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Pistor's "Women's gifts, women's roles: A Roadmap for navigating the debate over women in ministry" (book review)

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Book Reviews



Pistor, A. C. (2018). *Women's gifts, women's roles: A Roadmap for navigating the debate over women in ministry*. Columbus, OH: Gatekeeper Press. 194 pp. \$12.00. ISBN 9781642372410

This book lends a unique perspective to the debate over women in ministry between complementarians and egalitarians. Written by a layperson, a female who has a background in English literature and history, Catherine Pistor serves as a part-time compliance professional and mother. It is written for anyone who has wrestled with this subject, but as Pistor points out, complementarian local churches could benefit the most from this work. She admits her own bias can be found somewhere between a liberal complementarian and cautious egalitarian (13).

Besides covering relevant contested biblical passages (e.g. Gal. 3:26-29; 1 Tim. 2:9-15; 1 Cor. 11:3-16, 14:34-35, etc.) and their interpretations from the lens of history and scholarship, the book encourages women to use their gifts for the glory of God, regardless of one's understanding of Scripture pertaining to this topic. Rather, overarching guiding principles should be drawn from pertinent texts for practical purposes.

The author lists four purposes. One is to appeal to non-academics by keeping the guide brief, and another is to add interest to the subject utilizing humor, since other works on the matter tend to be a bit more stuffy, dense, or too focused on refuting one side over the other. Through this more balanced and light-hearted approach, Pistor will also question certain arguments by pointing out inconsistencies or fallacies in approaches taken. Because Scripture is essentially saying we all have gifts (1 Cor. 12:7), the author's final aim is to share personal knowledge she has learned over time with other women, so they can exercise their own gifts accordingly.

In my evaluation, the author does a great job of achieving her purpose by further educating people in an enjoyable manner. It is clear and concise, yet provides enough detail so someone can come to an informed decision concerning the issues at hand. Catherine Pistor defines the issues, points out the cultural, grammatical, and presuppositions that shade them, the role of sexism throughout time, how this secondary doctrine has become too elevated in the church, and how to approach

biblical texts hermeneutically. Additional commentary centers around what current gender roles look like in the church, distinguishing between calling versus gifting, and the biblical mandate to use any gifts we have been given by the Holy Spirit, regardless of our gender, as those who were created to worship the Lord.

Reviewer

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