earth to which we belong,"[15] God alone is

uncreated and perfect and possesses immortal nature. In Irenaeus's thought, Adam and

humans are all mortal creatures who needed some time before they could experience

their glorification and so participate in God's perfection:

> How then shall he be a God, who has not as yet been made a man? Or how can he be perfect who was but lately created? How, again, can he be immortal, who in his mortal nature did not obey his Maker? For it must be that thou, at the outset, shouldest hold the rank of a man, and then afterwards partake of the glory of God. For thou dost not make God, but God thee. If, then, thou art God's workmanship, await the hand of thy Maker which creates everything in due time.[16]

Adam did not possess perfection precisely because he was newly created. He was not

yet experienced or fully disciplined. It is like a human mother who offers only

breastmilk to her infant and withholds solid food. Similarly God withheld perfection for

Adam from the start. He needed time and discipline before receiving perfection.[17] That

God did not give perfection to Adam right away was also like Paul withholding spiritual

practices from new Christians, who still needed spiritual discipline and growth. God

knew that Adam could not retain divine perfection even if he had been given it.[18]

Adam and Eve were to be perfected progressively through the work of the triune God.

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[15] Irenaeus, "Against Heresies," 5.16.1.

[16] Irenaeus, "Against Heresies," 4.39.2.

[17] In Irenaeus's words, "Because, as these things are of later date, so are they infantile; so are they unaccustomed to, and unexercised in, perfect discipline. For as it certainly is in the power of a mother to give strong food to her infant, [but she does not do so], as the child is not yet able to receive more substantial nourishment; so also it was possible for God Himself to have made man perfect from the first, but man could not receive this [perfection], being as yet an [child]." Irenaeus, "Against Heresies," 4.38.1.

[18] "[T]he apostle had the power to give them strong meat . . . but they were not capable of receiving it, because they had the sentient faculties of the soul still feeble and undisciplined in the practice of things pertaining to God; so, in like manner, God had power at the beginning to grant perfection to man; but as the latter was only recently created, he could not possibly have received it, or even if he had received it, could he have contained it, or containing it, could he have retained it." Irenaeus, "Against Heresies," 4.38.2.

It was planned from the beginning that the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit would "nourish" and "increase" imperfect Adam and Eve toward glorification.[19]

Unlike the Augustinian view, Adam and Eve in Irenaeus's perspective did not possess divine-like perfection. Adam and Eve were not developed adults but were like innocent children. They were neither morally perfect nor fully righteous. They were vulnerable to falling into temptation, making a wrong choice and disobeying God's word. However, it was God-assigned purpose that Adam and Eve grow mature through God's education and Christ's revelation in order that they eventually reflect the image and likeness of Christ after which they were fashioned. That is the God-given goal. The first people were created not to maintain the present state but to experience development toward the state that God ultimately intended for them. In the Irenaean conceptual framework, Adam and Eve were imperfect and the human state before the fall was where their journey toward perfection only began.[20]

B. Current State of Humans

In the Augustinian conceptual framework, humanity after the fall is entirely or at least in large part corrupted. While the first people possessed the original perfection, the fall caused human mortality, depraved nature, separation from God, the guilt for the first

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[19] "[M]an, a created and organized being, is rendered after the image and likeness of the uncreated God,—the Father planning everything well and giving His commands, the Son carrying these into execution and performing the work of creating, and the Spirit nourishing and increasing [what is made], but man making progress day by day, and ascending towards the perfect, that is, approximating to the uncreated One. For the Uncreated is perfect, that is, God. Now it was necessary that man should in the first instance be created; and having been created, should receive growth; and having received growth, should be strengthened, should abound; and having been abounded, should recover [from the disease of sin]; and having recovered, should be glorified; and being glorified, should see his Lord. For God is He who is yet to be seen, and the beholding of God is productive of immortality, but immortality renders one nigh unto God." Irenaeus, "Against Heresies," 3.38.3.

[20] As noted above, by "imperfection," Irenaeus seems to suggest that Adam and Eve were mortal as created beings and needed to learn justice, or right relationship with God and his creation. With their "undeveloped" discretion, they were "easily mislead by the deceiver." Adam and Eve did not obey God and had "diseases of sin," which they needed to recover from.

sin along with all other consequences. Humans in the current state are very different

from the humans that God has first created. Depravity of the entire person caused by

original sin is gradually restored through union with Christ and the sanctifying work of

the Holy Spirit. For Augustine, the story of Adam and Eve is the story of the glory and

the utter failure of humans in the un-reversible past.[21] However, for Irenaeus, the story

of Adam and Eve is about the current human state as well as about that state in the past.

The story depicts God's plan for all humanity to grow into the image and likeness of

God, the goal for which men and women were fashioned.

According to Augustine's view, Adam and Eve, as fully developed humans, bore

the full image and likeness of God that was more or less corrupted after the fall. In

contrast, Irenaeus thought that the image and likeness of Adam and Eve were not yet

fully realized within them at creation. They had to wait until Christ, after whose image

and likeness they were created, became visible. They needed God incarnate, to come

into the world at a later time to show whom they will emulate.[22] Adam also needed the

filling of the Holy Spirit in order to be perfected according to Irenaeus. Without the

Spirit, Adam lacked the image and likeness of God and thus was imperfect.[23] It was

God's plan from the beginning of history to create imperfect beings, with the intention

to educate them and in time to reveal to them the incarnate Christ, in order that they

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[21] Minns, *Irenaeus: An Introduction,* 72.

[22] "For in times long past, it was *said* that man was created after the image of God, but it was not [actually] *shown*; for the Word was as yet invisible, after whose image man was created. Wherefore also he did easily lose the similitude. When, however, the Word of God became flesh, He confirmed both these: for He both showed forth the image truly, since He became Himself what was His image; and He re-established the similitude after a sure manner, by assimilating man to the invisible Father through means of the visible Word." Irenaeus, "Against Heresies," 5.16.2; emphasis in original.

[23] "But when the spirit here blended with the soul is united to [God's] handiwork, the man is rendered spiritual and perfect because of the outpouring of the Spirit, and this is he who was made in the image and likeness of God. But if the Spirit be wanting to the soul, he who is such is indeed of an animal nature, and being left carnal, shall be an imperfect being, possessing indeed the image [of God] in his formation (*in plasmate*), but not receiving the similitude through the Spirit; and thus is this being imperfect." Irenaeus, "Against Heresies," 5.6.1.

comprehend him and finally be perfected in the image of Christ. This is the plan not

only for the first people but also for all humans and more specifically for the church.

> God has displayed long-suffering in the case of man's apostasy . . . ; God thus
> determining all things beforehand for the bringing of man to perfection, for his
> edification, and for the revelation of His dispensations, that goodness may both
> be made apparent, and righteousness perfected, and that the Church may be
> fashioned after the image of His Son, and that man may finally be brought to
> maturity at some future time, becoming ripe through such privileges to see and
> comprehend God.[24]

Thus, the human state of Adam at creation can be also the present human state.

According to Peter Bouteneff, Irenaeus considers Adam as symbolic and historic; but

"Adam, the scriptural first-formed human being, has a primarily symbolic function for

Irenaeus."[25] Denis Minns also suggests that for Irenaeus, Adam is "never just an

individual" but symbolizes the entire human being because Adam and all humanity

share physically part of the mud that is fashioned to be the image and likeness of God

and also "because all humanity is descended from him [Adam]."[26] Thus Irenaeus says

that Adam was also saved just like other humans.

> [T]his is Adam . . . the first formed man, of whom the Scripture says that the
> Lord spake, "Let us make man after Our own image and likeness;" and we are all
> from him [Adam]: and as we are from him, therefore have we all inherited his
> title. But inasmuch as man is saved, it is fitting that he who was created the
> original man should be saved.[27]

Minns thinks that the manner in which Augustine read Adam is more literal than

Irenaeus' reading. That is for the former, Adam's story is only about the past. But for

Irenaeus, the story is about Adam in the past and humans in the present. According to

Minns, this is the strongest contrast between the Augustinian view of Adam and

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[24] Irenaeus, "Against Heresies," 4.37.7.

[25] Bouteneff, *Beginnings*, 84.

[26] Minns, *Irenaeus*, 71.

[27] Irenaeus, "Against Heresies," 3.23.2.

Irenaean's because for Irenaeus, "the history of humankind and the history of salvation are one and the same."[28]

Therefore, Adam and current humans also share their noetic condition. The intellectual condition is imperfect but not impaired. Adam and Eve sinned by disobeying God's word not to consume from the tree of the knowledge. The fruit of the tree was reserved till the due time when they became capable of receiving it. However, Adam and Eve could not wait, wishing to be like God their Creator: "Irrational . . . in every respect, are they who await not the time of increase, but ascribe to God the infirmity of their nature."[29] As a consequence, Adam and Eve lost the Word [Christ] and life: "being ignorant of Him [the Son] . . . they are deprived of His gifts, which is eternal life; and not receiving the incorruptible Word, they remain in mortal flesh, and are debtors to death, not obtaining the antidote of life."[30] Adam is "the man who had once for all been conquered, and who had been destroyed through disobedience"[31] Adam and Eve lost the relationship with God, which was to be recovered only by Christ.[32] Nonetheless, all humans retain the ability to choose right and wrong:

> And therefore the prophets used to exhort men to what was good, to act justly
> and to work righteousness, as I have so largely demonstrated, because it is in our
> power so to do, and because by excessive negligence we might become forgetful,

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[28] Minns, 71–72. According to Minns, "Generally speaking, Irenaeus' reading of Genesis 1–3 is far more modern, far more alive to the symbolic function of the story than the reading that has prevailed in the Western Church for most of its history."

[29] Irenaeus, "Against Heresies," 4.38.4.

[30] Irenaeus, "Against Heresies," 3.19.1.

[31] Irenaeus, "Against Heresies," 3.18.2.

[32] "He caused man (human nature) to cleave to and to become one with God. . . . And unless man had been joined to God, he could never have become a partaker of incorruptibility. For it was incumbent upon the Mediator between God and men, by His relationship to both, to bring both to friendship and concord, and present man to God while He revealed God to man. For, in what way could we be partakers of the adoption of sons, unless we had received from Him through the Son that fellowship which refers to Himself, unless His Word, having been made flesh, had entered into communion with us?" Irenaeus, "Against Heresies," 3.18.7.

and thus stand in need of that good counsel which the good God has given us to know by means of the prophets.[33]

For Irenaeus, passages that "demonstrate the independent will of man"[34] are: "let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father in heaven (Matt. 5:16)" and "Be on guard so that your hearts are not weighed down with dissipation and drunkenness and the worries of this life, and that day does not catch you unexpectedly (Luke 21:34)"[35] Adam's sin was neither to change the course of God-assigned purpose nor who Adam is noetically.

For Irenaeus, the state of Adam and Eve also is the state of present humanity. Adam, Eve and all humans are made imperfect; the image and likeness of God in which they are fashioned are to be perfected as they grow in the knowledge of God and in his grace. The disobedience to God by the first people caused death and alienation from God and from the rest of the creation. Without the presence of God, their lives are more affected by circumstances and more susceptible to succumbing to sin. Yet, God's salvation plan persists. The path of salvation "may twist and wander through many detours, but there is no radical bifurcation."[36] Human intellect is not corrupted. It is God-assigned purpose that humans grow in maturity over time. All humans are in the process of becoming like God through the union with Christ and the work of the Spirit.

C. Human Destiny

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[33] Irenaeus, "Against Heresies," 4.37.2.

[34] Irenaeus, "Against Heresies," 4.37.3.

[35] Other passages listed Irenaeus are these: "Be dressed for action and have your lamps lit; be like those who are waiting for their master to return from the wedding banquet, so that they may open the door for him as soon as he comes and knocks (Luke 12:35–36)"; "That slave who knew what his master wanted, but did not prepare himself or do what was wanted, will receive a severe beating (Luke 12:47)"; "Why do you call me 'Lord, Lord,' and do not do what I tell you? (Luke 6:46)"; "But if that slave says to himself, 'My master is delayed in coming,' and if he begins to beat the other slaves, men and women, and to eat and drink and get drunk, the master of that slave will come on a day when he does not know, and will cut him in pieces, and put him with the unfaithful (Luke 12:45–46 = Matt. 24:48–51)."

[36] Minns, *Irenaeus*, 71–72.

Augustine's view uniquely upholds both first people—Adam and Eve—and

Christ as ideals. In contrast, Irenaeus's view of anthropology emphasizes Christ as an

ideal and human destiny. The image and likeness of God are completed not at creation

but as a result of human maturity; and God-assigned purpose is marked as human

continual growth toward maturity.

As it has been noted, God created Adam and Eve in the image and likeness of

Christ, and their destiny and human destiny alike are to bear this likeness and image

fully. And for this purpose, Christ summed up whom humans should be, by taking a

human form:

> So then the Lord, summing up afresh this man, took the same dispensation of
> entry into flesh, being born from the Virgin by the Will and the Wisdom of God;
> that He also should show forth the likeness of Adam's entry into flesh, and there
> should be that which was written in the beginning, *man after the image and
> likeness* of God.[37]

Summing up of Jesus' life, death, resurrection and ascension means human redemption

by fulfilling the promise of fathers, abolishing death, freeing people from sinfulness and

giving them life:

> Thus then He gloriously achieved our redemption, and fulfilled the promise of
> the fathers, and abolished the old disobedience. The Son of God became Son of
> David and Son of Abraham; perfecting and summing up this in Himself, that He
> might make us to possess life. The Word of God was made flesh by the
> dispensation of the Virgin, to abolish death and make man live.[38]

Shelton explains that the purpose of atonement in Irenaeus's understanding is not only a

legal solution to sin or correction of sin but a way of freeing humans from sin and

perfecting the image of Christ in them. "It is a 'recapitulation', a summing up of in

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[37] Irenaeus, *Proof of the Apostolic Preaching*, 32; emphasis in original.
[38] Irenaeus, *Proof of the Apostolic Preaching*, 37.

solution all the effects of the great problem of Sin."[39] In Irenaeus's words, "God recapitulated in Himself the ancient formation of man, that He might kill sin, deprive death of its power, and vivify man; and therefore His works are true."[40] Christ demonstrated the state of human destiny, with which Adam was originally designed.

By summing up humanity in Christ, God showed what humans are and what they should be. It was God's plan at creation to perfect humans eventually in the image and likeness of Christ: God "from the beginning even to the end, forms us and prepares us for life, and is present with His handiwork, and perfects it after the image and likeness of God."[41] This means that humans become one with God: "He [God] caused man (human nature) to cleave to and to become one with God."[42] This enables humans to become like God: "[O]ur Lord Jesus Christ, who did, through His transcendent love, become what we are, that He might bring us to be even what He is Himself."[43] Christ became a person so that humans are enabled to partake in God: "the Word of God who dwelt in man, and became the Son of man, that He might accustom man to receive God, and God to dwell in man, according to the good pleasure of the Father."[44] Humans are gradually accustomed to partake of the divine nature of Christ and attain divine incorruption: "The [earthly] kingdom which is the commencement of incorruption, by means of which kingdom those who shall be worthy are accustomed gradually to partake of the divine nature (*capere Deum*)."[45]

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[39] Shelton, "Irenaeus," 46.
[40] Irenaeus, "Against Heresies," 3.18.7.
[41] Irenaeus, "Against Heresies," 5.16.1.
[42] Irenaeus, "Against Heresies," 3.18.7.
[43] Irenaeus, "Against Heresies," 5. Preface.
[44] Irenaeus, "Against Heresies," 3.20.2.
[45] Irenaeus, "Against Heresies," 5.32.1. *Capere Deum* means in other words, "gradually to comprehend God" (p. 596).

This idea sometimes is called "*theosis*," "deification" or "divinization." According to Donald Fairbairn, the term *Theosis* maintained in Eastern Orthodoxy subsumes ideas such as "transfiguration or transformation, acquiring the divine likeness, attaining union with God, sharing in divine life, and journeying to the kingdom." It does not mean that humans "actually become gods" or "possess" God; but that "humans become divine by grace, by participating in God's energies" while without burring "the line between God and creation." The concept of *theosis* primarily is based on the texts such as Psalm 82:6, "You are gods, children of the Most High," and 2 Peter 1:4, through God's promises we "may become participants of the divine nature."[46]

According to Linda Woodhead, divinization denotes that humans "become humans by becoming divine—which means growing into something we do not know or control rather than something we already possess." It is not that "human beings become God in the way that the Father is God, the Son is God, and the Spirit is God, for human beings are not *hypostases* of God."[47] Humans are created beings. Rather, in order for humans to be fully humans—by fulfilling the image of God—they need to incorporate into God:

> Whereas in Christ the divine becomes human, in human beings the human must become divine. In participating in the divine nature the human not only realizes the perfection for which it was created—a perfection seen in Christ—but in doing so comes to possess the unknowable character of the divine being.[48]

Woodhead critiques that although the idea of divinization was central to early Church Fathers and is biblical, the idea "has often been overwhelmed in the West by an Augustinian emphasis on human sinfulness." For Augustine and reformers such as

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[46] Faibrairn, *Eastern Orthodoxy through Western Eyes*, 68–69.
[47] Woodhead, "Apophatic Anthropology," 237–38.
[48] Woodhead, "Apophatic Anthropology," 238.

Luther and Calvin, "human nature is so utterly corrupted that it can do nothing on its own but contribute to its own downfall."[49] In the Western church,

> Salvation is a more prominent theme than divinization, for the best that the human can hope for is to be saved from his or her wretched condition by God's infinite love and mercy. It is not that he or she escapes from this condition, but rather that human sinfulness is forensically reckoned as righteousness in spite of itself. Humans are saved not because they become divine, but because God chooses to gaze on them as found in Christ rather than as they are in their own wretchedness. The human must decrease so that he may increase. It was left to more radical strands within Protestantism to revive the theme of divinization by way of the doctrine of sanctification.[50]

Shelton explains that "the Greek term *theosis* describes the end result of the salvation process for the individual but anticipates it more highly than Western Christianity."[51] Toward this *theosis* humans are "forever marked by growth" as "the child grows in the womb and the wheat grows on the stalk."[52] Humans are to look to Christ until his image and likeness are formed in them and eventually reflect the divine. It is a gradual process over time through the union with Christ and the sanctifying work of the Holy Spirit.

In order for humans to grow, they need to know Jesus who is the true knowledge. They need "the vision of the initial formation" by looking to Christ, who is the "human-divine life [who] lived in harmony with the will of the Father through the grace of the Spirit."[53] Irenaeus wrote his book *Against Heresies* in order to defend Christian orthodoxy. For him, the knowledge that Gnostics claimed to possess was a false one because "they do not know the true Saviour," and their knowledge is mere

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[49] Woodhead, "Apophatic Anthropology," 237. Woodhead tells that 2 Pet. 1:4, Ps. 82:6, John 10:34, Rom. 8:11, 1 Cor. 15:49, and 2 Cor. 8:9 are the primary passages that the Eastern Fathers cite for the concept of divinization.

[50] Woodhead, "Apophatic Anthropology," 237.

[51] Shelton, 57.

[52] Koch, "Zur Lehre vom Urestand und von der Erlösung bei Irenaeus," 193–214, quoted in Osborn, *Irenaeus of Lyons*, 219; Irenaeus, "Against Heresies," 2.28.1.

[53] Steenberg, *Of God and Man*, 34; Irenaeus, "Against Heresies," 4.39.1, 5.3.1.

anthropological and cosmological truth claimed.[54] Irenaeus insists that Christian faith

needs to be in conformity with teachings of Christ. Irenaeus is clear that humans are not

to seek any reality that is created, but to seek only God for a guide:

> And thus was the hand of God plainly shown forth by which Adam was fashioned, and we too have been formed; and since there is one and this same Father, whose voice from the beginning even to the end is present with His handiwork, and the substance from which we were formed is plainly declared through the Gospel, we should therefore not seek after another Father besides Him, nor [look for] another substance from which we have been formed, . . .[55]

Irenaeus insists that the destination for Adam and Eve and also for all humans was to

attain the divine within themselves by growing in the knowledge of Christ and his

teaching.

For Irenaeus, humans are eschatological. God continually works in bringing

humans into perfection in the process of *theosis*. Minns observes that Irenaeus places a

strong emphasis on "an enormous and unbridgeable gulf between God and his creation:

only God *is*—everything else is in a state of Becoming."[56] For Adam was fashioned after

the image and likeness of God, yet the image and likeness were to be perfected at a

future point. As created ones, Adam and Eve were not yet all they could be. Their

perfection was only potentially given. The state of Adam and Eve is similar to the

current human state. All humans await the future when the image and likeness of Christ

are more fully formed in them. In Irenaeus's thought, the creation story is the starting

point, and the destination lays yet in future time, when humans experience glorification

in the kingdom of God.

3. The State before the Fall as a Starting Point in Eastern Orthodoxy

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[54] Steenberg, *Of God and Man*, 31.
[55] Irenaeus, "Against Heresies," 5.16.1.
[56] Minns, *Irenaeus: An Introduction*, 83; emphasis in original.

Augustine in the fourth and fifth centuries has been influential in the Western

Christian thought for centuries. Bradley Green asserts that Augustine is "the most

prominent 'Latin' or 'Western' church father" who "sowed the seeds of virtually the

entire Western theological edifice that has been built from his day forward."[57]

Accordingly, the exalted condition of original perfection and righteousness of Adam and

Eve have been widely upheld among Western churches to this day. Nonetheless, Eastern

Church Fathers such as Clement of Alexandria and Gregory of Nazianzus shared

Irenaeus's view of Adam and Eve as imperfect creatures, thus initiating that legacy in

the thought of Eastern Orthodoxy.

A. Clement of Alexandria

Born sometime in the second century, Clement met people who could recall

Ignatius and Polycarp, and Clement himself was a follower of Tatian and Pantaenus.

After Justin and Irenaeus, Clement is considered to be "the founder of Christian

literature."[58] During the second century, Alexandria was the intellectual center of the

world, where "Christians developed the rigorous study of the Bible, theology, and

philosophy." There Clement taught and wrote in order to "exhorts pagans to turn to

Christian faith"; instruct wealthy Christians with ethics on how to overcome temptations

and live with virtues; deal with philosophical and theological questions; and defend

Christian faith from Gnostics.[59] Clement as well as his student Origen sought "how best

present the claims of Christianity" in the eastern part of the Roman Empire. Clement

attempted to demonstrate that "Christianity was the culmination of the best that Hellenic

and Hellenistic thought had produced." He inquired about "similarity and contact

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[57] Green, "Augustine," in *Shapers of Christian Orthodoxy*, 235.

[58] Coxe, "Fathers of the Second Century," 165–66.

[59] Osborn, "Clement of Alexandria," 127–28.

between the Christian faith and the leading philosophical systems produced by their

day—especially Platonism."[60]

Clement, Irenaeus's contemporary, also understood Adam as a child. Adam was

too young to receive and exercise wisely the knowledge from the tree in the Garden of

Eden. God even desired that Adam would maintain his innocence for a longer time.

> The tree of knowledge itself was good, and its fruit was good. . . . but knowledge
> is good when one uses it discreetly. But Adam, being yet an [child] in age, was
> on this account as yet unable to receive knowledge worthily. . . He wished man,
> [child] as he was, to remain for some time longer simple and sincere.[61]

Clement also embraced the idea of divinization that human destiny is to partake the

attribute of the Divine. Created from the mud and as the imperfect reality, humanity was

meant to grow into maturity over time and eventually to share divine nature including

immortality.

> And God transferred him from the earth, out of which he had been produced,
> into Paradise, giving him means of advancement, in order that, maturing and
> becoming perfect, and being even declared a god, he might thus ascend into
> heaven in possession of immortality. For man had been made a middle nature,
> neither wholly mortal, nor altogether immortal, but capable of either; so also the
> place, Paradise, was made in respect of beauty intermediate between earth and
> heaven.[62]

For Clement, Adam was not innately immortal. Immortality was rather a

possibility that Adam could receive immortality and deification. Adam could choose

either. But he could not be immortal at creation because he was not yet united with God.

Adam was a created being and not like God who is immortal.[63] Like Irenaeus, Clement

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[60] Payton, *Light from the Christian East*, 24.

[61] Clement, "Exhortation to Heathen (Protrepticus)," 2.24.

[62] Clement, "Exhortation to Heathen (Protrepticus)," 2.24.

[63] "But some one will say to us, Was man made by nature mortal? Certainly not. Was he, then, immortal? Neither do we affirm this. . . . He was by nature neither mortal nor immortal. For if He had made him immortal from the beginning, He would have made him God. Again, if He had made him mortal, God would seem to be the cause of his death. Neither, then, immortal nor yet mortal did He make him, but, as we have said above, capable of both; so that if he should incline to the things of immortality,

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considered Adam not as a fully grown adult but as a child. He was not yet capable of partaking from the tree of the knowledge. As a creature of the mud, Adam could not be the immortal God. Adam was capable of choosing death or eternal life. He was an imperfect creature whom God intended to bring into maturity in future time and toward divine perfection.

B. Gregory of Nazianzus

Gregory of Nazianzus is another Eastern Church Father who understood Adam and Eve as unperfected humans. The church would call him Gregory "the theologian," the title which only the apostle John shares in the Eastern Church. Gregory is renowned for his ascetic practices. For example, his knees were worn out because of extensive kneeling. He desired to "cut himself off from the world," "spending time in prayer, meditation, study and manual labour in the mountains at Basil's monastic base." He would have done so except for helping his father with his episcopal duties. Because of "his love for solitude," the amount of the theological work Gregory produced was limited, yet the excellence of his work still stood out. He is said to be the "single most quoted author in the East, after the Bible."[64]

For Gregory, Adam and Eve were like children. It was God's plan that he educates them in freedom so they would master contemplation, be prepared to eat from the tree of knowledge and grow to adulthood.[65] Gregory is the one who "coined" the

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keeping the commandment of God, he should receive as reward from Him immortality, and should become God; but if, on the other hand, he should turn to the things of death, disobeying God, he should himself be the cause of death to himself." Clement, "Exhortation to Heathen (Protrepticus)," 2.37.

[64] Letham, "The Three Cappadocians," 194–95.

[65] Harrison, *Festal Orations*, 50.

term "*theosis*" and whose "doctrine of *theosis* then [became] the standard concept for salvation in later Byzantine theology."[66]

According to Gregory, God forbade Adam and Eve to touch the tree of knowledge, not because God begrudged it to humans but because they were too immature to partake the tree or "contemplation" just like young children could not handle solid food yet.

> [I]t would have been good if partaken of at the proper time, for the tree was, according to my theory, Contemplation, upon which it is only safe for those who have reached maturity of habit to enter; but which is not good for those who are still somewhat simple and greedy in their habit; just as solid food is not good for those who are yet tender, and have need of milk.[67]

Adam and Eve were created with inclination to grow toward God or the mystery of their final divinization. They will eventually see the glory of God and be remade.

> A living creature trained here, and then moved elsewhere; and, to complete the mystery, deified by its inclination to God. For to this, I think, tends that Light of Truth which we here possess but in measure, that we should both see and experience the Splendour of God, which is worthy of Him Who made us, and will remake us again after a loftier fashion.[68]

Christopher Beeley explains Gregory's understanding of anthropology that humans were created "in a state of dynamic movement toward God, so that the process of divinization is rooted in the structure of our existence."[69] In other words, "Within this larger scheme, salvation is the restoration of the process of *theosis* that God established in creation and intends to perfect in the age to come."[70]

Just as Irenaeus, Gregory also thought that the current human state is identical to that of Adam and Eve.

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[66] Beeley, *Gregory of Nazianzus on the Trinity and the Knowledge of God*, 117.
[67] Nazianzus, "Select Orations of Saint Gregory Nazianzen," 38.12.
[68] Nazianzus, "Select Orations of Saint Gregory Nazianzen," 38.11.
[69] Beeley, *Gregory of Nazianzus on the Trinity and the Knowledge of God*, 118.
[70] Beeley, *Gregory of Nazianzus on the Trinity and the Knowledge of God*, 119.

> We were all [made to] . . . partake of the same Adam, and were led astray by the serpent and slain by sin, and are saved by the heavenly Adam and brought back by the tree of shame to the tree of life from whence we had fallen.[71]

Gregory did not see such a difference between the nature of Adam and Eve and the nature of people today. He did not insist that the first people were morally and intellectually perfect, but the following generations were not. Christopher states that in the Eastern Orthodox view of sin: "Sin defaces or taints nature or overlays nature with defilement but does not reach into or affect human nature itself."[72] Human nature according to Eastern Orthodoxy is un-changeable:

> The concept "nature" is reserved for what God made, and 'human nature' remains good. . . . Though all of creation, and humanity within it, has suffered from and been tarnished by sin, the creation still belongs to God. Nature, cannot be turned into its opposite by human transgression, and human nature cannot be depraved. Sin is not an act of nature, but of a person.[73]

In accordance with Irenaeus and Clement, Gregory of Naziansus sustained the orthodox view that Adam and Eve provide a starting point in human nature which God intended to develop more fully over time. They were not morally or intellectually more ideal than humans today. Christ in whose image they were created is their only destiny.

4. The State before the Fall as a Starting Point in Contemporary Thoughts

Eastern fathers called the Garden of Eden Paradise and regarded it as a wonderful state. Irenaeus thought that Paradise was beautiful and good, "better than this earth," where the Word of God strolls through it: "And so that he [Adam] might have nourishment and grow up in luxury, a place was prepared for him better than this world, well-favoured in climate, beauty, light, things good to eat, plants, fruit, water, and all other things needful to life; ad its name is the Garden. And so fair and goodly was the

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[71] Nazianzus, "Select Orations of Saint Gregory Nazianzen," 33.9.
[72] Payton, *Light from the Christian East*, 113.
[73] Payton, *Light from the Christian East*, 113.

Garden, . . ."[74] But unlike the Augustinian state of perfection, Eastern Orthodoxy holds

that creation of God was good in conformity to his intention, to be more complete, but

the ultimate perfection comes in the end times when creation is to be better than the

initial goodness. God intended to develop the original creation.[75] James Payton

elaborates on this idea:

> Created reality was not made perfect in the sense of being at its final goal . . .
> The original creation was itself the beginning realization of the full embodiment
> of God's purpose for creation. Because of that, God said at the conclusion of the
> work of creation that it was 'very good' (Gen 1:31).[76]

Understanding the garden as incomplete is more coherent to reality and to the Bible

message than that of the perfect garden of Augustine's view.

A. The Cosmological Imperfection of the State before the Fall

According to Mark Whorton, for many churches who hold that the state before

the fall was ideal Paradise, the idea that "the original creation could have been

imperfect" is unthinkable: "if the heavens had been created 'very good,' they would be

perfect and unchanging." Therefore, the church has resisted the idea of imperfect

creation. For instance, when Johannes Kepler discovered that "the planets moved in

elliptical orbits instead of perfect circles," and also when Galileo discovered that the sun

was imperfect having "irregular-shaped smudges on its surface," the Catholic Church

initially refused to accept this information because it conflicted with the notion of a

perfect creation.[77]

Nonetheless, Mark Whorton argues, there is scientific evidence that the universe

has been "never perfect and unchanging." Stars have been constantly appearing and

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[74] Irenaeus, *Proof of the Apostolic Preaching*, 12.

[75] Payton, *Light from the Christian East*, 96.

[76] Payton, *Light from the Christian East*, 96.

[77] Whorton, *Peril in Paradise*, 98.

dying. There are laws of nature at work that cause thunderstorms, tornadoes, and hurricanes. These phenomena do not appear to reflect a perfect world which God could have made, containing no such "disasters" or death. But the laws that involve heat transfers between the oceans and the atmosphere, and the change in humidity across different geographical variations of the entire earth are integral parts in sustaining life on earth. These laws and natural phenomena caused by them are not against God's will but rather important elements to fulfill his purposes. The laws of nature are "very good" whether they operate before or after the fall as they serve the Creator's "purpose." "Very good" does not necessarily mean perfection.[78]

B. Ecological Imperfection of the State before the Fall

From an Augustinian perspective, the recovery of the pre-fall state is a focal point for the ethical base: "we must realize that for him [Paul] the world before and apart from Christ was described by Genesis 3 and that any escape from that world must be by a return to the dominion described by Genesis 1."[79] For environmental discussions, the Garden of Eden is an ideal, and its recovery is often emphasized.

According to Whorton, the ecological imperfection as the state before the fall is in conformity with Orthodox theology. It recognizes that "the world was created with a specific end" of "glorifying the Creator." Creation exists in anticipation of its purpose that will be unfolded and realized fully in the final consummation. Whorton believes that the state before the fall was "never intended to be a pristine paradise, a place of

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[78] Whorton, *Peril in Paradise*, 99–105.
[79] Minear, *Christians and the New Creation*, 78.

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unblemished tranquility for [humans] to enjoy forever. This world was created for a

purpose and it was perfectly suited to accomplish the Creator's perfect purpose."[80]

Therefore, Whorton suggests that pains, hunger and death[81] were parts of

creation at the beginning. Pain was necessary if Adam and Eve were to be prevented

from injury as they worked in the garden. There may have been abundant food in Eden.

But the presence of food presupposes hunger. Adam and Eve would have had the

sensation of hunger to be tempted to eat from the tree. God created not an "unchanging

immortal world" but "a dynamic ecosystem, one that changed with time."[82]

From the problem of sufferings of nonhuman creation, Christopher Southgate

also insists that God created the world that contained suffering and death of creatures

and extinction of species. According to the Augustinian view of the creation story,

human sin generally is the cause of struggle and suffering of the nonhuman creation.

However, in agreeing with John Polkinghorne and Arthur Peacocke, Southgate believes

that "[p]redation, violence, parasitism, suffering, and extinction were integral parts of

the natural order long before *homo sapiens*." In fact, the life history of dinosaurs

disappeared about sixty-five million years ago.[83]

Thus, Southgate insists that the universe was not perfect before the fall and is

still not perfect. God's creation is good because it is his and it is destined to perfection at

the eschaton. As Rom. 8: 19–22 says, nonhuman creation awaits the final liberation yet

to come, and the hope of the liberation depends on the "transformation of the human

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[80] Whorton, *Peril in Paradise*, 107–11.
[81] Erickson suggests the possibility of human death in the Garden of Eden also. He thinks that the passage "and now, lest he put forth his hand and take also of the tree of life, and eat, and live for ever" (Gen 3:22) indicates that "Adam, even after the fall, could have lived forever if he had eaten the fruit of the tree of life." Erickson, *Christian Theology*, 613.
[82] Whorton, *Peril in Paradise*, 107–11, 223.
[83] Southgate, *The Groaning of Creation*, 28.

condition."[84] From a pneumatological perspective, Steven Studebaker also suggests that

believers' redemption from destructive attitudes and indifference toward the earth is the

key for the redemption of creation: "the Spirit of creation and Pentecost cannot be

separated."[85] Human unredeemed actions may make imperfection of the natural world

evil. Southgate writes, "the sort of universe we have, in which complexity emerges in a

process governed by . . . death, pain, predation, and self-assertion, is the only sort of

universe that could give rise to the range, beauty, complexity, and diversity of creatures

the Earth has produced."[86] The imperfection of creation is not defection but rather

constitutive for an ideal world to be formed.

C. Biblical Terms of the Imperfection of the State before the Fall

Agreeing with Derek Kidner, Mark Whorton believes that the terms "subdue"

and "keep" must imply that the Garden of Eden faced some hostile forces. The Hebrew

word כָּבַשׁ (kabash) for "subdue" in Gen 1:28 can be translated as "to tread down . . . to

conquer, subjugate . . . bring into subjection."[87] Thus, it is probable that there was an

opposition for Adam and Eve to overcome and "some sort of coercion" necessary for

them to experience. Adam and Eve needed to bring creation into submission, something

not easily accomplished.[88] Similarly, the term שָׁמַר (shamar) for "keep" in Gen 2:15

means "to watch or guard from any hostile attack" as frequently denoted. This term

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[84] Southgate, *The Groaning of Creation*, 15–17.

[85] Studebaker, "The Spirit in Creation," 955.

[86] Southgate, *The Groaning of Creation*, 29; original emphasis excluded.

[87] Whorton, *Peril in Paradise*, 92; Kidner, *Genesis*, 73.

[88] Harris et al., *Theological Wordbook of the Old Testament*, 430; word no. 951. "This verb and its derivative occur fifteen times in the OT. . . . In the OT it means 'to make serve, by force if necessary.' Despite recent interpretations of Gen 1:28 which have tried to make 'subdue' mean a responsibility for building up, it is obvious from an overall study of the word's usage that this is not so. Kabash assumes that the party being subdued is hostile to the subduer, necessitating some sort of coercion if the subduing is to take place. Thus the word connotes 'rape' in Est 7:8, or the conquest of the Canaanites in Num 32:22, 29. . . . Therefore 'subdue' in Gen 1:28 implies that creation will not do man's bidding gladly or easily and that man must now bring creation into submission by main strength. It is not to rule man" (p. 430).

implies that God warns Adam and Eve about the presence of "some evil and inimical power" that may harm them and of the "nature of the danger to which [they] were exposed."[89] As Whorton writes, "If there were no tendency for the garden to become 'un-kept,' there would have been no reason for Adam to 'keep' it. . . . Although unparalleled in beauty, the garden of Eden was not self-sustaining nor was it self-perpetuating."[90]

For the scholars who hold the imperfect state before the fall, it is important that humans use their ability to scientifically understand God's creation. While recognizing the fact that scientific theories constantly undergo "adaptation" and "replacement," Mark Worthing still insists on the importance of a theology of creation that is coherent with the reality which God created.

> [T]heology is responsible to find models that show how Christian affirmations about Creator and creation can be understood in light of currently viable scientific theories—these being the only theories relevant to the task of theology at the moment. If theology chooses to sit out a round of scientific development and await the appearance of more "favorable" theories, it sacrifices its credibility and the effectiveness of its apologetic function with regard to contemporary science in the modern world.[91]

An imperfect Paradise seems to be a foreign idea to Western Orthodoxy but not so to Eastern Orthodoxy. From the perspective of the latter, the distortion of universe, natural disastrous phenomena, and death and sufferings always existed whether there was a human impact or not. Some of the biblical terms may be also indicative of this. These imperfections were not the consequence of the fall or outcomes of God's curse on

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[89] McDonald, *Biblical Doctrine of Creation and the Fall*, 335. R. L. Harries also explains, "Frequently the verb is used to speak of personal discipline, the need to take heed in respect to one's life and action." This same verb "keeping" in Gen 2:15 is used to mean "guarding against intruders, etc., such as the cherubim guarding the way to the tree of life in Gen 3:24, or gatekeepers (Isa 21:11) or watchmen (Song 5:7)." Harris, *Theological Wordbook of the Old Testament*, 939; word no. 2414.

[90] Whorton, *Peril in Paradise*, 93–94.

[91] Worthing, *God, Creation, and Contemporary Physics*, 210.

the earth. After the fall, the earth became more affected by human sinful actions and more vulnerable to greater distortions. Yet, the world itself still maintains the beauty and good order which God created in the beginning, awaiting humans to serve creation to fulfill its purpose and reach its greater glory. Contemporary scholars in various disciplines are discovering that the Irenaean view of the creation story—a starting point rather than an ideal—is more coherent with God's creation.

5. Conclusion

There are two historical conceptual frameworks which undergird current understandings of the creation story. The one, proposed primarily by Augustine, sees Genesis 1 and 2 as the ideal creation to which we must return and the other by Irenaeus as a starting point for the development of a future and better kingdom. Augustine elaborated the human state before the fall as an exalted condition of original righteousness. It was the fall that caused human mortality, the guilt for the first sin, and all its consequences for the following generations. For this view, Adam and Eve were fully developed adults. The state before the fall serves as an ideal for humans to strive to attain.

In contrast, Irenaeus thought that Adam and Eve were like innocent children being far from perfection. It was God's intention that through their learning and the union with Christ Adam and Eve were brought into maturity in time. Their final goal was to partake of the divinity within them. The first people were created not to maintain the present state but to develop to a more complete future state where union with God was complete. The state before the fall for the Irenaean conceptual framework is therefore a starting point only.

The work of Irenaeus "shaped the Scriptures, the exegesis, the theology, the institutions, and the spirituality of nascent Christianity to such an extent that his imprint is discernible almost two thousand years later,"[92] says, Mary Donovan. Despite the significance of his contribution, his work has been little known because of its difficulty in accessibility. His major work *Against Heresies* became available only in 1982 as a critical edition and in 1992 as a readable English translation. Further, the content, style and internal organization of the book, which addressed the Gnostics in the second century, are foreign to most contemporary readers, thus presenting readers with challenges in understanding.[93] Nevertheless, writings on Irenaeus's thought are becoming increasingly available today.

The Irenaean conceptual framework of Adam and Eve as a starting point of who humans are, the need for humanity to develop and the goal of human divinization at a future time as an ideal was shared with Clement of Alexandria and Gregory of Nazianzus. Their view on anthropology has been maintained primarily in the Eastern Orthodox Church to this day. In more recent times, there have been many acknowledgements among scholars in different disciplines that the Eastern Orthodox view of creation and redemption is more coherent to experienced reality than the one which Augustine suggested. The Augustinian view of Paradise as a perfect state with no natural disaster, death, hunger, sickness, suffering or aging is being increasingly

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[92] Donovan, *One Right Reading?*, 3. In other words, "In his writings the Christian Bible takes recognizable shape as composed of the two testaments. He employs a definite style of exegesis, using the techniques of his day to read Christian texts and to claim for Christianity the texts of Judaism. He understands the Rule of Faith to be in a dialogical relationship with the Scriptures in such a way that each serves to amplify and correct the other. . . . By contrast, his distinctive spirituality, a spirituality marked by an appreciation of creation and a unique insight into the interplay between the Spirit of God and the human spirit, has been influential primarily in eastern Christianity" (p. 3).

[93] Donovan, *One Right Reading?*, 3–4. For a condensed version of *Against Heresies*, see Payton, *Irenaeus on the Christian Faith: A Condensation of against Heresies*.

questioned. The Irenaean view of Paradise as a good world which God has created with good plans but allows possibilities of these imperfections, is increasingly viewed as consistent with science and with the biblical data.

In the Irenaean conceptual framework, the roles of Adam and Eve are not represented as ideals for humans today. Nonetheless, the Irenaean view of the creation story is preferable to an Augustinian because this framework makes the state before the fall accessible to contemporary readers. In the previous chapters (chapter five and six), we discussed human inability to understand adequately the state before the fall either in interpretation or by reason. The perfect state leaves humans after the fall little information and ability to comprehend what the state was like and how Adam and Eve might have related to each other. However, according to the Irenaean view of the creation story, Adam and Eve are as imperfect as humans are today, whether as primogenitors or representatives of all humanity. Their world was imperfect like today's, and human reason after the fall is imperfect but not corrupt. Thus, the Irenaean framework of creation and redemption allows for an interpretation and comprehension of human roles in the creation story freely by using the context after the fall.

CHAPTER EIGHT

CALLING IN THE CREATION STORY

1. Introduction

Previous chapters have noted two conceptual theological frameworks: Augustinian and Irenaean. The Augustinian framework suggests that humans were created initially perfect and then corrupted subsequently. Thus, human roles before the fall are the goal, where God-assigned purpose was first revealed. In this view, contemporary men and women should follow the model of how Adam and Eve related to each other. In contrast, the Irenaean framework proposes that instead of being finished at the start, humans were created to grow. Therefore, nature before the fall is the starting-point toward God assigned purpose, not the finale. In this view, contemporary men and women can play roles better than first started. This chapter investigates this appropriation of the creation story in light of Christian calling that is constitutive to human roles.

The present chapter argues that in terms of callings, roles of Adam and Eve were a starting-point, as the Irenaean view of the creation story would suggest, and do not always determine roles of women and women today. This chapter will first explore the idea of calling including different views of calling in gender role discussions, and theological understandings of calling. Then, it will examine the calling of Adam and Eve before the fall. Finally, it will inquire into the response of Adam and Eve to their calling. The calling of Adam and Eve and their response do not constitute all their roles. Nevertheless, they are integral parts of the roles God summons them to play.

This chapter uses the term "calling," "vocation," "tasks" and "dominion" synonymously, and uses "roles" in a broad sense to include calling and one's response to it. The creation story will be treated as historical and Adam and Eve as historical progenitors of all humanity, and it will be assumed that access to the knowledge of lives before the fall is possible, whether or not their state, was pristine. Therefore, the materials and events in the state before the fall are freely discussed.

2. Calling

A. Calling in Gender Discussions

As is the case of many Christian conversations, the term "calling" is frequently mentioned in gender role dialogues. For hierarchicalists, sexual differences sometimes determine one's calling. Furthermore, the calling that Adam and Eve received may render guidance for men and women today as an ideal. For example it can be assumed that leadership of Adam is a calling and therefore, leadership of men today is their calling. In contrast, egalitarians believe that calling could be shared collectively as Christians but not according to sexual differences.

Scholars who hold hierarchical views sometimes claim that Christians today have different callings based on sexual differences. God calls men and women for their distinctive and un-exchangeable roles. More specifically, husbands are called to lead and wives are called to support the leadership of their husbands. John Piper argues that the leadership role of a husband and help-role of a wife is always the divine direction:

> Biblical headship for the husband is the divine calling to take primary
> responsibility for Christlike, servant-leadership, protection and provision in the
> home. Biblical submission for the wife is the divine calling to honor and affirm
> her husband's leadership and help carry it through according to her gifts.[1]

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[1] Piper, "A Vision of Biblical Complementarity," 43. In his discussion, Piper extensively affirms gender role based on calling. For instance, "If a woman undertakes to give this kind of leadership toward

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Leadership and submission are collective callings not only for husbands and their wives, but also for men and women in general: men lead, and women (with the rest of the church) submit by honouring and affirming the leadership of men:

> We will try to show that "authority" refers to the divine calling of spiritual, gifted men to take primary responsibility as elders for Christlike, servant-leadership and teaching in the church. And "submission" refers to the divine calling of the rest of the church, both men and women, to honor and affirm the leadership and teaching of the elders and to be equipped by them for the hundreds and hundreds of various ministries available to men and women in the service of Christ.[2]

This is primarily because these callings are ordained by God before the fall. John Piper states that the reason why "mature femininity feels natural and glad to accept the strength and leadership of worthy men"[3] is because,

> [t]his is implied in the goodness and gladness of creation before the fall (Genesis 2) when man, created first, was called to the primary responsibility of leadership, and woman, created to be "a helper suitable for him," was called to use her gifts in helping carry that leadership through.[4]

God called Adam as a leader and Eve as a helper before the fall. And the pre-fall was the ideal state without any effect of sin and the state where God said, "It is good." Accordingly, it is mandatory for men and women today to seek and share the same calling which Adam and Eve had: men to lead, and women to submit to the leadership.

> But she [Eve] was not [Adam's] equal in that she was his "helper." God did not create man and woman in an undifferentiated way, and their mere maleness and femaleness identify their respective roles. A man, just by virtue of his manhood,

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her husband she . . . would be taking up the masculine calling in that relationship" (p. 30); "masculinity is a God-given trust for the good of all his creatures, . . . is less a prerogative than a calling."

Heath Lambert also believes that a wife's submission to her husband is a call that determines the manner in which a wife rebukes her husband when he sins against her: "Because a wife is called to submit to her husband she will need to think about how to engage her husband in a respectful way, but she must not avoid it all together." Lambert, "Breaking the Marital Impasse," 24.

[2] Piper, "A Vision of Biblical Complementarity," 44.

[3] Piper, "A Vision of Biblical Complementarity," 40.

[4] Piper, "A Vision of Biblical Complementarity," 54.

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is called to lead for God. A woman, just by virtue of her womanhood, is called to help for God.[5]

Robert Yarbrough also understands wives' call to submit their husbands in related to the roles of Adam and Eve: "[T]he Genesis account assigns a leadership responsibility to the husband in the family (cf. Eph. 5:21–33 in conjunction with 1Cor. 11:3, 7–8)." Therefore, for Yarbrough, the Bible clearly calls a wife's "any form of submission" to her husband: "A wife who enjoys her godly husband's dying commitment in marital and Christian love in obedience to Scripture cannot reasonably declare that she is free from any form of submission to her husband on the basis of Scripture, which clearly calls her to this."[6]

In contrast, egalitarians may direct the term "calling" to all Christians regardless of a difference between men and women. Gilbert Bilezikian says that God calls all believers to become more like Christ with the work of the Holy Spirit.

> [Scripture] calls us—both men and women—to acquire the mind of Christ and to be transformed in his image . . . Both men and women are called to develop their "inner self," which means their basic personhood in cooperation with the Holy Spirit.[7]

Rebecca Groothuis thinks that calling is given depending on individual's gifts.

> The basis idea behind biblical teaching on God's gifts and callings is that one's calling follows naturally from one's gifts. A lifelong calling, therefore, ought not specifically deny the exercise of a person's most salient gifts or require a significant use of gifts a person does not have.[8]

Groothuis asserts that although sexual differences should be appreciated wherever applicable, the differences should not determine one's calling.

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[5] Ortlund, "Male-Female Equality and Male Headship," 91.
[6] Yarbrough, "Women and Ministry," 75–76.
[7] Bilezikian, *Beyond Sex Roles*, 160.
[8] Groothuis, *Good News for Women*, 74.

[E]vangelical egalitarians . . . do not believe that status differences are inherent to sexual differences, or that gender identity is the primary determinant of a person's calling and vocation. Gender may color the style in which a person does a particular job, but gender ought not be seen as a reason to deny a woman access to a position if she is, in fact, qualified to perform the work.[9]

As to the creation narrative, egalitarians tend to say that callings or tasks of Adam and Eve such as "to bear the image of God," "to have dominion over" and "to help" show equality between them. For example, Groothuis says that "man and woman are . . . equally human, and they equally bear God's image." Further, Adam and Eve received the equal responsibility and authority between them: "Gen 1:28 gives responsibility and authority to both male and female at once, with no indication of differing levels of responsibility or authority between them."[10] According to Groothuis, Eve's helping Adam implies equality:

> [T]he helper [is] equal in status to the one she helps, and that help be mutually given and received between the two persons. In the case of the first woman and man, she could have come to help him in the sense of coming alongside him to join him in his work—not as his assistant or his superior, but as one of equal rank.[11]

If "to help" is to imply Adam's authority over Eve, the authority should be limited to the tasks with which Eve provided: "Her [Eve's] helping tasks should concern only the sort of work for which the man would have had responsibility when he [Adam] was working in the Garden alone." Receiving help "does not lead to the *personal* authority that husbands are said to have over their wives and families."[12] Thus, Groothuis suggest that some callings such as equality between Adam and Eve as a person apply to us but not all callings do.

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[9] Groothuis, *Good News for Women*, 71.
[10] Groothuis, *Good News for Women*, 130–132.
[11] Groothuis, *Good News for Women*, 131.
[12] Groothuis, *Good News for Women*, 131; emphasis in original.

Both hierarchicalists and egalitarians consider calling or task as an essential part of Christian belief and practice. God calls Christians for unique tasks. The former sometimes insists that contemporary men and women may receive their calling collectively and differently and share the callings of Adam and Eve in the state before the fall. For the latter, God may call Christians as a whole for particular tasks but not based on sexual differences.

B. The Nature of Calling

Today, Christians frequently refer to their roles, to a task, vocation,[13] or calling, and regard it as a vital aspect of their relationship with God.[14] This idea of calling was important to both Israelites in the Old Testament and believers in the New Testament. The understanding of calling in the New Testament time was highlighted by Reformers, who insisted on the critical role of each Christian in their relationship with God.

Some scholars theologically define "calling" by differentiating between "general calling" and "special calling." According to Erickson, general calling is God's universal invitation. God calls all people to repent and turn to himself. It is expressed in both the Old Testament and New Testament. For instance, "Turn to me and be saved, all the ends of the earth! For I am God, and there is no other"[15] and "Come to me, all who labour and

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[13] According to Dykstra, "While the term 'vocation' is now commonly associated with one's work, its Latin root is *vocatio*, which means neither job nor career nor occupation. It means 'voice' or 'a voice calling.' Religiously speaking, it means 'a calling from God.'" Dykstra, "Called to Life, Called to Love," 11.

According to Miller, vocation is "the call of God on a person's life which subsumes any job or career path within it." Miller, "From the Editor," 151.

[14] For example, Donald Isaac insists that "call" should not be reserved only for those who are devoted to Christian ministries: work undertaken by everyone is a God-ordained vocation. He suggests that the many parables of stewardship, obedient servants, and business activities in the Bible affirm that work by each individual counts in the kingdom of God: "How else would the kingdom of justice and peace come about without human effort? If the sick are to be healed and the hungry fed, does this not imply work on our part? . . . But in the kingdom to come, our work is fundamentally important to achieve his purpose" Isaac, "Work and Christian Calling," 186.

[15] Isa. 45:22.

are heavy-laden, and I will give you rest."[16] In contrast, according to Erickson, special

calling or effectual calling is "an intensive and effectual working by the Holy Spirit"

within each believer.[17]

Wayne Grudem also distinguishes general and effectual callings and defines the

latter as "an act of God the Father, speaking through the human proclamation of the

gospel, in which he summons people to himself in such a way that they respond in

saving faith."[18] The emphasis may be more on the Father and the gospel than the work

of the Holy Spirit. Yet, for Grudem, the effectual calling is also "internal" calling.

Therefore, scholars who identify general and effectual callings characterize the latter as

the internal, individual summon that believers experience by the utterance of the Holy

Spirit.

Calling in the New Testament was "God's summons and designation of

individuals to particular functions and offices in his redemptive plan."[19] Christ summons

individuals "to repentance, faith, salvation, and service (Mark 2:17 = Luke 5:32; Mark

1:20, Acts 2:39)." Calling was God's verbal summons in his "approaches to the

individual." It was upward, a heavenly calling to freedom and felicity (Phil. 3:14; Heb.

3:1; Gal. 5:13; 1 Cor. 7:22; 1 Thess. 2:12; 1 Pet. 5:10), given as the benefits of

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[16] Matt. 11:2.

[17] Erickson, *Christian Theology*, 942–45.

[18] Grudem, *Systematic Theology*, 693. Grudem calls this effectual calling as effective calling or internal calling.

[19] They are apostleship, Rom. 1:1; missionary preaching, Acts 13:2; 16:10; and high priesthood, Heb. 5:4. Packer, "Call, Calling," in *Evangelical Dictionary of Theology*, 184. Packer understands that calling in 1 Cor. 1:26; 7:20 as another kind of application of special calling: application to "external circumstances and state of life in which a man's effectual calling took place." This calling is not quite the sense of occupation or trade which the Reformers supposed. Yet, according to Packer, it also is difficult to revaluate if this secular employment is a true vocation to God's service, because of its broad biblical foundation (p. 184).

redemption.[20] Thus, in the New Testament, calling usually meant a spiritual calling in the exclusively religious sense and was referred to the divine call for an eternal salvation.[21] 1 Corinthians 7:20 was the only exception to the spiritual use, which meant "one's earthly calling or station in life." But this was not significant in the church of Paul's time. In the early church, the prevailing idea of calling was a divine summons to salvation and vocation, which was based on the charismatic experience. It was an actual inner calling as a Christian experience.[22]

However, as the church grew in numbers, and infant baptism became a common practice, this inner calling became less important. As one was born into the church, people began to lose the significance of this divine call and a personal response to it. However, because the idea of calling as an eternal salvation was so deeply imbedded in the tradition and faith of the church, it was sustained and developed in monastic Christianity.[23] In Knudson's words,

> The monk had a divine call, a call to perfection, a call to fulfill completely the command of Christ, especially the command to love God. . . . It was comparable to the call of Abraham;[24] it was a "conversion," a "second" or "new baptism," and particularly a summons to a special mode of life, which henceforth came to be known in a distinctive sense as a "calling" or "vocation."[25]

In the Middle Ages, the term "calling" was applied in terms of relationship between people in the passive sense. In the ethical sense, calling was not understood as an active virtue that was highly commended to acquire. In the Middle Ages, secular work was not a calling or vocation in the proper sense of the term except for some mystics such as

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[20] Rom. 9:23–26. Ibid., 199–200.
[21] Knudson, *The Principles of Christian Ethics*, 181–83. Knudson explains how the contemporary understanding of calling has developed through several stages.
[22] Knudson, *The Principles of Christian Ethics*, 132.
[23] Knudson, *The Principles of Christian Ethics*, 132.
[24] Gen. 12:1 ff.
[25] Knudson, *The Principles of Christian Ethics*, 132.

Eckhart and Tauler. They would insist that humans obtain a divine call entirely

independently of their relation to the monastic orders. In contrast to the idea of "earthly

calling," they emphasized "the religious value of the common daily tasks" and thus,

significantly advanced the concept of calling identified only in the monastic order.[26]

Nevertheless, it was Reformers such as Luther and Calvin who decisively

transformed the meaning and application of the term "calling" and "vocation." Based on

the doctrine of the priesthood of all believers and the "doctrine of the sanctity of the

common life," Luther insisted that true calling of God is realized not only in

monasticism but also in lives of ordinary people in their workplaces.[27] According to

Luther,

> We see then that just as those that we call spiritual, or priests, bishops or popes,
> do not differ from other Christians in any other or higher degree, but in that they
> are to be concerned with the word of God, and the sacraments—that being their
> work and office—in the same way the temporal authorities hold the sword and
> the rod in their hands to punish the wicked and to protect the good. A cobbler, a
> smith, a peasant, every man has the office and function of his calling, and yet all
> alike are consecrated priests and bishops, and every man in his office must be
> useful and beneficial to the rest, that so many kinds of work may all be united
> into one community: just as the members of the body all serve one another.[28]

Today, evangelical Christians generally maintain the view of calling which was

articulated by the Reformers in the sixteenth century. God calls his people for unique

tasks in order to accomplish his will.[29] He speaks to individuals through the Holy Spirit,

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[26] Knudson, *The Principles of Christian Ethics*, 183.

[27] Weber, *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism*, 79–92.

[28] Luther, "Address to the Christian Nobility of the German Nation," 23.

[29] Col. 3:17; 1 Cor. 12:4–6. This is not to say that the role of the individual is insignificant. For instance, Friesen states, "Rather than waiting for some inward voice, every Christian should cultivate a willingness to serve God in the fullest manner possible. Certainly God may stimulate that desire, but the3 aspiration is said to belong to the person" Friesen, "The Case of the Missing Call," 39. Knudson also emphasizes the significant role of each individual to discover their duties in their vocation: "It is their utility, their value to ourselves and to society, and our ability to perform them, that enable us to decide whether they are really our duties and as such belong to our vocation. And these are questions that each one must answer for himself in the light of the concrete situation that confronts him and in the light of

who guides them and equips them with his gifts.[30] Gordon MacDonald asserts that "each

biblical call was unique. No call seems like any other. The circumstances, the nature, the

expectations of the call: all customized. When God wanted a word said or a people led,

he mandated a person to make it happen in an unprecedented way."[31] God calls all

people to turn to God and bear his holy name and attribute but through the Spirit, God

calls each individual to actualize the call in a unique manner.

The New Testament church understood that calling was a manifestation of the

work of the Holy Sprit and was to be uniquely given to an individual believer. It may be

difficult to say, then, that contemporary men and women are called collectively to

specific tasks of Adam and Eve—with an interest in how the tasks were shared between

them—unless it is the case that Adam and Eve had specific tasks assigned to each

gender; the tasks were shared either hierarchically or equally; *and* all their tasks of

Adam and Eve were to be shared by men and women today.

3. Calling of Adam and Eve

There were tasks which God summoned Adam and Eve to perform. It seems that

God expected them to share the same tasks between them without a clear notion of how

to share. However, many of their tasks were assigned only for Adam and Eve as the first

generation of human beings.

A. Nature of Calling for Adam and Eve

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what he believes to be the divine purpose in his own life." Therefore, Knudson suggests, it is not always easy to define which task one is called. The person may have to discover their duties and purpose in their lives first. Knudson, *The Principles of Christian Ethics*, 184.

[30] LaCelle-Peterson, *Liberating Tradition*, 111–12. LaCelle-Peterson states, one aspect which calling involves is spiritual gifts: "[W]e participate in the new creation as God calls and empowers us. Not only are Christians commanded to love each other, as well as their enemies, but they are instructed in numerous places in the New Testament to use the gifts given by God. Interestingly, these instructions are given without reference to gender or to marriage." LaCelle-Peterson insists that "it is a responsibility of Christians of the body of Christ to help one another to employ the gifts and talents given them by God."

[31] MacDonald, "God's Calling Plan," 36.

Without being alienated from God, Adam and Eve freely heard God's voice. They were called by God to fulfill some tasks, mostly to share between them. General calling was essential to men and women after the fall. Adam and Eve, however, needed no such calling. They knew God, however not perfectly, and had an intimate relationship with God in which they could directly communicate with him. Eve understood exactly what God said to her: "but God did say, 'You must not eat fruit from the tree.'"[32] Adam and Eve could clearly recognize God's voice: "Then the man and his wife heard the sound of the LORD God."[33] God freely conversed with Adam and Eve. After the fall, however, such intimate relationship with God was disrupted and lost. God needed to call people to reconcile them to himself.

Without such reconciliation, Adam and Eve had vocations before the fall. These vocations included who Adam and Eve should be, what they should do and what commands they should obey. When God created living creatures, it was God's intention that only Adam and Eve should bear his image: "Let us make humankind in our image in our likeness."[34] God created them in the image of God and also created them male and female.[35] Unlike any other animals, Eve was made out of the side of Adam to share the same essence as a human being. They were both created in the image of God and shared the common humanity. It was God's purpose that Adam and Eve reflected the same God and represent in their lives what he might be like, just like a mirror reflects.[36] God gave Adam and Eve the same instruction and command: "You are free to eat from any tree in the garden; but you must not eat from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, for

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[32] Gen. 3:3.
[33] Gen. 3:8.
[34] Gen. 1:26. Also Gen. 1:27.
[35] Gen. 2:27.
[36] Ramsey, *Basic Christian Ethics*, 105.

when you eat of it you will surely die."[37] It was God's will that both Adam and Eve

listen to his voice and obey his words.

God made Adam and Eve so that they could live in community and show their

mutual support and love. When God created Eve, he said, "It is not good for the man to

be alone. I will make a helper suitable for him."[38] The second person was there to be a

support. And for Eve, Adam was the second person as her support. God wanted Eve to

attend Adam with a serving attitude which Christ demonstrated and which Adam also

was expected to do. God did not wish Adam to live alone in the Garden of Eden. God

gave Eve for Adam to have community, serving to each other and the all creation, and to

extend it to the entire earth.

When Adam first saw Eve, he called her "female,"[39] who was taken from the

"male." Sometimes Adam's naming of Eve is assumed as his dominion or leadership

over her. However, he was the only human being who could have taken the task of

naming of any kind. Unless God had told Adam to have authority or make hierarchy

over Eve by calling, he would have had no reason to do so. What God told Adam to

have leadership over was non-human beings such as fish, birds and animals, which was

the task God assigned Eve to share.[40] As George Ramsey suggests Adam's calling of

Eve was "an act of discernment rather than an act of dominion."[41] It was a cry of

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[37] Gen. 2:16–17.
[38] Gen. 2:18.
[39] Gen. 2:23.
[40] Gen. 1:28.
[41] Ramsey, "Is Name-Giving an Act of Domination in Genesis 2:23 and Elsewhere," 35. Ramsey suggests that Adam's naming of animals also was discernment in which he discerned "something about these creatures—an essence which had already been established by God" (p. 34–35). In contrast, Ortlund believes that Adam's "naming of the woman makes sense as an act of his headship and that it does not make sense in any other way." Ortlund also argues that "[s]trictly speaking, Adam names Eve in 3:20. By his act here in 2:23 Adam identifies who she is in relation to himself. But because this act was the climax

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discovery, of recognition, which was celebration by Adam.[42] Adam had expressed his

joy, recognizing her as his counterpart.[43] Adam and Eve were to express the celebrated

relationship among the Trinity. When God created Eve, his purpose and intention

seemed not so much to create a hierarchical order between humans as to create a

community, where mutual love was exercised.

God had a purpose for Adam and Eve to reveal not only who God might be, but

also what they might do.[44] God assigned them tasks as a divine call. Adam and Eve were

to multiply and fill the earth: "Be fruitful and increase in number."[45] It was God's will

that Adam and Eve would participate together in God's creative work of reproduction so

as to extend his community over all the earth. Adam and Eve were also to have

dominion over and subdue the rest of the creatures, and be good stewards for them: "let

them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the birds of the air, and over the

cattle, and over all the wild animals of the earth, and over every creeping things that

creeps upon the earth."[46] It also was the vocation of Adam and Eve to work together on

the land in the Garden of Eden: "The LORD God took the man and put him in the

garden of Eden to till it and keep it."[47]

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of his naming of other creatures (vv. 19–20), it too may be referred to as naming." Ortlund, "Male-Female Equality and Male Headship," 102.

[42] Ramsey, "Is Name-Giving an Act of Domination in Genesis 2:23 and Elsewhere," 35. According to Ramsey, "The essence which God had already fashioned [in Eve] is recognized by the man [Adam] and celebrated in the naming . . . The essence which he perceives in this new creature determines the name, rather than vice versa."

[43] Grenz and Kjesbo, *Women in the Church*, 163.

[44] LaCelle-Peterson, *Liberating Tradition*, 99. "As a couple, they were to carry out God's work in the world together . . . We find in these chapters [chapter 1 and 2] theological statements that undergird marriage: the man and woman share essence, function, and substance."

[45] Gen. 1:28.

[46] Gen. 1:26. Also Gen. 1:28.

[47] Gen. 2:15.

Before Eve was created, Adam had to do tasks by himself, tilling and keeping

the garden and naming God's creatures. However, after God gave Eve for Adam, they

began to enjoy companionship and share tasks in the Garden of Eden. They shared their

callings together, bearing the same image of God and both being expected to obey his

command. They were to help each other and serve God together to fulfill the tasks

assigned. It seems that God neither assigned these tasks distinctively or exclusively to

Adam or Eve nor told them how to share the tasks in the manner which their roles

should be hierarchical or egalitarian.[48]

B. The Specificity of Calling for Adam and Eve

Living in the Garden of Eden, Adam and Eve had God-assigned purposes for

them. Some of them appeared to be shared by all people through human history. That is,

all humans are to be bearers of the image of God; they are to live in the right

relationship with God, and obey his command. They are to love God and extend their

love to their fellow humans. Adam, Eve, and all people both in the old and new

covenants are to share these callings.

Yet, other tasks which God assigned to Adam and Eve were specific to their

status as the first generation. For example, in Gen 1:28, God appeared to express his

intention for procreation by men and women when he said, "Be fruitful and increase in

number, fill the earth."[49] This also presupposes a marriage between man and woman. In

fact, Genesis 2: 24 speaks of a conjugal relationship which God intends for Adam and

Eve: "A man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, and they will

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[48] For example, as is mentioned earlier, Groothuis suggests that "Gen 1:28 gives responsibility
and authority to both male and female at once, with no indication of differing levels of responsibility or
authority between them." Groothuis, *Good News for Women*, 130.
[49] Gen. 1:25.

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become one flesh." It was then an essential vocation for Adam and Eve to have a conjugal union and to bear offspring to extend God's love and glory among all people. This union and procreation meant that they would fulfill the task through which God would multiply the population.

During Old Testament times, it also was important for Israelites to have offspring. For example, the psalmist said, "Blessed is the man whose quiver is full of them."[50] Israelites assumed in their culture that if they had many sons, they had many defenders in court, good care in their older ages, and above all, God's favour. In those days, it was a sign of blessing if women bore children. Nonetheless, in the New Testament, the role of marriage or procreation was not as important as in the pre-fall or the Old Testament times. In 1 Corinthians 7:28–40, Paul affirms both married lives and singleness; both Jesus and Paul also were single.[51] Contemporary believers in the West may or may not be called to marry and fill the earth with their offspring. It seems that there were tasks specifically assigned to Adam and Eve in the pre-fall, which do not necessarily apply to all individuals today. Procreation remains important and necessary today but it is not always a task for everybody as a human being.

Webb suggests that contemporary readers "should not be quick to use the original creation story in affirming patriarchy for today." One reason is that the patriarchal elements and practices, which are "at best implicit (embodied in quiet, background features of the narrative)," were unique to the pre-fall culture:[52]

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[50] Ps. 127:5.

[51] Although the Bible is not entirely clear about Paul's marital status, he is single when he writes the letter to the Corinthian church and wishes the church to follow his lifestyle of singleness (1 Cor. 7:8–9).

[52] Webb, *Slaves, Women and Homosexuals*, 249.

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> If the patriarchal elements of the story were a part of the original event and intended for the benefit of the first generation of human beings, it does not necessarily follow that we should practice them today. There are a number of aspects of the original story that the Christian community no longer practices (at the nonabstracted level), for they contain cultural components within them. Thus the inclusion of something in the creation story does not automatically make it transcultural, as some would suggest.[53]

In other words, many of the tasks given to Adam and Eve were cultural components that were characteristic of the events at the beginning of history. As we have observed, some callings for Adam and Eve belong to all men and women, yet others only to Adam and Eve. According to Packer, this calling has its ethical implications, that is, calling is a demand of "a worthy walk[54] in holiness, patience, peace,[55] and sustained moral exertion."[56] Therefore, the dynamic and nature of calling can be understood better in terms of Christian ethics.

According to Stanssen and Gushee, Christian ethics is "about the entire 'way of life' of the people of faith (Ephesians 2:10; cf. Deuteronomy 30:19–20)."[57] Then Stassen and Gushee introduce four levels of moral norms, which were proposed originally by Henry David Aiken and James Gustafson.[58] The first level is the practical/immediate judgment, which is a moral declaration about one particular case. For example, when Jesus said "Go tell that fox" (Luke 13:32), Jesus gave a moral judgment on a particular person, Herod, and in a particular time and space (in the first Century and at Jerusalem). The next level is the rules, which tell Christians "directly and concretely what to do or

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[53] Webb, *Slaves, Women and Homosexuals*, 249.

[54] Eph. 4:1.

[55] 1 Thess. 4:7; 1 Pet. 1:15; 2:21; 1 Cor. 7:15; Col. 3:15.

[56] Packer, "Call, Calling," 184.

[57] Stassen and Gushee, *Kingdom Ethics*, 121–22. Stassen and Gushee elaborate the definition of Christian ethics: "No aspect of moral existence is left out – decisions, practices, convictions, principles, goals and virtues are all included in the effort to 'live your life in a manner worthy of the gospel' (Phil. 1:27; cf. Rom. 16:2; Eph. 4:1; Col. 1:10) as we seek the kingdom of God" (p. 122).

[58] Aiken, "Reason and Conduct"; Gustafson, "Context vs. Principle," quoted in Stassen and Gushee, *Kingdom Ethics*, 99–124.

not to do." The rules apply to all similar cases, not merely to one particular case. For instance, the statements such as "Go the second mile" and "Do not kill" are rules which tell Christians what to do or not to do in a direct and concrete level. The third level is principles such as "Love your enemies" (Matt. 7:12), and "Love your neighbour as your self" (Matt. 22:39). Principles are "more general than rules" and more abstract than rules. The fourth level is the basic conviction. This is faith in Christ in which Christians base all their commitments, including all the previous levels. These four levels are connected in the manner in which "particular judgments depend on rules. Rules depend on principles. Principles depend on basic-conviction theological beliefs, which serve as the ultimate foundation."[59]

When we understand Christian calling in terms of ethics, these four levels of Christian ethics also define calling for those who base their faith in Christ. That is, some callings are equivalent to such ethical principles as "love your neighbours as your self." Other concrete callings are ethical rules such as, "Do not murder." They are universal, regardless of any situation. Finally, there are practical/immediate callings addressed on specific cases. Sharing the same humanness, people of God share the first two ethical principles and rules, for example, "love your neighbours" and rules, for instance, "do not murder." They universally apply to Adam, Eve, Israelites and contemporary Christians alike. On the other hand, being an individual believer, each has multiple callings in practical/immediate cases in particular times and spaces. In the case of Adam and Eve, it could have been their callings to "name animals," "till the earth," and "fill the earth," which were assigned specifically for these individuals as the first generation.

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[59] Stassen and Gushee, *Kingdom Ethics*, 99–124.

Among the tasks which Adam and Eve were given by God, some were generally understood to be for all people beyond the boundary of the Garden of Eden. For instance, all humans are to bear the image of God;[60] to obey his commands; and to be faithful stewards for the rest of God's creatures and responsible guardians of the earth.[61] But others appear to be taken as vocations assigned only to Adam and Eve as the first generation. Today, not everyone is called to name the creatures, to till the land literally, or to rule over the other living creatures directly. All people are to obey God's commands, yet the specific content of the commands can be different: prohibition regarding the tree of the knowledge of good and evil is not relevant to people today. Humans are "culture-producing, history-bearing" beings.[62] In the very new culture, calling for contemporary men and women may vary from the one of Adam and Eve. Not all of the callings of Adam and Eve were to be shared by all people in the following generations. Their callings may be situated as a starting point of human callings as many of their callings were to develop over time as people accumulated their experiences in their cultures.

It may be difficult to say that men and women today are collectively called to the tasks of Adam and Eve, thereby making their tasks as an ideal for roles of female and male today. It seems that God neither gave Adam and Eve different callings according to their sexual difference nor told them how to share their callings between them either hierarchically or equally. Besides, whatever their callings might have been and how

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[60] Gen. 9:6; 1 Cor. 11:7; 2 Cor. 4:4; Col. 1:15, 3:10. Some believe that the image of God was sullied by sin. Yet the image of God is believed to be born by all people.

[61] Ellis states that Genesis 1–2 suggests "a broad vocational purpose that brings fulfilment: God has called every human to the vocation of promoting the order and life of creation" Ellis, "Creation, Vocation, Crisis and Rest," 313.

[62] Ramsey, *Basic Christian Ethics*, 105.

Adam and Eve might have shared them, many of the callings were unlikely to be shared by men and women today. Instead, because their tasks may evolve toward the future time, their callings were more a starting point than a goal.

4. The Response of Adam and Eve to Their Calling

Not only the nature of callings of Adam and Eve but also how they responded to their callings shows that roles of Adam and Eve were not a standard for today. The Bible recounts that their response to callings, as their roles, were less than ideal. Not Adam and Eve, but Christ is the ultimate role model for men and women today. It is Christ whom they should strive to emulate.

Paul discusses Adam's nature in Romans 5:12–21. In this passage, Paul calls Adam "the first Adam" and compares what Adam caused for human beings with what Christ has done for the sake of humanity.[63] Paul describes Adam as the one who is responsible for bringing sin into the world: "Therefore, just as sin entered the world through one man, and death through sin, and in this way death came to all people."[64] The act of Adam led humans to death, while the act of Christ brought them the victory over death. Furthermore, Paul reminds the Romans that Adam's sin not only brought death, but also affected him and his descendents, and their relationships with God. Adam's act brought condemnation while Christ's act brought justification.[65] Besides, Adam's conduct made humans "part of sin-prone humanity." Although humans are sinners not only because of Adam's actions, humans "inherit an Adamic condition" and tendency

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[63] Cranfield, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Epistle to the Romans*, 295. According to Cranfield, Paul probably was aware of many of the ideas regarding Adam—what the Apocrypha, Pseudepigrapha and Rabbinic literature said about Adam—but here Paul refers to Adam in order to underline the nature and significance of Christ's salvation work (p. 281).

[64] Rom. 5:12. Jews knew that death was the result of sin (Isa. 25:8). Paul was familiar with the Jewish idea that there would not have been death if there had been no sin to intrude on God's design. Black, "Pauline Perspectives on Death in Romans 5–8," 415.

[65] Moo, *The Epistle to the Romans*, 337.

toward sin.[66] Adam and Christ are both heads of humans as representatives: Adam as the instrument to bring death to humans while Christ as the instrument to bring life to them.[67]

In the Garden of Eden, Adam was given the status of king. He, being created in God's image, was king over nature.[68] He was entrusted to subdue and rule the world on behalf of God.[69] Adam was to "represent his authority on earth" and "reflect the divine will on earth in such a way as to extend God's kingdom into every area of nature, society and culture."[70] However, Adam could not fulfill the role as a king and was banished from Eden instead. Adam was not to be the role model for Christians.

Gregory Beale proposes that the Garden of Eden was God's sanctuary that was expressed, for example, in Ezekiel 37:27, 40–48 and Isaiah 54:11–12, and that Adam was given a priestly task in the sanctuary. To "cultivate and keep" in Genesis 2:15 can also be translated as to "serve and guard," meaning that either Israelites serve and guard/obey God's word or that priests "serve God in the temple and guard the temple from unclean things entering it (Num. 3:7–8; 8:25–26; 18:5–6; 1 Chron. 23:32; Ezek. 44:14)." Adam was to serve at the temple of God. Adam was a God's priestly servant who served at the temple of God and worshiped God "by obeying God, by cultivating and guarding" the sanctuary. By ruling over and subduing the earth, Adam was to "widen the boundaries of the Garden." God gave Adam the task to extend the Garden over the whole earth so that God's glorious presence was to fill throughout the world.

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[66] Fitzmyer, *Spiritual Exercises Based on Paul's Epistle to the Romans*, 88.

[67] Robertson, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the First Epistle of St Paul to the Corinthians*, 352–53.

[68] Wenham, *Genesis 1–15*, 33.

[69] Gen. 1:28.

[70] Hess, "Adam," 18.

Adam's offspring also was to bear the image of God, obey his word and continue to

expand Eden sanctuary till it covered the earth. Adam and his descendants were to

actualize the new cosmos revealed in Revelation 21:1–22:5.[71] However, Adam failed to

fulfill his priestly task, says Beale:

> Adam was not faithful and obedient in subduing the earth and extending the
> garden sanctuary, so that not only was the Garden-Temple not extended
> throughout the earth, Adam himself was cast out of the Garden and did not enjoy
> God's presence anymore and lost his function as God's priest in the temple.[72]

Adam was not faithful and obedient enough to extend God's temple and his glorious

presence throughout the earth. Adam was not an ideal, priestly representation.

In contrast, Paul urges believers to reflect Christ-likeness.[73] Jesus was completely

obedient to God's commands. The character of Christ represents a sharp contrast to the

one of Adam who disobeyed the word of God. Christ demonstrated his obedience to the

Father's will by his willingness to suffer and die on the cross. "God's plan, to rule his

world through obedient humanity, has come true" in Jesus.[74] What Paul expects of

believers is a new creation. In the kingdom of God, through the union with Christ, new

creatures are to reflect Christ's perfect attributes such as spotlessness, righteousness and

obedience. Adam and Eve were called to represent God to the creation but failed. Christ

did represent God instead and moreover, enabled "other human beings to achieve the

directedness to God of which their fallenness had deprived them."[75] Although Adam was

created by God as a significant part of the "very good" world, Paul depicts Adam as a

representative of flesh, which required Christ's redemptive work. In Romans 5:12–21,

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[71] Beale, "Eden, the Temple, and the Church's Mission in the New Creation," 7–8; 10–11.

[72] Beale, "Eden, the Temple, and the Church's Mission in the New Creation," 11.

[73] Paul and many others in the Bible are good examples of faith. Paul also tells Christians to imitate him (1 Cor. 11: 1; Phil. 3:17). However, Christ is the ultimate model for all believers. That is, Paul says, "Be imitators of me, as I am of Christ" (1 Cor. 11:1).

[74] Wright, *The Climax of the Covenant*, 29.

[75] Gunton, *Christ and Creation*, 100.

Paul urges believers to become a good witness not for Adam but for Christ, who brought life and glory of God to all people.[76]

The roles of Adam and Eve seem to be a starting point of human roles not only because their callings belonged to the first generation of humans but also because their response to their calling was not ideal. Although Adam and Eve were created as good, they failed to respond to their calling faithfully. Not Adam and Eve but Christ is the role model of how one should live out one's calling. In light of calling, the creation story appears to be not a goal but a starting point.

5. Conclusion

The examination of the roles of Adam and Eve with the focus on calling informs us that their roles are not necessarily a goal for us today. This is because first of all, calling is to be given to each Christian individually. It is the general understanding of the New Testament church that calling is given to each believer uniquely, as a manifestation of the work of the Holy Spirit.

In fact, it seems difficult to say that men and women are to be assigned with the callings of Adam and Eve collectively, thereby determining that gender roles should be either hierarchical or egalitarian. This is because Adam and Eve primarily shared the same callings. There appeared to be not much task that was distinctively or exclusively allocated to either Adam or Eve. Also, God did not appear to instruct how they should share the tasks between them, either hierarchically or equally. What is more, most callings of Adam and Eve were not applicable to contemporary men and women. Their callings specifically belonged to them as their own in the early stage of civilization.

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[76] Cranfield, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Epistle to the Romans*, 295.

Rather, the examination of callings of Adam and Eve shows that their callings were more like a starting point of human callings for both men and women. This is because their callings would see a development in the following generations. Furthermore, the manner in which Adam and Eve responded to their callings reveals that people should do better today than they did then. Christ is the role model, not Adam and Eve: while Jesus remained faithful to his tasks, Adam and Eve were said to be unable to do so. Indeed, whatever calling should be shared universally is what Jesus has demonstrated and articulated. We need not consult Adam and Eve for a guide.

The examination of calling shows that the creation story was rather a starting point than a goal. The Irenaean view of the pre-fall state that the creation story is a starting point appears more plausible than the Augustinian view. Whatever human roles before the fall may have been, it may have been more a starting-point than a universal ideal. Men and women today do not always need to refer to the roles in the pre-fall.

CHAPTER NINE

MARRIAGE, MINISTRY AND THE KINGDOM OF GOD

1. Introduction

This chapter argues that roles of women and men should be centered around

Christ and his teaching so that the roles might make a positive contribution to his

kingdom. Both hierarchicalists and egalitarians sometimes understand that Adam and

Eve before the fall played the ideal roles and attempt to determine their roles. Some

scholars further believe that Paul's instructions on the role of women such as 1

Corinthians 11:2–16 and 1 Timothy 2:8–15 are for all Christians because he refers to

Adam and Eve. However, these interpretations are the outcome of a particular reading

that is framed by the Augustinian view of the creation story, whose difficulties were

discussed in the previous chapters. Christian marriage and ministry today should be

discussed not in reference to the creation story but in light of the ethic of the kingdom of

God which is a clear and more applicable standard than roles of Adam and Eve. This

chapter will first underline Christ as an ideal model of human roles in terms of the image

of God. Then it will show how Christ's teachings are a more intelligible and appropriate

guide for marriage and ministry today. Finally, it will discuss the dynamic nature of

roles of women and men in relation to the kingdom of God.

2. Christ as the Model of Who Humans Are and Should Be

Christians today neither attain sufficient or lucid knowledge about how Adam

and Eve might have related to each other nor are able to emulate their roles as relevant

to contemporary gender roles. In contrast, the Bible is clear that Christ is the person who

represents the ideal of humanity and his teachings are the guide for us today. Christ is the model because humans, including Adam and Eve, are all created in the image and likeness of Christ and to become like him.

The image of God is an important concept for Christian anthropology, generally being understood that it speaks of who humans are. Nonna Harrison says that Christian churches have believed that the image of God is "at the core of who we are and defines us as human," and attempted to find the image "in many different aspects of what we are, what we can and should do, and what we are called to become."[1] Passages such as Genesis 1:26 and 27 say that bearing the image of God makes humans distinctive from the rest of God's creation.

Scholars have suggested various views of the image of God. According to LeRon Shults, the views are categorized in three ways: functional, existential and eschatological. The first view emphasizes that the image of God should be understood in the immediate biblical context. More specifically, the image of God means "dominion" in the understanding that Adam rules like a Lord or a king. According to the second view, the image of God should be thought of as trans-cultural and therefore the image is about the current human condition: "the core and ground of our own existence." For this view, the specific quality of the image is relationality. The last view maintains that the image of God is eschatological. That is, the image of God is partially realized in the present world but is to be complete in future: "the image is not yet actualized, but exists as a predisposition to the operation of providence that draws us toward the final state of

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[1] Harrison, *God's Many-Splendored Image*, 5.

being in God's image."[2] Many biblical scholars may hold the functional view. The existential view has been enlisted since twentieth-century neo-orthodox theology. The eschatological view tends to be in line with Eastern Orthodoxy, but has been increasingly appreciated in Western churches.

Among these three views, the third view appears fitting in order to place primary focus on the unity of the two Testaments and read the Bible accordingly. The Christian tradition has earnestly defended the unity of the two Testaments since its earliest history. Eastern Church Fathers in the second century were one or two generations away from the apostles. They developed substantial theological principles that were to be sustained by the following generations.[3] Among them, Irenaeus was the one who endeavored to affirm the unity of the Old Testament and the New Testament in the face of the Marcionite tendency utterly to segregate them. Irenaeus wanted to expose the heresies concerning "how the books of Jewish Scripture and the Christian Gospels and Epistles relate to each other and how they should be properly read and understood."[4] Christians were to read the Bible in a decisively different manner from Jews. Christians were to read the Bible according to the spirit and to read "in the light of Christ."[5]

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[2] Shults, *Reforming Theological Anthropology*, 217–42. Millard Erickson identifies the corresponding views as functional, relational and substantive or structural views. Erickson, *Christian Theology*, 495–517.

[3] Bouteneff, *Beginnings*, 55. According to Bouteneff, second-century Christians believed that the promise of the salvation in the Scriptures is for all people so they even copied the Bible into papyrus codices which is "the equivalent of modern-day notebooks or even paperbacks" to make them available universally.

[4] Bouteneff, *Beginnings*, 73.

[5] Bouteneff, *Beginnings*, 56–57, 73–74. 2 Cor. 3:14. Bouteneff tells how believers in the early church began to read the Scriptures in a significantly new manner: "Christian adaptation was therefore twofold. It concerned both production/dissemination and a thoroughly altered understanding of the meaning and place of the Scriptures. The law, already transformed in Pauline understanding, was now a code that, although not completely superseded, was transfigured in the light of the new covenant. Its relevance by no means disappeared, but it was significantly altered. With the rest of Scripture, it was no longer a matter of study 'according to the letter' but 'according to the spirit.' Scripture could now be read, discussed, and summarized in briefer segments and in florilegia; from the third and fourth centuries it

This is sometimes expressed with the term the "rule of faith."[6] Irenaeus usually is

thought as the one who uplifted this idea. The rule of faith was to express "the

underlying sense" of the Scripture and to serve as the "lens through which it was read."[7]

In this reading, the image of God in the Old Testament is understood in relation to the

New Testament. The image and likeness of God are the image and likeness of Christ

(Col. 1:15). The functional view of the image of God sees the image as dominion. The

existential view envisions it as human relationship. However, for the eschatological

view of the image of God, these elements are parts but not all of it. Christ likeness is

more than dominion and relationality, but embraces the totality of who Christ is. Both

the Old and New Testaments testify that from the beginning, God's purpose is for

humans to become like Christ as a goal.

Irenaeus's understanding of the image of God[8] based on the unity of the two

Testaments seems adequate also because if God wills humans to bear an image and

likeness of somebody, it must be always the same image and likeness. Whether referring

to people in the ancient time or present time, they would have been created in the same

image and likeness as an ideal. As his consistent will, God would have created all

humans in the image and likeness of the incarnated Christ as a goal. Adam, Eve, and

people today are all designed to reflect the same image and likeness of Christ although

could also be 'read' visually on the walls of churches. All of this took place—most explicitly by
Irenaeus—from the perspective of a 'rule of faith,' or 'canon of truth'" (p. 56–57).

     Flinn also notes that "Irenaeus embraced a principle of a single Scripture (with both Old and
New Testaments) united by a series of covenants between GOD and humankind (*Against Heresies*
3.11.8)." Flinn, *Encyclopedia of Catholicism*, 373.

[6] See chapter five for the detail.

[7] Bouteneff, *Beginnings*, 56–57.

[8] Opinions vary regarding Irenaeus's understanding of the image of God and likeness to God.
Some think that Irenaeus differentiated the meanings of "image" and "likeness" and thereby understood
that Adam and Eve preserved the image of God but lost their likeness after the fall. Others believe that
Irenaeus used the two terms synonymously. Shults, *Reforming Theological Anthropology*, 221. I take the
position of the latter.

the fullness of the image and likeness may be realized in the kingdom of God. The image and likeness after which Adam and Eve were created are the same image and likeness to which Paul encourages Christians to be conformed. At creation, God intended humans to become more like Christ and to reflect his image and likeness through the union with Christ and the sanctifying work of the Holy Spirit.

Mary Donovan suggests that the distinctiveness of Irenaeus's anthropology can be understood in contrast to that of the Gnostics. Theodotus, a disciple of Valentinus would ask non-theological questions about human nature:

> "Who were we? What have we become? Where were we? Whither have we been cast? Whither do we hasten? From what have we been set free?" Reflection oriented by such questions takes as its starting point the human dilemma. The accent is on the human being and the movement of thought is philosophical.[9]

"Not so for Irenaeus," says Donovan:

> His [Irenaeus's] point of departure is the conviction that the human situation is under the Hand-or the Hands-of God. The movement of thought is theological. His exploration of the meaning of the human person employs the biblical language of image and likeness. For him, as for his predecessor Philo and his contemporary Clement of Alexandria, the Son is the true image of God, and humans are the image of the Son. Underlying this is his conviction that image is according to nature. In the Irenaean schema the image in the person is in the flesh. This sense of image corresponds to form, and form inheres only in matter.[10]

From Irenaeus's perspective, theological anthropology is rooted in and answered by who Christ incarnate is, not merely a philosophical question of human nature, or nature of man and woman. Christ is the one who showed us who humans are and what humans should become in a concrete manner, as the only and best model.

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[9] Donovan, *One Right Reading?*, 133.

[10] Donovan, *One Right Reading?*, 133. Donovan refers to Irenaeus, *Proof of the Apostolic Preaching*, 22; also, Irenaeus, "Against Heresies," 2.7.3.

Each person, including Adam and Eve, is created to bear and reflect the image and likeness of the truly Divine, Christ, the only holder of moral perfection.[11] Genesis 1:26 and 27 "do not say that humans *are* the image of God, only that they are created after, or according to, or oriented toward it," says Shults.[12] Not Adam and Eve but Christ is the role model of what humans should be and of how they should relate to each other.[13] In the words of Wolfhart Pannenberg, "Only in Jesus, as Christian anthropology sees it, did the image of God appear with full clarity."[14] He is the ultimate and clear goal of who humans should be and what they will become through God's grace.

3. The Ethic of the Kingdom of God

Christ demonstrated and taught what God intended humans to be and how they should relate to each other. This is the ethic of the kingdom of God. Men and women today are to model Christ and follow his teachings as guide and thus participate in the kingdom of God and its rule.[15]

Christ as one male is a model for both men and women. This is because Christ-likeness is not about capacity of maleness and femaleness, through which they actualize Christ-likeness, but about relationship with Christ and fellow creatures. The first step of being Christ-like is to recover a relationship with God through repentance. Apostle

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[11] The New Testament says that Christ is the image of God (Col. 1:15; 2 Cor. 4:4).

[12] Shults, *Reforming Theological Anthropology*, 239; emphasis in original.

[13] Russell, *Human Liberation in a Feminist Perspective*, 138–39. Ruether, *Sexism and God-Talk*, 137–38. Wilson-Kastner, *Faith, Feminism and the Christ*, 56. Carr, *Transforming Grace*, 187.

[14] Pannenberg, *Systematic Theology*, 216.

[15] James Childs understands that Christian anthropology that entails the eschatological view of the image of God affirms the same sex marriage: "Our fulfillment as human beings, including our sexuality and its innate relationality, is an order of promise. From this vantage point it does not seem possible to argue for a prelapsarian heterosexual order of creation . . . that provides the unexceptionable norm for sexual relations, all deviations being inherently disordered." However, humanity that is open to the future is to be always in conformity with God's consistent will and Christ's teaching such as Matthew 18:4–5. Childs, "Eschatology, Anthropology, and Sexuality," 13.

Paul,[16] the woman of Samaria[17] and Zacchaeus, a tax collector,[18] repented and turned

their lives for a relationship with God. Believers then grew in relationship with God and

his people. Christ commended a woman in Bethany who anointed him with the

expensive oil and thus testified to her dedication and deep love for the Lord.[19] Christ

also commended Mary who listened to him, attempting to grow in the knowledge of

God.[20] Paul, Lydia, Priscilla, Phoebe and Timothy served God and his people by

faithfully responding to their callings whether they were male or female.[21] They

demonstrated Christ-likeness as they grew in their knowledge of God and love for him

and his people. They became more like Jesus as they prayed[22] and responded to their

calling even at great costs.[23]

Maleness or femaleness does not determine one's Christ-likeness. The twelve

disciples of Christ were all male. However, they were not always the ones who

demonstrated Christ-likeness in their best manners. Accompanying Jesus daily, they

could have been more taught by Christ than anybody. Yet, Judas, not Mary or Martha,

betrayed Christ.[24] Peter denied his association with the Lord upon his arrest and

crucifixion.[25] So were the rest of the disciples, hiding away for their lives.[26] Christ

reproached them for their "lack of faith and stubbornness" not believing the news of his

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[16] Acts 9:1–22.

[17] John 4:5–29.

[18] Luke 19:1–10.

[19] Mark 14:3–9.

[20] Luke 10: 38–42.

[21] Lydia (Acts 16:14–15); Priscilla (Rom. 16: 3–4; Acts 18:26); Phoebe (Rom. 16:1–2); and Timothy (1 Cor. 4:17).

[22] Acts 1:14.

[23] For example, Rom. 15:4; 16:6–7; 2 Cor. 4–10.

[24] Mark 14:10–11; 43–45.

[25] Mark 14: 66–72.

[26] John 20:19.

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resurrection.[27] Thomas was determined not to believe in the resurrected Christ, who told Thomas to change his attitude of doubt.[28] They were chosen disciples not necessarily because they were more like Christ but because, just as many others, they were recipients of his grace, with which they repented, grew in faith and eventually became invaluable apostles. Both men and female needed repentance and grace from God in order to be more like their Lord.

Both man and woman share the same humanity. "[B]both psychologically and biologically, men and women are more alike than different," informs Mary Van Leeuwen.[29] Even if one saw an immense difference between them, Christ-likeness is not about gender or the capacity of maleness and femaleness but about one's relationship with Christ and his creation. It is about demonstrating Christ's character by loving his creature and responding to God's calling faithfully through their capacity of maleness and femaleness. Christ is a model for both man and woman.

In his humility, servanthood and sacrificial love, Christ showed his true humanity. Christ humbled himself to the extent that he identified himself with humans. He willingly yielded to the Father's will that cost him a cruel death on the cross. The love which Christ demonstrated was sacrificial and unconditional, seeking the best for the others (Phil. 2: 5–8). Christ demonstrated his servanthood by washing his disciples' feet (John 13:2–5) and constantly taught that serving fellow humans fulfills the ethic of the kingdom (Matt. 20:25–28; Mark 9:35; 10:42–45).

The apostles witnessed to the true humanity of Christ and applied his teachings as a guide for Christian living. That is, humans treat fellow humans with respect and in

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[27] Mark 16:14.
[28] John 20:24–29.
[29] Van Leeuwen, *Gender and Grace*, 54.

humility (Phil. 2:3); mutually submit (Eph. 5:21), serve others with a self-emptying attitude (Phil. 2:6–8), practice holy love (1 Cor. 1:1–7), and teach each other to build the body of Christ (Col. 3:16). The ideal attitude towards one another is mutual submission, characterized by the humility of Christ, self-sacrifice and service: "Be subject to one another out of reverence for Christ" (Eph. 5:21).[30]

To model this king, Christ, is our participation in the kingdom of God. "[T]he fullest revelation of God's divine rule [in the New Testament] is in the person of Jesus Christ," says Peter Gentry and Stan Norman. What John the Baptist prepared for was the coming of the kingdom of God (Matt. 3:2). Jesus said that the kingdom was at hand (Matt. 4:17; Luke 10:9). "His miracles, preaching ([Matt.] 4:23), forgiving sins, and resurrection are an in-breaking of God's sovereign rule in this dark, evil age."[31] Christians are to seek the kingdom of God first by participating in Christ and modeling him. Jesus demonstrated what humans should be, regardless of the difference of man and woman.

In a concrete manner, Christ showed and instructed how humans should relate to fellow humans. This way of life which Christ demonstrated and taught is the ethic of the kingdom of God. Stassen and Gushee suggest that Christian ethics is the kingdom ethics because God "taught what the kingdom is like, what its characteristics are, and therefore what kinds of practices are done by those who participate in it and are ready for it." God commands Christians to practice his will. And Jesus "offered concrete ways to practice God's will and be delivered from the bondage of sin. In other words, he taught his

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[30] Bruce, *The Epistle to the Galatians*, 154.
[31] Gentry and Norman, "Kingdom of God," 988.

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followers how to participate in God's reign."[32] Christ taught human relations of the

kingdom, setting aside a concern for the difference of gender, which would have been

expected of his time otherwise.

The ethic of God's kingdom supersedes the preservation of creation. Bonhoeffer

cautions against creating ethics based on the creation order that believes God's

command should be discovered in orders of creation which God made as "very good."

Bonhoeffer insists that this argument could defend everything even "the division of man

into nations, national struggles, war, class struggle, the exploitation of the weak by the

strong, and cut-throat competition of economics." However, being alienated from God

after the fall, "creation and sin are so bound up together that no human eye can any

longer separate the one from the other." Christians therefore should "obtain their value

wholly from outside themselves, from Christ, from the new creation."[33] What current

humans need to know is a new creation, but not re-creation of Adam and Eve. Christian

ethics on roles of women and men need to be founded on Christ's revelation, not on the

creation order. The ethic of the kingdom that reveals who Christ as true humanity is, and

his teachings of how one should treat fellow humans, are more comprehensive and

appropriate standard of contemporary gender roles than any other.

Christ showed the ethic of the kingdom of God: what humans should be and how

they should relate to fellow humans. Their destiny is the humanity of Christ: to humble

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[32] Stassen and Gushee, *Kingdom Ethics*, 31.

[33] Bonhoeffer, "A Theological Basis for the World Alliance," 104–05. In his criticism, Bonhoeffer explains the manner in which the church attempts to know "God's commandment in the *orders of creation*": "Because certain orders are evident in creation, one should not rebel against them, but simply accept them. One can then argue: Because the nations have been created different, each one is obliged to preserve and develop its characteristics. That is obedience towards the Creator. And if this obedience leads one to struggles and to war, these too must be regarded as belonging to the order of creation. Here . . . , the commandment of God is thought of as something which has been given once and for all, in definite ordinances which permit of discovery." (p. 104; emphasis in original)

For a brief summary, see Rüter and Tödt, "Editors' Afterword to the German Edition," 148–49.

oneself as if others are better than themselves,[34] serve as if one serves Christ,[35] and

submit to others out of reverence for Christ.[36] Christian anthropology which is grounded

in Christology offers a lucid model of true humanity for relating to others. What God

has revealed of the kingdom of God to come is a clearer and more applicable standard

for marriage and ministry today than the ethic based on the creation order.

4. Transforming Roles of Women and Men

What Christ modeled and taught is the ethic of the kingdom of God that should

serve as the guide and standard of roles of female and male today. Yet, their roles are to

be continually shaped in order to best reflect the ethic of the kingdom. This is because

humans are to be continually transformed toward Christ-likeness, and their callings

continually changed in the altering world. Christians are to "seek" the kingdom of God.

It is a privilege and responsibility for Christians to pray about and pursue how they can

best play their roles in a given situation by applying the ethic of the kingdom as guide.

Humans are eschatological, and their God-assigned purpose seems dynamic

because who they are and who they will be are not fixed to a particular quality in the

past or present but are open to the potential of every moment of life. They are created to

be more like the Divine as a goal. As we have previously discussed, this may be

expressed in the ideal of *theosis*. The Eastern tradition of Christianity maintains the idea

of *theosis*, deification or divinization and emphasizes divine-human union as much as

divine-human distinction: "God became human so that we might become God."[37] Linda

Woodhead explains that "human beings, made in the image of God," do not find who

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[34] Phil. 2:3.
[35] Col. 3:23.
[36] Eph. 5:21.
[37] Athanasius, *De Incarnatione*, 54.3, quoted in Woodhead, "Apophatic Anthropology," 233.

they are in themselves but "in the God into whose image they are to grow. They become

human by becoming divine—which means growing into something [they] do not know

or control rather than something [they] already possess."[38] The Eastern tradition insists

that humans cannot fully understand human nature because it shares in the mystery of

God. Mary Donovan suggests how Irenaeus defended human freedom as an essential

part of Christian anthropology. She explains that for Irenaeus, "freedom of choice" was

the first sense of what it means to be the likeness of God. God gave humans freedom to

do good, believe in God, accept the Holy Spirit and become more like God. Or they

have freedom to do otherwise. Donovan asserts, "This strong affirmation of human

liberty [by Irenaeus] is . . . a clear rejection of the Gnostic notion of predetermined

natures."[39] The idea that human nature is dynamic belonged uniquely to Christian

thought since the early century.

Christian anthropology that sees humans as eschatological has been maintained

by many contemporary scholars.[40] Among them are Wolfhart Pannenberg, Jürgen

Moltmann, Stanley Grenz, Colin Gunton, Ted Peters, LeRon Shults and James

Peterson.[41] Pannenberg asserts that neither the image of God nor his likeness was

achieved fully at the beginning in Adam and Eve. The image of God as well as likeness

to God is "still in process." The "full actualization" of the image of God is human

"destiny," which was fully actualized only in Christ historically. And humans may

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[38] Woodhead, "Apophatic Anthropology," 236–37.

[39] Donovan, *One Right Reading?*, 134. Irenaeus, "Against Heresies," 4.37.2; 4.37.4.

[40] As discussed earlier, this anthropology maintains that the image of God as eschatological in the sense that being only partially realized in this world, the image of God is to be complete in future.

[41] Pannenberg, *Systematic Theology*; Moltmann, *God in Creation*; Grenz, *The Social God and Relational Self*; Gunton, *The Triune Creator*; Peters, *God, the World's Future*; Shults, *Reforming Theological Anthropology*; Peterson, *Changing Human Nature*.

participate in the image of Christ by "transformation."[42] Moltmann believes that "the

true likeness to God is to be found, not at the beginning of God's history with mankind,

but at its end." Humans have to respond to God's calling to become the image of

Christ.[43] For Grenz, the image of God is the relational, eschatological personhood whose

identity is in Christ. Therefore, according to Grenz, "Although this is the case already in

the here and now, the participation in the divine life that constitutes the ecclesial self

remains ultimately future, and hence it is present in this age in a proleptic manner."[44]

Agreeing with John Zizioulas, Colin Gunton thinks that since the image of God is to be

perfected through redemption, true humanity is realized only in the final kingdom of

God. "Because creation is a project, something to be perfected, being in the image of

God is also being in movement to an end." In other words, who humans are eventually is

an "eschatological concept."[45] Ted Peters thinks that the image of God is "the call

forward, the divine draw toward reality." Humans are becoming and they sin by not

becoming. The image of God is "not in the old Adam but in the new Adam," and thus is

"essentially future" although it is present proleptically in the person of Jesus Christ. For

Peters, "Our created humanity is our eschatological humanity. Who we are is

determined by who we will be."[46] Shults thinks that human nature is about "not its

primordial past but lies in eschatological future, an arriving determination that addresses

us and calls us to spiritual union with God in Christ," where humans share in "the

mutual [divine] glorification of the three persons of the Trinity." Thus, for Shults, "Paul

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[42] Pannenberg, *Systematic Theology*, 217.

[43] Moltmann, *God in Creation*, 225–28.

[44] Grenz, *The Social God and Relational Self*, 322. A proleptic event connotes "eschatological occurrence happening within history prior to the end." Grenz et al., *Pocket Dictionary of Theological Terms*, 96. We experience events now in anticipation or in hope that they will happen in future time.

[45] Gunton, *The Triune Creator*, 209.

[46] Peters, *God, the World's Future*, 140–50. For Peters, "proleptially present" means that "it is an anticipation of a reality yet to be fully realized" (p. 150).

and other New Testament authors are not looking backward of Adam and Eve, but forward to what lies ahead." We are now experiencing the hope, "as a proleptic participation," that humans properly relate to God in future time.[47] James Peterson suggests that because the image of God is realized in Christ as the complete form, "the degree to which we each reflect God's image develops by grace over time." The image is fulfilled as individuals grow in their capacity, calling and relationship but "at no point in this life is it complete."[48]

The New Testament speaks of the eschatological, dynamic nature of the image and likeness of Christ. In the Testament, the image of Christ is described as a present state. Believers are "conformed to the image of" Christ (Rom. 8:29) and "bear the image of the man of heaven" (1 Cor. 15:48–49). They are to be created new "according to the likeness of God" (Eph. 4:24). Simultaneously, bearing the image and likeness of Christ involves continual transformation toward the future. Believers are to be continually "renewed in knowledge according to the image of" their creator (Col. 3:10). They will be like Christ when they see him as he is in future time (1 John 3:2). It is God's will that Christians grow into "maturity" of Christ, "to the measure of full stature of Christ" (Eph. 4:13–15). Christ will transform and conform a believer's body to the one of his glory (Phil. 3:21). Christians are urged to grow continually to reflect and fulfill the image and likeness of Christ.

Scholars who hold the eschatological view of the image of God tend to underline human potential as the essential constitutive of humanity. For instance, Pannenberg thinks that humans have "openness to the world." They have a "horizon that transcends

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[47] Shults, *Reforming Theological Anthropology*, 239–42.
[48] Peterson, *Changing Human Nature*, 19–20.

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their finitude, and hence [are] able to move on constantly to new experiences."[49] Humans are finite and face many limitations. Yet, they are created with and possess potential of the eternal divine as Christ promised. For instance, Christians may do even greater things than Christ did: "Very truly, I tell you, the one who believes in me will also do the works that I do and, in fact, will do greater works than these, because I am going to the Father" (John 14:12). It is not surprising also if one acquires the gift she did not have yesterday because God will give without reservation what she asks for (Matt. 7:7). It is not surprising then if she not only takes exactly the same office and ministries which Christ held but even greater. It is not she but Christ and the Spirit who work through her as she continues to seek how she can best participate in Christ.

With the dynamic nature of the image of God and potential which each one possesses, human roles seem to become dynamic also. The image and likeness of God is to be uniquely expressed by each individual. By maximizing their potential, all people are to express the image and likeness of Christ differently. Christians today do not imitate exactly what Jesus did. Everyone expresses Christlikeness individually and in varied ways. McGrath suggests Christ is given as the enabling gift for our transformation into his image:

> What has been made known and made possible through the life, death and resurrection of Jesus of Nazareth is passed down to posterity, not as something which we are required to *imitate*, but as an enabling gift. The act of transmission is authentic, to the extent to which it is able to reproduce on the part of its present recipients the patterns of judgment and conversion evinced by encounter with Jesus of Nazareth.[50]

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[49] Pannenberg, *Systematic Theology*, 229; Pannenberg, *Anthropology in Theological Perspective*, 63.

[50] McGrath, *The Genesis of Doctrine*, 172.

The manner in which a paralyzed person in sickness expresses the image and likeness of

Christ may differ from that of a person who takes care of the diseased. The expressions

of the image and likeness uniquely belong to each individual and are open to change.

Woodhead insists that as members of the body of Christ, believers are in the life in the

Spirit. They are to "be open to become more than they can possibly know."[51] Or, in

Grenz's words, humans do not have a niche in the biological framework where they can

find ultimate fulfillment. Humans are dependent creatures but their "dependency is

greater than the finite world can ever satisfy."[52] Humans are to be continually

transformed toward the conformity with the image and likeness of God. As they express

the image and likeness uniquely, their roles shift so that they can best express God's

plan for them in a manner that expands the kingdom with their roles.

God calls Christians to fulfill their tasks in a unique manner to each individual.

The Bible talks about God giving different types and amounts of talents for the benefit

of all (1 Corinthians 12). They are given to start with so that people may use them

faithfully. It is not so much God's concern what or how much capacity each one has

than that they respond to God's calling faithfully. God has given each one, including

maleness or femaleness, a capacity to respond creatively. People have a responsibility in

regards to how they appreciate and employ the gift of sexuality in a God honoring

manner, yet each in their own way. People are accountable to God eventually for what

they have been given.[53] It is up to believers whether or not they answer their calling,

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[51] Woodhead, "Apophatic Anthropology," 233–46. Woodhead suggests that although "it is much safer and easier to choose a route that has already been clearly mapped out . . . that is not the same as entering into Life."

[52] Grenz, *The Social God and Relational Self*, 171–72.

[53] Elizabeth Stanton, Address Delivered after the first Woman's Rights Convention, September, 1848. Stanton states, "Let woman live as she should, let her feel her accountability to her Maker...Let her live *first* for God, and she will not make imperfect man as object of reverence and idolatry. . . . She will

how and to what degree.[54] They are to express Christ-likeness according to God's calling

and with God's might.

Humans live in a unique and changing world. God calls Christians to react to

each situation faithfully by playing unique roles. Thus, it is not surprising if God calls

men or women to do different tasks from the ones which he might have called one

hundred years ago. God called no one to fly missionaries into the bush until the last

eighty years. Or even in the same timeline, God may ask men and women to do

something quite different in one culture from another. Gender roles today sometimes are

devoted to seeking how Adam and Eve might have played their roles. Nonetheless, they

played their roles in response to their own callings. By applying the same ethic of the

kingdom of God as guide, men and women today may be challenged to play their own

roles, responding to their unique calls in the diversifying world.

Moltmann insists that "God does not create merely by calling something into

existence, or by setting something afoot. In a more profound sense he 'creates' by

letting–be, by making room, and by withdrawing"[55] Christians as well as Adam and Eve

are to strive for more than they were originally created. They are to keep seeking for

God's will and purpose for themselves as divine calling.[56] Grenz also states, "Christ did

not establish the church merely to be the mirror of original creation but to be the

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become conscious that each human being is morally accountable for [herself] that no one can throw upon
another [her] burden of responsibility, that neither Father, Husband, Brother nor son, however willing they
may be, can relieve woman from this weight, can stand in her stead when called into the presence of the
searcher of spirits." Gordon, *The Selected Papers of Elizabeth Cady Stanton and Susan B. Anthony*, 107–
08; emphasis in original.

[54] As we have discussed in the previous chapter, calling is a manifestation of the work of the
Holy Spirit and is to be uniquely given to an individual believer.

[55] Moltmann, *God in Creation*, 88.

[56] Costas, "Wholistic", 100, quoted in Heaney, *Contextual Theology for Latin America*, 201. In
Costas's word, the church is "fellowship of the Holy Spirit and the covenant people of God." Costa
suggests that in order for the church to reflect the nature of the Trinity, men and women today are called
to "grow in divine holiness and communion" (original emphasis excluded).

eschatological new community, living in accordance with the principles of God's new

creation and thereby reflecting the character of the triune God."[57] It is the responsibility

and privilege of Christians to aspire to hear God's voice and modify their roles in order

to cater to God's voice. Here it is helpful to use Peterson's view that the image of God is

fulfilled in the areas of capacity, calling and relationship.[58] One's weaknesses and

strengths as capacity may change; calling may shift as capacity and circumstances

change. They may grow over time in relationship with God and fellow men and women.

Fulfilling the image of God may entail versatility and constantly demand them to choose

and play their roles wisely and thoughtfully.

Although Christ is a clear model for Christians, God still remains a mystery to

them. McGrath urges believers to renew their vision of humans and God.

> [W]e are invited to reshape our mental horizons and reconsider any prior
> understandings of God and human nature in the light of the story of Jesus of
> Nazareth. The history of Jesus of Nazareth once forced, and still forces, the
> redrawing of conceptual boundaries and mental horizons, demanding that we
> rethink and refashion our understanding of such matters as God, and human
> nature and destiny.[59]

As understanding of humanity and God is renewed, vision of his kingdom may also be

reshaped continually. The Kingdom always expands and increasingly becomes fruitful

as Christians faithfully participate with God and his reign. The full picture of the

kingdom is beyond present understanding. The Word of God, the guidance of his

people, the Holy Spirit and ability to reason are the guides and strength for Christians to

exercise their discernment and determine roles more adequately. Roles of women and

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[57] Grenz, *Women in the Church*, 192.
[58] Peterson, *Changing Human Nature,* 19–20.
[59] McGrath, *The Genesis of Doctrine*, 174.

men may not be so much about making legalistic rules or insisting on one's right than how to practice Christian love more genuinely.

5. Conclusion

Humans are created in the image and likeness of Christ. Christ demonstrated and taught who humans are to be and how they should relate to each other in the kingdom of God. This kingdom ethic is a more comprehensive and applicable standard for Chirstian marriage and ministry today than the ethic based on the creation story. Humans are continually to be conformed to the image and likeness which they were fashioned after. As constitutive of humanity, people have tremendous potential of what they might become, thus transforming their roles. As people substantiate the image and likeness of Christ in their unique manner, their roles inevitably become unique: no person, whether man or woman, may play exactly the same roles. Furthermore, God calls Christians to their own tasks in unique circumstances. These tasks may or may not be shared with others. People are responsible to hear God's voice actively and determine their roles that might honor God. Christians are to seek and bring the kingdom constantly into reality in the already-but-not-yet tension. The full realization of the kingdom of God lies in the future, and so may be the full realization of roles of women and men. It may be then that Christians are to constantly inquire into the ideal of the roles worthy for the kingdom of God. Gender roles are to be continually cultivated and enhanced, seeking how they might best reflect the ethic of the kingdom of God.

CONCLUSION

Contemporary discussions of marriage and ministry which make reference to the creation story endeavor to determine the roles of Adam and Eve before the fall and use these roles as a guide for roles of men and women today. These roles are considered foundational because of the belief that the state before the fall is pristine whereby one can discover human nature as God-ordained purpose. Nonetheless, in this particular understanding of the pre-fall, it appears that we are neither able to articulate sufficiently roles played by Adam and Eve nor establish their roles as applicable guide for the roles of women and men today.

Part II discussed four problems concerning the knowledge of life before the fall. First, it addressed the confusion between nature as "God-assigned purpose" and nature as "current structure and tendency." Just as John Calvin appeared to understand the current structure and tendency of his time as God-ordained purpose, Christians today may run the risk that they assume what they feel as "natural" is the God-assigned purpose and means before the fall. Today, certain gender roles may sometimes seem natural and therefore something that needs to be honoured or conserved. But what feels self-evident maybe only self-evident to particular people.[1] If people are to seek human nature of original perfection, the knowledge of that nature is not attained by their conscience of general revelation.

Furthermore, more consideration upon the genre of the creation story and status of Adam and Eve is necessary before one consults roles of Adam and Eve for a standard

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[1] We are again reminded what O'Connor suggests: self-evident always is "self-evident to somebody." O'Connor, *Aquinas and Natural Law*, 67.

of contemporary men and women. While different views regarding the genre of the creation story have been suggested, more of the appreciation of the aesthetic feature should be taken into. The story contains a considerable artistic craftsmanship, which demands our sensitive appreciation of how ancient author(s) might have viewed and described reality. While particular discussions on roles of women and men stand only by the presupposition that the story is more like straight history and that Adam and Eve are historical biological parents of all people, such perceptions are less conceivable. The scientific evidences available today increasingly challenge such views. It may be more illuminating to understand Adam and Eve in relation to Christ.

Interpretations of the creation story provide yet another challenge which current discussions of marriage and ministry in reference to the story might encounter. Positing that the discussion is framed by Augustine's view of sin and the fall, people have difficulty after the fall to find an adequate methodology to interpret such a pristine world and relations before the fall. After sin entered the world, all events and relations in the world were more or less stained or corrupt. It is a challenge then for humans after the fall to discover unstained relations and use them as equivalent to those in sinless Paradise. Without sufficient materials necessary to delineate the sinless state, interpretation of human roles of the creation story seems troublesome.

Yet, another difficulty lies in human access to the pre-fall knowledge through general revelation or reason. In Augustine's view of the creation story, Adam and Eve possessed original righteousness and perfection. Yet moral perfection or sinlessness belongs only to the Divine, whose knowledge demands special revelation and more importantly the revelation of Christ. Limited but also corrupt reason, according to

Augustine, is not an adequate medium for the knowledge of the perfect nature of Adam and Eve. It should be noted, however, that Augustine does not teach Christians to emulate Adam and Eve as ideal but Christ.

To assume that we have access to pre-fall knowledge and can thereby determine roles played by Adam and Eve, either through the special revelation of Scripture or through general revelation or reason, puts Christians at risk of projecting life after the fall as current structure and tendency. This reveals the primary challenge of Augustine's view that assumes a pristine pre-fall state and original righteousness and moral perfection of Adam and Eve. In this view, their perfect natures are equivalent to or are in harmony with the divine perfection. Conversely, if they are not, why are they considered normative for all? Nevertheless, such divine-like perfection of human natures needs to be in conformity with God's consistent will and character, Christ's humanity and his teachings. Without divine revelation, our ideas of the nature of humans, both men and women may become merely those of human philosophy. As a corollary, there may be many produced ideas of what humanness, maleness or femaleness might be, should be and should not be.

While it is difficult to attain sufficient knowledge of the roles of Adam and Eve in the Augustine's theological framework, even if this knowledge was attainable, their roles are not necessarily applicable as a guide for current marriage and ministry. In contrast to Augustine's view that delineates the state before the fall as perfection, Irenaeus's understanding of the creation story portrays the state as incomplete. In the Irenaean framework, the pre-fall account teaches us important things about God, his creatures and his good plans for them. But in this view, the goodness of creation before

the fall is not same as perfection. For Augustine, human roles before the fall are an ideal. But for Irenaeus, the roles are a starting point.

The investigation of the roles of Adam and Eve in light of their callings, tasks or vocation indicated that their roles were an interim relationship rather than a goal for all people. In accordance with the biblical teaching that calling is primarily given personally as believers, callings that Adam and Eve shared were not distinct due to their sexual differences. Their shared callings were uniquely their own and were to be developed by following generations, thus outlining their tasks as a beginning. Furthermore, the responses of Adam and Eve to their callings were less than ideal, suggesting that contemporary men and women should not emulate them. Instead, the New Testament constantly directs believers to imitate Christ as a role model for his faithfulness and not Adam and Eve who failed to obey God's command and be faithful to their callings.

The Irenaean conceptual framework that envisions the creation story as a starting point is a better description of Adam and Eve than the Augustinian framework. One may discover their roles in the creation story as hierarchical or egalitarian. Nevertheless, no matter what human roles before the fall may have been, they were a preparation for rather than an ideal for all people.

The creation story and the references in the New Testament should be read through the lens of Irenaeus's framework instead of Augustine's. In the Irenaean conceptual framework, humans do have some access to the knowledge of the state before the fall, thus making the interpretation of the creation story possible. We can exegete the life before the fall by studying the culture and context of life after the fall.

Reason allows us to access the pre-fall noetically and to understand the interpretation reasonably. Irenaeus's view of the creation story, however, still points humans to see the state before the fall not as a goal but as a beginning. The understanding of roles of Adam and Eve may vary depending on which view to take regarding the genre of the creation story and the status of Adam and Eve. But men and women today do not need to refer to their roles in the pre-fall. Rather, as Irenaeus view would suggest, they should seek to do better than roles played by Adam and Eve before the fall.

Hierarchical views sometimes assume equality between men and women in essence or being and hierarchy in their roles or function.[2] This seems to be an outcome of the Augustinian view of nature—God-assigned purpose—that understands nature as a static entity. When we consider that there is such a thing as a perfect human nature, we endeavour to discover ideal nature philosophically, asking what the perfect nature of humans may be. Similarly, in gender role discussion in reference to the creation story, some attempt philosophically to discover nature of man and that of woman as roles, which Adam and Eve presumably possessed, assuming that such would be essential to maleness and femaleness. Since there are assumed to be two kinds of natures, that of man and of woman, apart from nature of humans, the interest also becomes is there ever a hierarchy or an equality between the two natures. However, contemporary Christians will have challenges to know such natures of Adam and Eve by the conventional

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[2] For example, according to Schreiner, "One can possess a different function and still be equal in essence and worth. Women are equal to men in essence and in being; there is no ontological distinction, and yet they have a different function or role in church and home." Schreiner, "Head Coverings, Prophecies and the Trinity," 120.

Grudem also thinks that "the Bible does teach that men and women were created with equal value and dignity before God, it also teaches that they were created to fill different roles in marriage." Grudem, *Countering the Claims of Evangelical Feminism*, 20.

interpretation or reason alone, if there ever existed such distinct natures of man and that of woman.

While there should be no hierarchy in nature among humans, there may be an assumed hierarchy in nature between men and women as part of their roles. Humans have been attempting to abolish a hierarchy among humans. Contemporary Christians also seek to abolish hierarchy in essence or being between men and women. Yet, Christians may still retain the hierarchy between men and women in nature or role, so long as they assume there are different natures between them.

In contrast, the Irenaean view does not recognize such multiplicity of human nature and nature of man or woman. Unlike the static idea of nature of the Augustinian view, the Irenaean view of nature as God assigned purpose is dynamic. It is to become like Christ. There are not two natures of man and woman or three natures of humankind, man and woman. There is only one God intended human nature and that is for us to become more like the Divine Christ. Humans are created after the image and likeness of Christ. We are designed to grow more fully into the image and likeness of Christ as a goal. Men and women have physical differences, and these differences may entail some psychological differences. But these differences are capacities through which men and women actualize the image and likeness of Christ.

Human roles in the Irenaean view are to become more like Christ. Whether it is of men or women, believers endeavour to reflect the likeness of the Divine or express who Christ is and live out their roles accordingly. Alienation from God causes inconsistency between who humans should be and what they actually are or do. But the

God-assigned purpose for men and women alike is to unite these and make their roles consistent with who they should be.

After all, even if there were natures as God-assigned purposes for Adam and Eve, these do not serve as the ideal. Instead, the humanity of Christ is the ideal, and his teachings are a guide for men and women today. Christ demonstrated and taught how humans should live and relate to one another. He showed the ethic of the kingdom of God that humans serve and submit to one another, responding to their callings through their capacity faithfully. Christian theology of roles of women and men that is grounded on the ethic of the kingdom is a clearer and more applicable model for men and women today than that based on the creation story.

The kingdom of God is to be sought and expanded. In this way, Christians are to continue to seek the fuller picture of roles of female and male that reflect the ethic of the kingdom and might bring the blessings of the kingdom into the world. This requires believers to experience a vital relationship with God, constantly listening to his teachings and voice as a guide. And they may yet need to be ready for a renewed ideal of humanity and roles that would honour the immeasurably good and loving God.

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