

Vanessa Castor  
CS502: Church as a Social and Cultural Institution  
Dr. Stanley John  
Summary: Women in Ministry – Keener, Witherington, and Beulah.

Keener argues that Paul was for women and his long-range plan was to liberate, not subordinate women's ministry. He further clarifies that the issue is not gender but learning God's word. Keener explains that the controversial texts were culturally bound and not Paul's prescription for women in general. Witherington points out Jesus's affirmation of women in ministry by combatting double standards and prejudice as well as allowing women to have a significant place and status in His words, deeds, and ministry. Beulah contends for a holistic vision for the role of men and women that every individual of all ages should be able to contribute positively in the home, church, and society as a whole if we are to express our gospel and mission as holistic. In each of the articles, they affirm women can and are used by God for His kingdom purposes.

I personally don't believe women are given a junior Holy Spirit and are less than men. I understand during the period the bible was written, women were limited due to lack of education and traditions. However, women are educated and have competency to participate in ministry. Jesus shows women were the ones who carried the good news and did what everyone is called to do. I appreciated Witherington's point of the Samaritan woman leading the people to eternal food, Jesus, while the male disciples went into town to look for actual food. The priorities were to have an encounter with Jesus, even if that means crossing cultural boundaries. I also appreciated the story of Martha and Mary. Usually this is explained in terms of not to be a worker bee and to be still in the presence of the Lord, but Witherington explains at the foot of

Jesus, meaning an attentive disciple. Would God really put a limit with gender on handling His word when Jesus entrusted many women on spreading the good news?