

FOREWORD BY **LYNNE HYBELS**

the **resignation** of **eve**

WHAT IF ADAM'S RIB IS
NO LONGER WILLING TO BE
THE CHURCH'S BACKBONE?



jim henderson

Jim Henderson brings us voices that organized religion has silenced—from those women who glory in their submission to those who've become so alienated from the church that they're utterly indifferent to it. While honoring them all, Jim asks the hard questions. A must-read for anyone who wants to understand what's happening with women in the church today.

CHRISTINE WICKER, Author of *The Fall of the Evangelical Nation: The Surprising Crisis inside the Church*

A wake-up call to the church. Relentlessly straightforward, uncomfortably provocative, and unnervingly relevant. Don't read it if you don't want to be challenged.

TOSCA LEE, *New York Times* bestselling coauthor of *Forbidden*

In *The Resignation of Eve* Jim Henderson applies his incredible ability to ask good questions to a diverse group of Christian women. By framing questions in a unique and nonthreatening way, Jim enables us to discern what our sisters have to say about following Christ today, regardless of what we believe the Scripture teaches about women and the church.

JOHN H. ARMSTRONG, President of ACT 3; author of *Your Church Is Too Small*

The Resignation of Eve is sure to spark lively dialogue and clarify our own views on the role of women in the church, if we let it. Do we dare? We must! The future of Christ's beloved church, where each person should be empowered to use all of his or her gifts for building God's Kingdom, is at stake.

MARY SCHALLER, President, Q Place; author of *How to Start a Q Place*

The Resignation of Eve includes an amazing array of engaging stories from women, ranging from those who have stayed in traditional churches to those who have given up on church. There is a collective power to these diverse stories, as Jim invites us to reconsider "one of history's most radical advocates for women—Jesus of Nazareth."

DAN BRENNAN, Author of *Sacred Unions, Sacred Passions*

In his conversational style, Jim relates the unpredictable church experiences of more than a dozen women—and he challenges the church to listen to them too. The result is a profoundly honest survey of how women of faith relate to their own communities. Jim's thought-provoking conversation with these women taps into the previously unexplored territory of understanding why women engage with, or disengage from, their faith communities.

JENNIFER ROACH, Pastor of Light of Christ Anglican Church, Seattle

The Resignation of Eve is a valuable and right-on-time book for Christ followers. It helps define the tangled-up mess of gender and inequality that people of faith negotiate (or not) in the world of church. Jim Henderson has provided us a collection of multiple perspectives and experiences from the women he interviewed. Church leaders of all denominational persuasions would do well to lean in and listen with him.

PAM HOGEWEIDE, Blogger and author of *Unladylike: Resisting the Injustice of Inequality in the Church*

In *The Resignation of Eve*, Jim Henderson follows Christ in the revolutionary act of listening to women. That this is revolutionary already tells us much. Jim asks questions with a disarming frankness, and if we, too, listen to these women with an open mind, their stories will tell us so much more—not least the fact that it's probably later than we think.

MIKE HERTENSTEIN, Cornerstone Festival

When we stand before Jesus, all of us—women and men—will have to account for how we've invested the gifts God has entrusted to us. What are you doing with yours and those of the women in your life? *The Resignation of Eve* will challenge you to figure that out and act accordingly. Read this book, pray, ponder, and then do something.

ELISA MORGAN, President emerita, MOPS International; publisher, *FullFill*; author, *She Did What She Could*

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jim henderson



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Dedication

*If I ever have to go to war, I want Pam Hogeweide by my side. She's smart, tough-minded, tenderhearted, and loyal. Pam has backed me up under extremely difficult circumstances and taken bullets that I deserved. She is a better writer than I'll ever be and selflessly advances others on her blog, *How God Messed Up My Religion*. Most of all, Pam loves Jesus and has dedicated her life to advocating and agitating on behalf of his favorite group of outsiders—women.*

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Foreword

FOR NEARLY FOUR DECADES I've been a pastor's wife and volunteer in a church community that believes the Holy Spirit distributes spiritual gifts irrespective of gender.¹ In practical terms, this means we believe it's possible for men to have spiritual gifts like hospitality and helps (which some consider "women's gifts"); and that it's possible for women to have gifts like teaching and leadership (which some consider "men's gifts"). It also means that many of the teachers and leaders in our children's ministry are men, while many of our senior leaders—elders, ministry directors, and teaching pastors—are women. To us, that seems normal.

As a church, we've often been criticized for our "position on women in leadership," but we've been criticized for so many things that I've learned to hold such criticism at a distance. Sometimes I even forget that our position on spiritual gifts and gender is fairly uncommon in evangelical circles. Reading *The Resignation of Eve* reminded me that this is still a hot debate and there are still smart, thoughtful, godly people lining up on opposing sides.

I have tended to avoid jumping into the debate because, frankly, it's not a personal issue for me. I never wanted to lead or teach, in the church or anywhere else. Seriously. When Bill and I started Willow Creek Community Church in 1975, I said to Bill, "I believe in this dream. I'll do anything I can to help make it happen. I'll clean toilets. I'll cook meals. I'll shake hands. I'll say private prayers. Just don't ask me to stand up in front of people! Don't ask me to teach! Don't ask me to lead!"

So I'm rather amused now when I look around a meeting room and realize I am the only woman seated at a table of ministry decision makers. Or the only woman speaking at a theological conference. Or when I speak out about an area of injustice and suddenly hear Christian women *and* men saying, "What can we do? How can we get involved? If you lead this effort, we'll follow you."

I wasn't aiming for any of this, not because of theological restrictions, but simply because I was terrified—of visibility, of failure, of disappointing people. I'm sixty years old, and it was only a decade ago that I finally quit kicking and screaming about my inadequacies long enough to hear the Holy Spirit calling me to live a bit more "out loud." In other words, I finally agreed to grow up and use my gifts, experiences, and platform for God's purposes. I still don't aspire to teach or lead, but if that's what it takes to live into God's calling, then so be it. I'll do my best.

During the last decade, I've traveled from Bosnia to Rwanda, from Lebanon to South Africa, from Egypt to the Democratic Republic of the Congo. In the devastation of

disease and the horror of war, I've seen how messed up our world is. I've also seen God use amazing women to address the mess. You want to increase economic development in a poor community? Invest in microenterprise for women: about 98 percent of them will pay back the loan and they'll invest a full 90 percent of their revenue back into the common good (compared with 40 percent reinvestment by men).² You want to promote peaceful political and social change? Engage women in the process: they'll exhaust every possible nonviolent option rather than turn to violence. You want to end child marriage and assure that poor women have fewer but healthier babies? Educate little girls.

When women have half a chance, they change the world! I am convinced that women are our greatest untapped resource—in local communities and in the church. Unfortunately, I fear one of the unintended results of the debate about the role of women in the church is that some women fail to take themselves seriously. They don't think personal growth—stretching themselves intellectually, emotionally, and spiritually—really matters because, well, they're just women.

That's why I'm writing the foreword to this book. I doubt anything I've written will change the theological perspective of church leaders regarding women's roles in the church. But I do hope my words will encourage women—whatever their gifts and whatever church they're in—to take themselves seriously. Whether we're singing lullabies to babies (as I did last night to my six-day-old grandson) or protesting sexual

exploitation (as I did recently at a forum on human trafficking), our voices matter.

The only thing more moving than hearing women cheer each other on is hearing a man cheer us on. Thank you, Jim, for recognizing Jesus' revolutionary love for women, for honoring women's stories, and for encouraging us to offer our full selves in service to God's healing, restoring, redemptive work in this world.

Lynne Hybels

OCTOBER 3, 2011

Preface

I THINK JIM HENDERSON IS a really fun guy, at least partly because he is a provocateur.

Not everyone is comfortable with that side of Jim. He loves to ask challenging questions, has no qualms about playing the role of “devil’s advocate” in a dialogue, and gently but pointedly skewers simplistic answers. He enjoys taking sincere yet outlandish points of view seriously, and regularly offers some “outside the box” ideas of his own. He is willing to go the extra mile to discover genuine truth, justice, and compassion. Because he loves Jesus a whole lot, Jim does this mental teasing with a playfulness that is disarming.

It is this combination of qualities and practices that compelled Jim, against the better judgment of some of his friends, to write this book about the experience of women in America’s Christian churches. Troubled by his observations of their plight, along with years of faith-related conversations with women from all walks of life, Jim became convinced

that the roles typically assigned to women in churches are biblically indefensible, if not downright oppressive. True to his nature, he set out to address the wrongs, determined to improve the situation. In the process, which he continues in this book, Jim is making many people uncomfortable with the state of women in our nation's Christian churches—and, sometimes, with people's own beliefs about and behaviors toward women of faith.

Because he is a catalyst who enjoys substantive conversation, this book is filled with remnants of such exchanges about women's place in local churches. He uses these stories to raise important questions about roles, authority, love, responsibility, biblical authority, power, the essence of Christianity, leadership, church life, scriptural interpretation, and more. As you will see, while he is digging for understanding and truth, everything is fair game in his explorations and reflections.

The Resignation of Eve comes at a vulnerable moment in the history of the American church. At one point in his ruminations, Jim asks what would happen if female Christ followers en masse, all at once, simply stopped coming to churches, stopped serving others, and stopped delivering the leadership they provide. We may not have to wait long to learn the answer. Some of my recent research has revealed that women of faith, increasingly disgruntled and feeling unfulfilled by their church experiences, are already leaving churches in massive numbers. Here is what has happened between 1991 and 2011:

- There has been a 20 percent decrease in the percentage of adult women attending church services during any given week.
- There has been a 29 percent drop in the number of adult women attending Sunday school classes.
- The number of women who volunteer at a church during the course of a week has plummeted by 31 percent.
- The proportion of American women who are unchurched has nearly doubled in the past twenty years, rising by 94 percent. In fact, more than one-third of all women are no longer connected to a church.

In preparing to write this book, Jim not only talked to countless women across the nation—either in person or through online exchanges—but also commissioned The Barna Group to conduct a nationwide survey among women related to his hypotheses. You will find the results of that survey woven into the arguments made in this book. The provision of both qualitative anecdotes and statistical evidence makes for an interesting and thought-provoking read. (You'll find some of the data in tabular form in an appendix of this book.)

I don't know if I agree with all of Jim's conclusions, but I'll tell you this: he's making me think. I am grateful for that challenge. Sometimes it seems that those of us who are men in positions of church leadership don't think enough about

the issues that Jim raises. It's good to be confronted on these matters. Grappling with the tough issues and complex situations of our faith is necessary if we are to reflect the heart of Jesus to the world. We are God's representatives of his love and truth; to represent him well, we must wrestle with such matters, no matter how uncomfortable they make us, or how much we discover we have to change our ways of thinking and acting.

Do yourself a favor; take your time working through this document. Clarify, in your own mind and heart, what you truly believe the Scriptures teach about power, gender roles, success, love, unity, and purpose. This is not fluffy stuff that you can blow through in an hour or two. Don't even try to do that. The questions raised in these pages are too important to give short shrift.

Jim Henderson: restless thinker, playful servant, man of God, provocateur. He wants you to join the conversation. It won't always be comfortable, but you'll be a better person for engaging in it.

George Barna
Ventura, California
August 2011

Author's Note

SINCE I SPEND A LOT OF time on airplanes, I'm frequently asked what I do. I decided to give myself a title that neither my fellow passengers nor I could completely understand (and that only a truly interested person would ask a follow-up question about). So I designated myself a "spiritual anthropologist."

I like this description for two reasons. First, a spiritual anthropologist sounds important, which I don't consider myself to be. It also gives me permission to be professionally nosy, which I am. I enjoy probing into people's spiritual lives and asking questions like "How do you navigate life spiritually—or not?" This anthropological impulse is what drew me into this project. I wanted to find out how women spiritually navigate the church and Christianity, particularly given the ferment in the culture and the church about women's roles.

While it was my own curiosity that pulled me into this undertaking, along the way it became apparent that a wider

audience of Christians would benefit from doing some serious thinking about this issue, in light of realities like these:

1. Women are often the first leaders of vibrant spiritual movements.
 - Jesus chose Mary Magdalene to be the first human being to witness and announce his resurrection.
 - Women had key leadership roles in early Wesleyanism and Pentecostalism, the Salvation Army, and the American missionary movement.
 - In our own time, the growth of the Yoido Full Gospel Church in Seoul, South Korea, which in 2010 had 800,000 members, is attributed mainly to the leadership of women.¹ Women often lead underground churches, such as those in China, as well.

2. Researcher George Barna says women continue to be “the backbone of the church,” even in churches where men hold most of the official leadership positions (pastor, elder).² In fact, some major denominations—and many independent churches—still officially limit the roles available to women.
 - Women are doing most of the work. Yet Barna has also found that they are more open than men to leaving their current faith communities.
 - In many families, women ensure their families get

to church. If the women leave, their husbands and children leave with them.

3. Regardless of anyone's theological persuasion regarding women, women can no longer be taken for granted by the church. Millions of Christians are reevaluating their spiritual options today. A majority of those Christians are women. Research shows that:
 - There has been a significant increase in the percentage of women avoiding church in recent years. Between 1991 and 2003, the percentage of unchurched women rose from 18 to 30 percent.³ In 2005, Gallup released a study reporting that 38 percent of women are unchurched.⁴ A study by sociologists at the University of Nebraska–Lincoln found that although church attendance rates have been relatively steady over the past thirty years, “sizeable shifts have occurred within traditionally reliable churchgoing groups,” including women.⁵
 - Barna notes that women are more likely than men to reevaluate their spiritual options and, as a result, change churches, join a different faith, or practice their faith in new ways.

Songs emerge out of the interplay between music and lyrics; this book emerges out of the interplay between an observation and a question.

My observation: Jesus actively promoted women as spiritual influencers, yet women today are not given access to as much influence as they're capable of in the church.⁶

My question: How, then, do women perceive their role in the church, what are they doing about it, and what are the consequences for the church as a whole?

Who Do You Think You Are?

When I started talking to some of my women friends about *The Resignation of Eve*, they asked me who my coauthor was—meaning, “Which woman is writing this book with you?” They weren’t the only ones doing the assuming. I normally work with coauthors, so I anticipated doing this book with a woman as well. However, early on it became clear to me that I was to write this book on my own.

I’m not surprised if some women misunderstand my decision or are even angry with me. By putting myself in this position, I’ll inevitably be on the receiving end of a lot of frustration. But while I didn’t have a coauthor, *The Resignation of Eve* wouldn’t have been possible without the frank, heartfelt input of more than a dozen women. As readers of my other books know, I prefer to “get my preaching done through others,” which is why I profile a number of

women whom I've interviewed over the past year. I simply asked the questions, and they told their stories.

I present these accounts knowing that all of us operate under what I call *the myth of objectivity*. The myth of objectivity means we view ourselves as objective and those who disagree with us as subjective. The harsh reality is this: *when it comes to humans, there is no such thing as objectivity—only observations and opinions*. That is why I largely let the stories speak for themselves, even when the women profiled arrived at conclusions with which I personally disagreed. I approached the project this way because I needed to challenge my assumptions and biases about women and church. I needed to discover where my perception and reality clashed. In the process I not only learned about women and church, I also learned about myself. I hope that by the time you finish this book, you will be able to say the same.

—Jim Henderson

Introduction

PICTURE THIS.

It's 8:30 a.m.

You're in your office at New Life Community Church, getting ready to lead the ten o'clock service.

You hear some rumbling outside your study and make out the voice of Barry, your head usher. He's talking with a few other ushers who have arrived to straighten things up in the sanctuary.

You try not to worry about how many people will show up today. You turn your worries into prayer to help remind yourself why you do this.

Normally Linda, your longtime volunteer administrator, would be at church by now, busily inserting your fill-in-the-blank sermon outlines into the bulletins. You feel a slight flash of irritation at Linda's tardiness, but let it go since she's as faithful as the day is long. But it does seem unusual. You bury the thought and get back to your final sermon run-through.

The first notes from Sam's keyboard echo through the sanctuary, reminding you that you have about half an hour to finish your preparations. Sam and the other boys in the band—Frank on bass and Tommy on the drums—are getting ready for the sound check. These guys all played together in an eighties cover band until Frank got saved. Then they stopped playing the clubs, and Sam and Tommy followed Frank into your church. That was twenty-five years ago. Now they help lead worship every Sunday.

Billy, the twentysomething worship leader (with spiked hair), walks by looking perky and directs a quick wave your way. He's carrying his electric guitar and soon starts running through the worship set. "Lord, we lift your name on high; Lord, we love to sing your praises. . . ."

You think to yourself, *Not exactly the Time Warner worship band, but hey, the price is right.* Billy is interning with you while he completes his final year at Bible school. You know he's planning to apply for a music and arts director position at some megachurch. Knowing how tight the economy is and how ruthless church business can be, though, you don't anticipate losing him anytime soon.

It's closing in on 9:30, and you haven't heard a peep coming out of the Sunday school area downstairs in the basement. And where's Linda? Normally you'd ask your wife to fill in, but she's out of town caring for her ailing father. You start feeling that Sunday morning emotional mix (something between anger and anxiety) that pastors are very familiar with. You sense trouble.

You head out to the front lobby, doing your best not to appear flustered or un-pastor-like. That means you look unusually happy and shake hands more than a normal person would. Because your entire Sunday school is taught by women, the silence stuns you. There are no women anywhere.

A few dads with their sons in tow straggle in, the men desperately looking for their kids' teachers in the dark classrooms. Your throat tightens, fear turns to panic, anger turns to dread. You momentarily wonder if Hal Lindsay got the Rapture right but failed to mention that in the Greek it says *for women only*.

With no time for humor, you rush into the sanctuary, tossing furtive glances at the men who've figured out that there is no Sunday school. The committed ones are dragging their sons into the pews, where they expect you to explain why the good Lord told you to shut down Sunday school today.

As you head back out the doors leading from the sanctuary to the lobby, you stop to shake the hand of your church's finance chairman. "Hey, Rob," you say to the fortysomething man, who is pulling one boy by the hand and glancing back at the scowling teenage boy behind him. "Good to see you this morning. Hi, Tyler; hey, Robby." After a beat of silence, you smile and ask, "Umm, where's Susan this morning?"

Rob sighs and shrugs. "Wish I knew. After getting Tyler dressed, she told me to go on ahead; said she'd follow us later."

She's not the only one MIA, you think. Where is Linda, anyway? Your sermon outlines are missing from the bulletin, Sunday school is nonexistent, and the background singers are nowhere to be found.

Billy and the band forge ahead, trying their best to get the men and boys to sing the high notes. Collectively, their voices sound more like a moan than a melody.

Billy gives you “the nod,” which translated means “Pastor, pleeeeeaze rescue me from this incredibly awkward moment.” Because you’re the only person in the church who’s paid to be a Christian, you do your duty. Walking up behind Billy, you touch his back like a tag team wrestler and begin to pray.

In midprayer, your cell phone rings. *You stupid dork*, you think to yourself, *Why didn’t you turn the ringer off?* (Here’s why—normally Linda reminds you of those details.) You clumsily grab for your phone, which is buried in the inside pocket of your suit coat. As you do, you notice all the other men doing the same thing, almost as if this moment had been choreographed.

“Pastor, Pastor? This is Linda! Can you put me on speakerphone, please?” Not knowing what else to do and not wanting to appear controlling or angry, you hold the cell phone up to the mic on the pulpit. You briefly wonder if this is scriptural but being desperate decide this is not the time to split hairs. You want to know where all the women have gone.

You find your voice and composure. “Linda, where are you? And who’s there with you?” You hear a lot of women chattering in the background on the other end of the line.

“Pastor, sorry for the interruption, but we ladies have been talking and praying about some of the needs of our church. We realized that we could help out with some of those needs—if we weren’t limited in which of our gifts

we're allowed to use around here. But rather than trying to get you to debate, we decided it would be more effective if we simply didn't show up one Sunday. We call it *Sisters Solidarity Sunday*, and we plan to do this kind of thing until you become comfortable opening up more opportunities for us to serve."

The men sit in stunned silence. They are used to their wives telling them what they think in private, but never in public—and never ever from the pulpit!

"Pastor, we don't want to interrupt the service. We can pick this up at our staff meeting later this week. You guys have a great time worshiping the Lord, and all of us women will do the same. See you!" *Click.*

"Linda? Linda?"

And with that, Linda finishes the first sermon ever given by a woman from behind the sacred pulpit of New Life Community Church.

If you think this scenario is a stretch, think again.

Write down the name of every woman who runs some part of your church (paid or volunteer).

Ask yourself what your church would look like if these women ever organized their own version of Sisters Solidarity Sunday.

This book is written to help you avoid that scenario.

CHAPTER 1

THE THREE FACES OF RESIGNATION

RESIGNATION IS ONE OF those fascinating words that can be used appropriately under opposite sets of circumstances.

It is used to express both resistance and acquiescence.

It can be used to express either outrage or submission.

When someone *resigns from a job*, it's the functional equivalent of saying "I quit."

When someone *resigns herself to a job*, it is the functional equivalent of saying "I accept."

Moreover, if I say, "I resigned from that job last March," I'm describing an *action*, but if I say, "I'm resigned to staying in the job one more year," I'm describing an attitude.

In the first scenario, I'm in charge; in the second, someone else is. If I quit, my circumstances are being shaped by me, but

if I accept, I'm being shaped by my circumstances. Certainly, it's normal to do both things at different times. We have to. No one gets to do what he or she *wants* to do 100 percent of the time.

When we don't possess the freedom to change our work situation, we become resigned to it. Sometimes this doesn't even bother us, and we continue on, seemingly unaffected. Often, however, we "go through the motions" and appear to be present but in fact are not. We do the minimum needed to get by (and get paid) but do our most creative work somewhere else (often for no pay).

When we're dissatisfied at our workplace, we might quit or fire ourselves before we get fired. Or, on the other hand, instead of walking away, we might choose to remain engaged and work for change from within.

How does this relate to what I learned about how women are negotiating the church? All the women profiled in this book fit into one of the following categories:

- Some of the women have resigned themselves to their churches' positions on women;
- others have resigned from their churches because of those churches' positions on women;
- and, finally, some women have "re-signed"; that is, they've reengaged in their churches or in other churches, leading and influencing despite opposition.

So that you can get the most from these stories, let me offer a few more distinctives of each group.

Resigned To

In this book you will read the stories of women who have come to terms with the fact that they are not “allowed” to exercise all the gifts and abilities they’re capable of contributing in the church setting. Some say they are perfectly fine with this reality. They’ve accepted the idea that the same people who deny them the right to lead their churches would go door to door on their behalf if they ran for president.

Other women love their churches and their people, but they know they aren’t being given the opportunity to think, strategize, innovate, and create new ways of doing church that both men and women find appealing. Often when they have expressed their desire for more influence, they were blocked, stonewalled, or stalled. These women have acquiesced to the powers-that-be who are more than willing to allow them to run the operation but not lead it. As a result, many have lost the desire to be creative.

Resigned From

How would you feel if you were capable of leading, thinking, guiding, shaping, and forming a spiritual community but were denied the opportunity to do so? This experience leads some women to walk away from the church, Christianity, and in some cases God. That is the experience of the women profiled in this section. At one time these women were very dedicated Christians, churchgoers, and Bible study leaders, but they have since opted for other beliefs or no beliefs. Some

maintain deeply spiritual, fulfilling lives but in a context that is separate from the churches they left.

Which is worse in your mind, *actually resigning* or *being resigned* to not being able to quit?

Re-Signed

We will look at one more type of resignation in this book—the *re-sign*. This is the decision some women make, knowing the limitations, knowing the risks, and knowing that things are not likely to change. Women who “re-sign” don’t quit or accept things as they are; they engage, lead, and influence. They make waves *and stay connected*. They’re engaged but not owned, integrated within the church but knowledgeable about its inherent limitations and dangers.

They’re like those of us with extended family whom we would prefer to avoid but with whom we choose to stay connected. We do this for a variety of reasons—perhaps because they’re all we’ve got. To Outsiders it may appear that we’ve “sold out,” especially since they’re the ones we often complain to about our unusual families. They can’t figure out why we keep going back for more abuse each Christmas.

But we do go back—except we don’t go back blindly or perhaps as often as we went at first. We are measured; we are in control. We’re not going to get sucked completely back into the system that could suck the life right out of us. We don’t expect these family members to provide our meaning, and we aren’t surprised when they disappoint us.

Women who have re-signed either remain active in their

own churches even though they disagree with the churches' stances on women, or they intentionally plug into other churches that provide them with the opportunities they seek.

Women who have re-signed realize that life is a series of trade-offs. You don't always (or even often) get what you want or need, but you get something that provides enough meaning to make it worth the trade.

Women who have re-signed are realists and even optimists. They are willing to nudge the ball of change down the field. They're not world changers, but they're contributors. They belong to a long line of sisters and brothers in arms who are committed to seeing women be given equal opportunities to express, create, lead, and influence change inside and outside the church.

Women who have re-signed defend women who have quit and challenge women who have acquiesced. They advocate for both groups. They associate with both groups. They do not see themselves as having arrived and are never sure they are doing the right thing all of the time. They walk by faith, following in the footsteps of Jesus, who radically advocated for women in his time.

What Problem?

In those churches where women either acquiesce or leave, it can be easy to not even consider whether women are being given the opportunities God intends them to have. But if you want women to bring the best of their gifts and talents

to your church, you need to know what they're thinking and saying behind closed doors. Here are the top four issues that emerged as I interviewed women for this book.

Doctrine

There's a lot of confusion among both men and women about what the Bible does or does not say about the role of women in the church. Women struggle (often in private) trying to determine whether their churches' positions on women's roles are genuinely God's ideal or simply a reflection of dogmatic conditioning and cultural bias. The most ardent students of the Bible on both sides tend to be the ones who are *most certain* their view of the biblical role of women is the correct one.

Given the polarization, I am dismayed at how uninterested Christians seem to be in trying to understand why their brothers and sisters can read the same biblical passages and come to opposite conclusions. We need to learn how to stay in the room with differences and not "break up" over every biblical disagreement. Frankly, I think this attitude needs to begin with pastors.

Disillusionment

Many women are discouraged. And while some of them, particularly young women, leave the organized church only, others walk away from the faith altogether. In fact, in 2010 The Barna Group found that 26 percent of Americans have changed faiths or adopted a significantly different faith view during their lifetimes. Barna released its study just after the

author Anne Rice famously renounced Christianity on her Facebook page. According to Barna, Rice “shares a spiritual profile with nearly 60 million other adults nationwide,” most of whom, the research found, are women. Since breaking with the Catholic church, Rice has publicly reaffirmed her commitment to Christ several times; however, Barna’s report notes, “The most common type of spiritual shift was from those who were Christian, Protestant or Catholic in childhood to those who currently report being atheist, agnostic or some other faith. In total, this group represents about one out of every eight adults (12%), a category that might be described as ex-Christians.”¹ Disillusionment with their church and religion was cited as one of the top reasons people gave for leaving their faith.

But for many women (particularly wives and mothers), leaving doesn’t mean walking away; more often it means showing up without being present. Women often do this because they want their husbands and children to grow spiritually. They participate at the minimal levels and give just enough to ensure their families are included, even if the women themselves are not growing. They seem to be masters at finding ways to feed themselves without requiring as much from the place they call church.

Contradictions

It’s been my experience that unless someone they love is directly affected, few Christians even consider whether the systems we’ve created in our churches reflect the same commitment to women that Jesus showed the women of his day.

Our denial that this issue even exists reflects the church's confusion. Many pastors (both conservative and liberal) say one thing in public (or more precisely at denominational meetings) and do something different in their own churches.

In later chapters you will read the stories of people who believe a woman can be the president of the United States but not the pastor of a church. You will also read about denominations that ordain women but still find ways to stop them from expanding their influence at the highest levels. If nothing else, these interviews will help you see that we Christians are one contradictory bunch. Hopefully the stories will provide you with insights as to how you might correct that habit in your own church.

Spiritual Brain Drain

Potentially the most serious loss the church faces because of this confusion is the *spiritual brain drain* of women. As you read these stories, you'll discover that when it comes to the spiritual development of themselves and their churches, women simply "outcare" most men. Some people seem to scold women for this, as if they need to cut back so as not to discourage men from taking their rightful place of leadership in the church. A few of the women I spoke with hear this as blaming the victim.

Certainly the pastor of the world's largest church, whom you'll read more about later, would agree. Pastor Cho of South Korea grew his church to close to 850,000 members by encouraging women to have as much influence as God

gifted them with, and he did this in a culture that, unlike America's, has historically assumed women are subservient to men. Christian history may record that Pastor Cho's decision to open the doors of influence to women in his church was a primary contributing factor in his country's transformation from a predominantly Buddhist country to a Christian one.

We limit women to our own detriment, because they are not just good at caregiving and connecting, they're also good at strategizing, seeing patterns, and understanding what the long-term needs and objectives are. While not all women serving in our churches consider themselves leaders, many of them offer outstanding skill and vision and are energized by leading. While some of these women have either embraced leadership roles in their churches or prefer not to lead in church because they are so worn out from leading elsewhere, a significant number are frustrated because they can't lead at all or are not allowed to lead within their areas of giftedness.

And the Survey Says

As part of my due diligence for this project, I not only interviewed women, I also commissioned The Barna Group to survey a nationally representative sample of more than 600 women about all sorts of issues that affect them as churchgoers.

When asked to consider their churches' positions on women in leadership, the majority of the women voiced support for their churches' positions. Well over three-quarters said their churches' perspectives on women in ministry are

either almost identical or similar to their own. Almost the same percentage said the senior pastors in their churches are somewhat, highly, or completely supportive of women leading in their churches. Nearly two-thirds said that all leadership roles in their churches are open to them.

What gives? If women in the church are as satisfied as they say they are, why are so many of them willingly considering bolting or switching churches? And why are more and more women, who as we noted earlier are the functional backbone of the church, staying away?

I found many of the survey results surprising, so I decided to prerelease a few of the statistics to the public to see how they would respond. The reactions were all over the place. Some women felt the stats were very accurate and questioned why I would want to analyze them further. They saw my attempt to drill into these statistics as another expression of the rejection of traditional roles for women.

Many other women, however, said the views shown in the survey once matched their own, but they have since reached different conclusions about women's roles in the church. Others went so far as to suggest that the statistics proved that women are afraid to tell the truth about their real feelings, not wanting to cast the church in a negative light.

Scattered throughout the book you will find pages called "Fast Facts." These highlight the survey statistics we pre-released, followed by some of the responses we received. It will become apparent that there is no consensus on these issues, but there are lots of opinions and much pain.

As you read the comments and the stories, I hope you'll spend more time pondering *how* you arrived at your beliefs about women's role in the church than you spend defending them.

Dual Data or Data Duel

This book, then, is the result of a unique data “mash up” of quantitative (statistical) and qualitative (story-based) research. In the world of research there's currently a battle going on between these two approaches. Think of it as mind share versus heart share.

In other words, the modern era gave us statistics and quantitative measurement. It also gave us the Internet, Google, and Wikipedia. As cultural sociologist Daniel Pink writes, “When facts become so widely available and instantly accessible, each one becomes less valuable. What begins to matter more is the ability to place these facts in *context* and to deliver them with *emotional impact*.”² Pink is suggesting that when humans get information overload, they revert to stories. Interestingly, we modernists have been trained to value stats, but Jesus was more inclined to use stories.

Besides lacking the geek gene required to do the serious work of quantitative analysis, I am drawn to qualitative research by Jesus' example. As I see it, *stories are the new statistics*. Without question, there are limits to qualitative research. It's subjective, anecdotal, and at times difficult to verify. But quantitative research comes with its own baggage as well. It's

overwhelming, sterile, and can often leave us trying to guess the agenda of the researcher.

Being the troublemaker that I am, I thought it would be interesting to combine the quantitative with the qualitative and let you draw your own conclusions from the picture that emerges. This is why my organization asked The Barna Group to partner with us.

One of the mantras public speakers recite to themselves as they take the stage is, *It's not what you say but what they hear*. The same could be said of statistical analysis. It's not what the research concludes but how you interpret it. *Statistical veracity lies in the eye of the beholder*.

Here's the deal: if you have a bias toward quantitative analysis, you will find more than enough statistical evidence to support your opinions. If on the other hand you lean toward qualitative analysis, you are likely to find the stories compelling, convincing, and moving.

What most of us are likely to do is simply toggle between the stats and the stories—hanging our opinion on a number here and a story there. Over time we create our own version of how things *really* are. Just remember what Anne Lamott said: “You can safely assume you’ve created God in your own image when it turns out that God hates all the same people you do.”³

Bottom Line

George Barna summarized one of the findings of his quantitative research this way: “Among women whom the Barna

Group would classify as Born Again, few seem frustrated about their opportunities to lead in the church.”⁴ In fact, when asked how they felt about their role within the church, 61 percent said they believe they have much influence. That is even higher than the 55 percent of those not identified as Born Again who felt they had significant influence.

Depending upon who is doing the interpreting, Barna’s conclusion could be (and without a doubt will be) read in one of three different ways:

1. Most Born Again women have no complaints about their role in their churches.
2. Most women have been persuaded to toe their churches’ line on the issue of women’s influence in the church.
3. When selecting a church, some women view leadership opportunities as a criterion, so it’s not surprising that they landed in churches that reflect their views on this issue.

The same could be said (and without a doubt will be) of the conclusions I arrived at based on my qualitative research:

1. Some women are quite content at church.
2. Many women are disengaged and not able to bring their best to their church.

Understanding research, just like understanding the Bible, is all about correct interpretation of reliable data.

Acknowledgments

HERE ARE THE WOMEN who have formed, influenced, impacted, and provoked me into becoming a better person.

My wife, Barbara; my daughters, Sarah and Judah; my daughter-in-law Kelli Henderson; my mother, Jacqueline Wallace; my sister, Leigh, and her daughters; and my sisters-in-law Kathy MacKintosh and Susie Ellis and their daughters. My former comrades-in-arms: Ollie Smith, Kandy Rettig, Linda Brockway, Jeannette Case, Maureen Burke, Carol Allard, Val O'Neil, Chris McDaniels, Renee Fox, Jacki Dunlap, Mary McKinney, Sarita Fernandes, Blessi Kumar, Elizabeth Di Candilo, and Barbro Askew. The women I sang with: Jessica Ketola, Joanna Brantley, and Cherese Sutton. The pastors I respect: Julie Clark, Deborah Loyd, Rose Madrid-Swetman, Debbie Hunter, Charlotte Baker, Kathy Escobar, Kelly Bean, Molly DuQue, Julie Clark, Dawn Oas, Sheila Cherian, Lisa Domke, and Grace McLaren.

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Sheila Bartlett. My agent, Esther Fedorkevich; my publisher (and the person who came up with the very creative title of this book), Jan Long Harris; and my editor, Kim Miller. The women who are married to my close colleagues: Cote Soerens, Tina Smith, Sandy Siever, Anne Shantz, and Sara Spinks. The women I've worked shoulder to shoulder with in leadership, church planting, movement planting, and Kingdom advancing: Pam Sardar, Julie Nagel, Vicki Baird, Darci Rubart, Leigh Buchan, Diane Ellis, Geneva Vollrath, Mary Schaller, Elizabeth Chapin, Sharon Karns, Sharon Richards, Nancy Short, Lani Faith, Lisa Wellington, and the Circus Sisters, Sister Dorothy Fabritze and Sister Bernard Overkamp.

Finally, I want to acknowledge four other women who have had profound influence on my life: Helen Mildenhall, who taught me about dialogue; Christine Wicker, a wonderful writer and courageously open person; Kris Hoots Thomas, my social media coach and great friend; and Elaine Hansen, my coworker who's stuck with me through thick and thin. Pam Hogeweide was particularly helpful to me as I wrote the book. In fact, she recounted Denie Tackett's story to me and was instrumental in connecting me with a number of other women for this project.

Without the help of all these women (and many more), I would have had nothing to say on this topic.

Selected Barna Group Survey Data on Women and the Church

THIS APPENDIX PRESENTS some of the overall findings from a nationwide random survey of females, eighteen years of age or older, who consider themselves to be Christian and who attend Christian church services. The survey includes responses from 603 such women randomly sampled from across the forty-eight continental states. The outcomes are based upon telephone interviews conducted by The Barna Group in April 2010. The maximum margin of sampling error associated with the aggregate sample is ± 4.1 percentage points at the 95 percent confidence level. Note that for some questions the responses shown do not total 100 percent, either because of rounding or because the “don’t know” response is not shown. In some questions the responses add up to more than 100 percent because multiple responses were allowed for, as indicated by the notation after the question (multiple responses allowed).

1. I'd like to know more about how you describe yourself. I'm going to read a list of descriptions and would like you to tell me if each of these adjectives is a very accurate, somewhat accurate, or not too accurate description of you.

	Very	Somewhat	Not Too
a leader	36%	46%	18%
a servant	49%	32%	15%
deeply spiritual	65%	29%	5%
mature in your faith	74%	24%	2%

The following question was asked only if the respondent called herself a leader in the first question:

2. You mentioned that you are a leader. In what settings or in what type of activities do you provide leadership? (Note: response options were not read to respondents; multiple responses were allowed.)

At a church 52%
 On the job 31%
 Parenting/in home/with family 29%
 In the community/neighborhood 28%
 At a school 18%
 At a nonprofit/community organization 13%

3. As you examine your spiritual life, is there anything you do on purpose as your way of intentionally serving God? (Note: response options were not read to respondents; multiple responses were allowed.)

Pray for others 46%
 Encourage people 24%
 Help needy/disadvantaged/homeless people 24%

- Talk about Jesus/gospel with people 23%
- Volunteer at church 21%
- Donate money to religious causes 17%
- No, no intentional service 13%
- Volunteer at a nonprofit/service organization 9%
- Provide leadership to a group 8%
- Teach a religious class 8%

4. Overall, do you think you are *capable* of doing more to serve God than you are currently doing?

Yes 83%

The following question was asked only if the respondent answered yes to question 4.

5. Overall, do you think you *should be* doing more to serve God than you are currently doing?

Yes 87%

6. What prevents you or holds you back from doing more to serve God? (Note: response options were not read to respondents; multiple responses were allowed.)

- Lack of opportunities; gender restrictions; women not allowed 27%
- Not sure what to do 12%
- No time; too busy 11%
- Have not thought about it much 7%
- Laziness; selfishness 7%
- Health restrictions; age 6%
- No resources 5%
- Fear of failure 4%
- Family obligations 3%
- No training/preparation 3%
- Not good enough at anything 2%

7. How similar is your church's perspective on the role of women in ministry with your perspective?

- Almost identical 27%
- Very similar 34%
- Somewhat similar 23%
- Not too similar 6%
- Almost completely different 5%
- Don't know 4%

8. Think about the roles that you fill in your church.

Please tell me if the following words accurately describe how you feel about serving in your church: you are resigned to their expectations. Does that describe your feelings accurately or not?

- Yes 31%
- No 59%
- Don't know 10%

9. Are there any types of leadership activities or roles in your church that are not currently open or available to women, strictly because of their gender? (Note: response options were not read to respondents; multiple responses were allowed.)

- Yes—pastoral staff 23%
- Yes—elders/deacons/trustees/vestry/board 11%
- Yes—teaching men 3%
- Yes—administrative staff 3%
- Yes—teaching (anyone—men, women, children) 2%
- Yes—other roles 1%

10. As far as you know, what are the main reasons why women are not allowed to fill some of those leadership roles or positions? (Note: response options were not read to respondents; multiple responses were allowed.)

Biblical principles 64%
Believe women are not as capable 4%
Tradition/history 4%
Church doctrine/church rules 3%
Women are not strong/tough enough 3%
Women lack the same level of training 2%

11. If you were given an open invitation to exercise a greater degree of leadership in your church, how likely would you be to invest more of your time and energy in leading in your church? Would you . . .

Definitely do so 16%
Probably do so 40%
Probably not do so 33%
Definitely not do so 10%
Don't know 2%

12. Men hold many different roles in society and have a variety of opinions about women serving in leadership roles. I'm going to mention some of those male roles and would like to know how supportive you feel the men who hold those positions are of allowing women to provide leadership in any role within your church.

How supportive is this person of allowing women to lead?

Position	<i>Completely</i>	<i>Highly</i>	<i>Somewhat</i>	<i>Not Too</i>	<i>Not At All</i>	<i>Don't Know</i>
your senior pastor	42%	26%	15%	4%	6%	6%
your husband	41%	22%	19%	4%	9%	6%
the men on the board of elders	31%	23%	23%	3%	7%	14%

13. To change our focus a bit, I'm going to read some statements to you about women leading in the local church. Please listen carefully to each statement and then tell me if, based on your personal experience at your church, you agree or disagree with the statement. Do you agree/disagree somewhat or strongly?

Statement	Agree Strongly	Agree Somewhat	Disagree Somewhat	Disagree Strongly	Don't Know
your church provides women with the same degree of leadership opportunities that Jesus would give them	55%	26%	6%	7%	6%
you can tell by its actions that your church values the leadership of women as much as it values the leadership of men	55%	27%	9%	6%	3%
you have more opportunities to lead outside of your church than you do within your church	22%	19%	22%	29%	7%
you believe that most of the men in your church would prefer that women have more leadership opportunities in your church	17%	27%	26%	17%	14%

THE RESIGNATION OF EVE

Statement	Agree Strongly	Agree Somewhat	Disagree Somewhat	Disagree Strongly	Don't Know
you would be more active in your church if you had more opportunities to use your leadership abilities there	12%	19%	27%	38%	5%
you believe that the Bible prohibits women from being leaders in your church	10%	9%	23%	53%	6%

Endnotes

FOREWORD

1. The biblical study that led to this conclusion is captured in *Beyond Sex Roles*, a book by former Wheaton College professor and Willow Creek elder, Dr. Gilbert Bilezikian.
2. Jesse Ellison, “Where Women Are Winning, *Newsweek*, September 18, 2011.

AUTHOR’S NOTE

1. In November 2010, Yoida Full Gospel Church released twenty satellite congregations to become independent, which resulted in a drop of over 300,000 people from its membership rolls. See <http://www.charismamag.com/index.php/news-old/29486-pruning-the-worlds-largest-church>; see also “O Come All Ye Faithful,” *The Economist*, November 1, 2007, http://www.economist.com/node/10015239?story_id=10015239&CFID=25385374.
2. The Barna Group, “Women Are the Backbone of the Christian Congregations in America,” March 6, 2000.
3. Reggie McNeal, *The Present Future* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2003), 3–4; based on George Barna’s State of the Church 2002. Note: George Barna defines the “unchurched” as not having attended a Christian church service, other than for a holiday service, such as Christmas or Easter, or for special events such as a wedding or funeral, at any time in the past six months.
4. Albert L. Winseman, “How Many Americans Are ‘Unchurched?’” Gallup, October 11, 2005, <http://www.gallup.com/poll/19129/how-many-americans-unchurched.aspx>.
5. Steve Smith, “Study Tracks Church Attendance Trends,” press release, University of Nebraska–Lincoln, April 15, 2010, <http://scarlet.unl.edu/?p=8242>.
6. I use the word *influence* because it includes *but is not limited to* “leadership.” Jesus treated women like Mary Magdalene and the Samaritan woman in John 4 not only with honor but also with intellectual respect. He didn’t talk down to them or patronize them. He asked them to do

difficult things and to use their influence to help others. He approached them in a way that demonstrated his belief that they were as spiritually competent as any men he interacted with.

I found it interesting to discover that denominations (whether liberal or conservative) that officially provide women an open door to the highest levels of influence often unofficially block them from walking through that same door. For more on this, be sure to read my interview with Amy Snow in chapter 9.

CHAPTER 1: THE THREE FACES OF RESIGNATION

1. The Barna Group, “Do Americans Change Faiths?” August 16, 2010, <http://www.barna.org/faith-spirituality/412-do-americans-change-faiths>.
2. Daniel Pink, *A Whole New Mind* (New York: Berkley, 2006), 103.
3. Anne Lamott, quoting her priest friend Tom in *Bird by Bird* (New York: Anchor Books, 1994), 21–22.
4. When conducting surveys, Barna defines Born-Again Christians as those people who say they have made “a personal commitment to Jesus Christ that is still important in their life today” and who also indicate they believe that when they die they will go to heaven because they have confessed their sins and accepted Jesus Christ as their Savior. Respondents are not asked to describe themselves as “born again.” Being classified as “born again” is not dependent upon church or denominational affiliation or involvement.

About 63 percent of the women who took part in the Barna research study for this book were classified as Born Again.

CHAPTER 2: WHY IT MATTERS

1. *Outsiders* is the term I use for the people Jesus misses most—those formerly known as lost, the unsaved, non-Christians, unredeemed, etc. It correctly identifies the us/them divide we have created in our understanding of who’s in and who’s out.
2. As reported in “Senior Class Day” in the *Yale Bulletin & Calendar*, vol. 31, no. 31 (June 6, 2003), <http://www.yale.edu/opa/arc-ybc/v31.n31/story104.html>.

CHAPTER 3: SUBMITTED

1. Hanna Rosin, “The End of Men,” *The Atlantic*, July/August 2010.
2. The term *spiritual covering* comes out of a biblical interpretation that says each of us needs another person to whom we are accountable and submitted. Proponents believe women, in particular, need a man as a covering. Usually this is their husband, but in the most conservative circles this injunction

includes even unmarried women. According to this theory, the person above us serves not only as an accountability partner but also (for those who are properly submitted) protection from Satan and deception.

CHAPTER 4: TALL MEN DON'T, BUT I DO

1. Dan Brennan, *Sacred Unions, Sacred Passions* (Elgin, IL: Faith Dance, 2010).
2. "For this reason, and because of the angels, the woman ought to have a sign of authority on her head. In the Lord, however, woman is not independent of man, nor is man independent of woman. For as woman came from man, so also man is born of woman. But everything comes from God. Judge for yourselves: Is it proper for a woman to pray to God with her head uncovered?" (1 Corinthians 11:10-13)
3. James Davison Hunter, *To Change the World* (New York: Oxford, 2010), 12.
4. See my book *The Outsider Interviews* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Publishing, 2010), which I cowrote with Todd Hunter and Craig Spinks.

CHAPTER 5: YOUR LIFE WILL NEVER BE THE SAME

1. Lawrence A. Greenfeld et al., "Violence by Intimates," US Department of Justice, March 1998, <http://bjs.ojp.usdoj.gov/content/pub/pdf/vi.pdf>; Karen Scott Collins et al., "Health Concerns across a Woman's Lifespan," The Commonwealth Fund, May 5, 1999, <http://www.commonwealthfund.org/Content/Publications/Fund-Reports/1999/May/Health-Concerns-Across-a-Womans-Lifespan--The-Commonwealth-Fund-1998-Survey-of-Womens-Health.aspx>.

CHAPTER 7: I WONDER WHAT WOULD HAVE HAPPENED

1. When it comes to women and influence, the Roman Catholic Church ends up exactly where conservative evangelicals do, although they arrive there using a different rationale. Evangelicals quote specific passages in the Bible, but Catholics refer to history or what they call "tradition," which they feel is equal to the Bible. Their tradition tells them that the priesthood is reserved for men only. They do, however, continue to practice the evangelical tradition of using women to do the work.

CHAPTER 9: YOU DON'T ALWAYS GET WHAT YOU WANT

1. While still making up a small percentage of the total number of senior pastors, more women are leading churches today than in past decades. The Barna Group reports the percentage of female senior pastors increased from 5 percent to 10 percent between 1999 and 2009. For more details, see "Number of Female Senior Pastors in Protestant Churches Doubles in Past Decade," <http://www.barna.org/barna-update>

/article/17-leadership/304-number-of-female-senior-pastors-in-protestant-churches-doubles-in-past-decade.

2. Genesis 5:2, KJV, italics added.

CHAPTER 10: EATING INTO THE PRINCIPAL

1. Calvin Miller, “The Slow, Slow Art of Urgency for Women in Ministry” (sermon, Woman’s Missionary Union annual meeting, Atlanta, June 13, 1999), <http://www.christianethicstoday.com/cetart/index.cfm?fuseaction=Articles.main&ArtID=659>.
2. Thanks to my friend Peter Block, consultant and author of *Community* (San Francisco: Berrett-Koehler Publishers, 2008), for this insight.
3. When I searched the words *egalitarian* and *complementarian* at Google, a few of the resources that came up were: *Manly Dominion and Womanly Dominion* by Mark Chanski; *Equal Yet Different* by Alexander Strauch; *Man and Woman, One in Christ* by Philip B. Payne; *Beyond Sex Roles* by Gilbert Bilezikian; *How I Changed My Mind about Women in Leadership*, ed. Alan F. Johnson; *Two Views on Women in Ministry*, ed. James R. Beck and Craig L. Blomberg; and *Men and Women in the Church* by Sarah Sumner.

CHAPTER 11: SHE LEFT THE HOMESCHOOL CHURCH

1. Clay Shirky, *Here Comes Everybody: The Power of Organizing without Organizations* (New York: Penguin, 2008), 303.

CHAPTER 12: WHOSE JESUS SHOULD I FOLLOW?

1. Helen blogs at www.mildenhall.net.

CHAPTER 13: CHANGE A METAPHOR, CHANGE A LIFE

1. Susan Hall, “My Journey to Feminism,” *Christian Feminism Today* 32, no. 4, winter 2009, <http://www.eewc.com/CFT/v32n4a1.htm>.

CHAPTER 14: YOU DON’T NEED PERMISSION

1. Malcolm Gladwell, *Outliers: The Story of Success* (New York: Little, Brown, and Co., 2008), 204–209. *Power distance index* is one of five differentials in the cultural dimensions theory, a systematic framework developed by Dutch social psychologist Geert Hofstede to assess and differentiate national cultures.

CHAPTER 19: PRESIDENT, SURE! PASTOR, SHHH!

1. On May 2, 2010, Pastor Larry Kroon gave a message in which he explained Wasilla Bible Church’s application of 1 Timothy 2:12, which reads, “I don’t allow a woman to teach or exercise authority over a man.” He said, “So as a

- congregation here, our practice is that we do not have women on our elder board. That isn't an issue of whether they're superior or inferior, or anything like that. It's just simply applying this passage. And secondly, we don't have them filling our pastoral preaching role either, in other words teaching from the pulpit on Sunday mornings. That's the way we've chosen to apply this passage." See http://wasillabible.org/sermon_files/2010_Transcripts/The%20Church3-The%20Practical.pdf.
2. The Nashville-based United Methodist Church has a total of 44,842 clergy, and about 10,000—23 percent—are female. Of the denomination's largest churches, just 85 are led by women, compared to 1,082 men in such positions. "Methodist Women Seek to Crack 'Stained-Glass Ceiling,'" *USA Today*, January 22, 2009, http://www.usatoday.com/news/religion/2009-01-22-methodist-women_N.htm.
 3. The Barna Group, "Americans Are Exploring New Ways of Experiencing God," June 8, 2009, <http://www.barna.org/barna-update/article/12-faith-spirituality/270-americans-are-exploring-new-ways-of-experiencing-god>.
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CHAPTER 20: WHEN ONLY A WOMAN WILL DO

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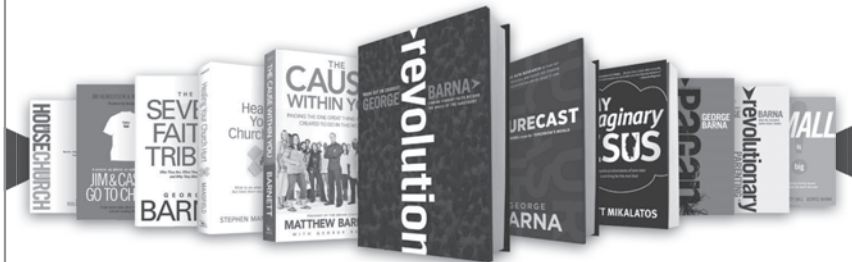
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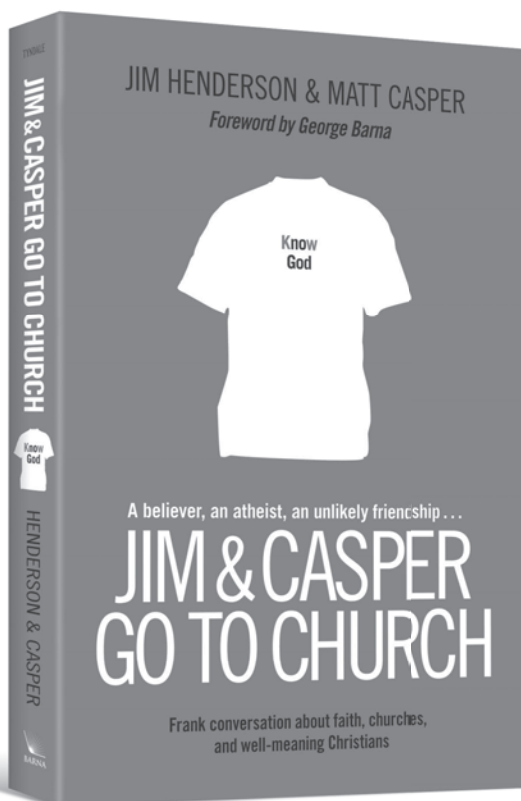
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