

Position Papers

of the

Covenant Reformed Presbyterian Church

TOPICS:

Distinctives

Federal Vision Theology

Women in the Military

DISTINCTIVES of the Covenant Reformed Presbyterian Church

At its meeting in Hingham, Wisconsin on November 1-2, 2005, the American Presbytery of the Covenant Reformed Presbyterian Church (CRPC) passed the following list of “Distinctives” which are intended to summarize the more notable distinctives which set the CRPC apart from other Presbyterian bodies. What follows was passed unanimously.

The Covenant Reformed Presbyterian Church (CRPC) recognizes that there is much confusion amongst churches that bear the name of Reformed and/or Presbyterian. This confusion has resulted from differing positions on the authority of Scripture and those historic and biblical confessions upon which their churches were originally founded. As error crept in over time, it gained a foothold in various ways and ultimately became tolerated. While the Westminster Confession says in chapter 25:5 *The purest Churches under heaven are subject both to mixture and error* it has come to such a state that *...some have so degenerated, as to become no Churches of Christ, but synagogues of Satan.* However, it goes on to say *Nevertheless, there shall be always a Church on earth, to worship God according to His will.*

The CRPC earnestly seeks to remain in this latter category while seeking out others with which to unite. The CRPC believes that the original Confessional Standards as formulated at the Westminster Assembly and accepted by various churches in England and Scotland in the 1640's, accurately summarize the Bible's teaching. It also recognizes that other confessional standards (such as the Belgic Confession, Heidelberg Catechism and Canons of Dordt) likewise represent the biblical foundation. However, many new varieties of errors addressed in these various confessions have arisen since the time of their writing, and many new ethical issues having arisen which were not addressed directly by these confessions. Therefore, there is a need for the church today to take a stand on issues either as clarifications of those already addressed by these confessions or those not addressed by them.

Additionally, there are some issues which are addressed by the confessional standards over which there is legitimate difference of opinion and which, in the opinion of the CRPC, should not be cause for division into separate covenantal federations or denominations.

Consequently, the following abbreviated distinctives summarize the CRPC's commitment to walk together in obedience to the Scriptures with agreed upon allowance for differences within the general framework of a strict subscription to our Confessional Standards (specifically, the Westminster Confession of Faith and the Larger and Shorter Catechisms from 1643), as well as both biblical and wise polity practices.

The CRPC has four major documents which are prioritized in authority as follows: 1) The Bible; 2) The Constitution (CONST), which include, among other documents, the Westminster Confession of Faith (WCF), Larger Catechism

(WLC) and Shorter Catechism (WSC); 3) The Book of Church Government or By-Laws composed of three directories: Directory of Church Order (DCO), Directory of Church Discipline (DCD), and Directory of Church Worship (DCW); 4) Appendices and Position Papers.

THE BIBLE:

We believe that the Bible is composed of the 66 canonical books acknowledged by the church over all ages and that:

[Quoted from Const. I,B,2,e]

“higher critical” teaching which denies the Mosaic authorship of the Pentateuch, denies the inerrancy of the Scripture or postulates any position which makes any portion of Scripture the product of evolutionary development or redaction, and/or teaches that any portion of Scripture is “not profitable” for the church to teach, use or expound today; is out of accord with Scripture.

THE ORIGINAL TEXT OF THE BIBLE:

[Quoted from Const. I,B,2,e]

The Canon of Scripture has been providentially preserved in the original languages via the Byzantine Majority Family of Greek texts (especially the Textus Receptus), and the Massoretic text of the Old Testament Hebrew. Such was the position of the Westminster Assembly. We therefore reject texts that omit passages from the canonical books of the Bible in the same way that we would reject the omission from or addition to the canonical books as asserted by the Roman Catholic Church’s addition of the Apocrypha and other attempts to rethink the canonicity of the historically accepted canon of Scripture.

VERSION OF THE ENGLISH BIBLE:

The Authorized Version of the Bible will be used by the presbytery for public statements, unless the presbytery specifies otherwise by majority vote in each case. We do not accept as reasonable, any exclusive understanding of the Authorized or King James Bible as the *only* English version authorized by God for use in His churches (much less “inspired” or “inerrant”), though churches and brethren which desire to use the Authorized Version as their church Bible or for personal use is both acceptable and edifying.

MIRACLES, SIGNS AND WONDERS:

God’s Word declares His authority over all creation and thus His ability to perform miracles and work extra-ordinarily as He wills. God, in times past, used these extra-ordinary means as part of His direct revelation. Now that the Scriptures are complete and the apostolic age has ended, we hold that the biblical teaching is that the ordinary use of these means has now ceased and that God speaks only through His word. For this reason we oppose the neo-Pentecostal movement and:

[Quoted from Const. I,B,2,f]

...the charismatic movement including the use of extra-ordinary spiritual gifts and offices (which have ceased).

SCIENCE AND THE BIBLE:

Our biblical position is in contrast to much “science”, falsely so-called, yet accepted and taught in many churches and most schools around the world. True science will never contradict what the Bible teaches. We reject

[Quoted from Const. I,B,2,a]

...any position which denies the world wide scope of the Noahic Flood (which destroyed the entire earth in water and all mankind save Noah and his family and destroyed all the clean and unclean animal life on earth

except that which Noah took aboard the ark or which naturally swam in the oceans);

CREATION:

We hold to the biblical account of creation as six normal and literal contiguous days. While some of these days were before the creation of the sun and the moon, and some after, we accept all these days to be of the same length as the 24 hour days we have today. Creation was thus a miracle of God accomplished in a short period of time and not a process that took place over long periods of time, much less millions or billions of years. Consequently, we oppose:

[Quoted from Const. I,B,2,a]

Any position which denies a creation in six literal, contiguous calendar days...theistic evolutionary theory; uniformitarian geology (positing many millions of years for the earth and the universe); Framework Hypothesis or Analogical Day View (that is, any poetic or linguistic construct of Genesis which hermeneutically denies or refuses to affirm six literal, contiguous, calendar days);

THE LOVE OF GOD:

Because of the many doctrinal errors that have resulted from a misunderstanding of the all-important doctrine of God's love for His people, we have set forth our position and understanding on this critical doctrine so as to be clear in our understanding of the Bible on this all-important subject.

[Quoted from Const. I,B,2,a – Please download the full Constitution from our website to obtain all the footnotes for this section.]

SECTION 3. STATEMENT ON THE LOVE OF GOD

We confess that God is love, and that this describes His essential and unchanging nature, which is first of all and underlying all, a love for Himself.

We confess that God's creation was declared by Him to be "very good" and that His essential goodness extends without change or alteration to all that He has created.

Further, we confess that in Adam's fall all of his subsequent posterity sinned in and through him, and so all are liable to the just and righteous punishment due to his and their own sins. God might righteously have inflicted that punishment to His own greater glory in the vindication of His attributes of holiness, righteousness, and justice without any diminishing of His essential property of love.

We confess that God has been pleased to demonstrate His love nature by the sending and sacrifice of His Son, Jesus Christ, to bear the just punishment of His elect. This in no way diminishes His holiness, righteousness, or justice demonstrated in the deserved punishment of the sins of the reprobate.

Therefore we acknowledge and confess that the love of God which is demonstrated in the sending and sacrifice of Jesus Christ is unmerited, discriminating, purposeful, covenantal, effectual, and exclusive to His elect people, and that no power in heaven or earth can separate them from it. As this is so, we confess that God regards all those outside the redemption and righteousness of the Son with His just hatred, and that His divine prerogative in love toward His elect and hatred toward the reprobate is expressed to the end that He alone will be glorified in the fulfillment of His purpose by Jesus Christ.

We also confess that, although God knows all of His elect individually from eternity, it has pleased Him to call them individually in time, primarily by the means of the preached gospel. Since men are not privy to His unrevealed will and decree of election, it is His will that the gospel be preached to all men without distinction, that the elect may be convicted of sin and converted, and the reprobate hardened and rendered without excuse on the coming day of judgment.

SEXUALITY:

The Bible teaches that one man and one woman are the only rightful persons in a biblical marriage (Genesis 2:24; Matthew 19:5-6, see also WCF 24:1) to which all sexual conduct should be confined. All sexual conduct outside of such a biblical marriage is sin. Therefore, we oppose bigamy, polygamy, bisexuality, homosexuality, lesbianism, incest, bestiality, necromania, and paedophilia. (WLC 138, 139).

LIFE:

The Bible teaches that life begins at conception, and that it is sinful to destroy human life once conceived and that all reasonable measures should be made both to preserve and protect it. Therefore, we oppose abortion, infanticide and euthanasia. (WLC 135, 136)

THE ROLE OF MEN AND WOMEN WITHIN THE FAMILY AND CHURCH:

The Bible teaches that man and woman are both equal in the sight of God. However, we also recognize that just as there is equality of Personhood in the Trinity, yet with differing roles and responsibilities; so to with mankind, men and women have differing roles and responsibilities. Within the family, men are exercise sacrificial, loving headship. Within the church, we believe that the Bible authorizes men alone to hold ecclesiastical offices, though we heartily recognize the many gifts God has given to women to minister within the church. For this reason, within the church, we affirm:

[Quoted from Const. II, C]

Only men may be ordained to ecclesiastical office.

CIVIL MAGISTRATES:

“The Scriptures declare that civil magistrates are instituted by God for the good of both mankind and the church. We believe that God’s establishment of the family and the church as legitimate governments are distinct from the civil magistrate. Accordingly, we oppose Erastianism.” (Const. I,B,2,g)

We further acknowledge that God’s work at the Tower of Babel and His gathering of men into distinct tribes, nations, cultures, races and language groups has its divine purpose in hindering the growth of ungodliness.

BIBLICAL POLITICAL PROCESS:

It is the biblical duty of all believers to evaluate all political parties and candidates in light of biblical law. We therefore hold that the teachings of the Bible prohibit advocacy in the churches of a socialistic world view, and its consequent, redistributive (envy) mentality.

CHURCH GOVERNMENT DISTINCTIVES:

We hold ourselves to be a denomination adhering to Presbyterian church government (polity). By that, we mean that there is a divine warrant in Scripture for the existence of presbyteries and that they have been invested by God Himself with authority to decide on issues such as doctrine and disputes between churches, and additionally to provide godly advice. We do not believe the presbyteries (or classes or synods as they are sometimes called) are merely an administrative tool without divine warrant or authority. Many other things have developed within Reformed and Presbyterian church tradition which, while not disallowed by Scripture, have been found to tend toward corruption and hierarchical practices within the Presbyterian system. With these experiences in mind, and in order to avoid these same practices within the future of this denomination, we have taken the following positions on church polity structure:

No standing committees [See DCO 10:4]

All ecclesiastical ministries such as missions, theological education, deaconal aid are to be accountable to a local church. (See DCO 25:1)

Regional and broader presbyteries exist only during the actual time of their meeting. (See DCO 18:14)

Ministers are members of their local church. [See DCO 7:3; 23:19]

Doctrinal and ministerial credentials of ministers are under the authority of the regional presbytery, and not the local church. (See DCO 13:22; 23:19)

Ethical practices of the minister in his personal or official life, but not under the category of doctrinal or ministerial credentials, are dealt with at the local church level first, before coming to the regional presbytery. (DCO 23:19,20)

MISSIONARY AND MINISTRY ACTIVITY:

We believe that the local church is the backbone of all outreach of the denomination and for that reason broader presbyteries shall not establish a centralized missionary or evangelistic outreach, except through a local church, with which other churches may cooperate.

[Quoted from DCO 25:1]

SECTION 1. Foreign missions, their agencies and bodies are to be undertaken by local churches who may invite participation of other local churches

LORD'S TABLE:

We celebrate the oneness and unity of the whole true Body of Christ. However, we also recognize that because of sin, we cannot have that unity represented perfectly in one particular local church or group of local churches, and some churches have fallen so far from the truth that they can no longer be called true churches of Christ. Within our member churches, there are some basic requirements, but beyond that a good degree of flexibility on the practice of those requirements. All of this is reflected in our view of the Lord's Supper which is as follows:

[Quoted from Const. I,B,2,j]

All churches must practice, in some manner, a guarding ("fencing") of the Lord's Table. Presbytery will not specify beyond this mandate. Thus, various means of guarding the Table are allowed: examination of visitors and members; closing of the communion to visitors; exhortation of the congregation concerning the Table. However, if the Table is closed in a particular CRPC church, the Table, nonetheless, will be opened to visiting members and officers of other CRPC churches and ministries.

SUBSCRIPTION:

The issue of "subscription" has caused difficulties over the years within most confessional churches. We require every officer who disagrees with any statement in the confessional standards to state, in writing, said exception or "scruple". The only exceptions or "scruples" that are allowed are those that have been carried through and agreed to by the broadest presbytery in existence within our denomination. The following represents our specifics on this:

All ministers in the CRPC are bound by oath to teach publicly only those things found to be in accord with the Constitution (as interpreted by the exceptions and clarifications herein stated). Those received who hold different views are bound not to teach them publicly or privately, though they may be discussed within the context of a broader assembly as provided by its rules and directories. (Const. I,B,2,l)

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SECTION 4. The congregational presbytery will also inquire of any exceptions/scruples the potential ministerial candidate may have with regard to the Westminster standards. Any such exceptions/scruples shall be recorded and the congregational presbytery will indicate by vote whether it finds such exceptions/scruples to be allowable. The congregational presbytery will make these exceptions/scruples known to the

congregation should it nominate the candidate to the congregation. The congregational presbytery, should a call be issued by the congregation, will forward those exceptions/scruples and the action taken to the regional presbytery for consideration.

SECTION 10. The regional presbytery will inquire of any exceptions/scruples the potential ministerial candidate may have with regard to the Westminster standards. Any such exceptions/scruples shall be recorded and the presbytery will indicate by vote whether it finds such exceptions/scruples to be allowable and so inform the candidate. Any exception/scruple that is not allowed by the regional presbytery will be cause for refusing to ordain and/or install the man as a minister in the calling church. In the case of a current CRPC minister, an exception/scruple previously found to be allowable in his case will continue to be allowed by the regional presbytery. Any new or changed exceptions/scruples are subject to review and approval by the regional presbytery.

OWNERSHIP OF CHURCH PROPERTY:

DCO 3:13 Presbytery may not lay claim to the properties, lands, buildings, parsonages or other assets owned by the individual churches, members, or officers. No act of discipline (or otherwise) of presbytery may be construed as a claim to the title, ownership of the properties, lands, buildings, parsonages or other assets owned by the individual churches, members, or officers.

Federal Vision Theology

At its meeting in Fellsmere, Florida on January 18-19, 2005, the American Presbytery of the Covenant Reformed Presbyterian Church voted unanimously to adopt this statement:

The Covenant Reformed Presbyterian Church has found itself in the unenviable position of having to deal with a recent movement, variously referred to as Auburn Avenue Theology, Monroe Doctrine, Federal Vision, Hypercovenantalism and Neolegalism. We hereby express our concern regarding numerous doctrinal aberrations within the writings of the major proponents of this movement.

It is our desire as a denomination to be known for our clarity and charity, as well as our evangelistic zeal. There are times when the church must take a definitive stance against theological error, especially when said error strikes at the heart of the Gospel.

We stand with our Protestant forbearers in declaring justification by faith alone based upon the imputation of Christ's righteousness alone. We cordially invite those who are likewise interested in the truths of the Protestant Reformation to join with us in spreading the good news of Jesus Christ to the world.

Women in Military

On March 22, 2000, the Covenant Reformed Presbyterian Church (CRPC) adopted the following motion:

Resolved that the CRPC recognizes the Biblical prohibitions concerning any drafting of the female into the armed services of this or any nation, since such a command represents a direct rejection of the Laws of our Lord and would be sinful for any nation to adopt or woman to obey.

Therefore the churches reject the drafting of women as contrary to Christian faith and practice.

The following position paper was then adopted at the June 26-28, 2000 presbytery as the Scriptural basis for the above motion.

Position Paper Concerning Women in the Military and Combat of the Covenant Reformed Presbyterian Church

June 28, 2000

I. Political Background: The problem considered

The prospect of a “gender-neutral” draft into the military has become a real possibility in this country. Such a draft raises the question of women being drafted into the role of combatants.

This issue has come up in the past administrations (Republican and Democrat), showing bipartisan support, so it is feared that the prospect has potential, especially after the November, 2000, Presidential elections. The reason for such “potential” lies in the well-publicized fact that the Armed Forces of the United States are “down” in military manpower from their needed levels of preparedness. In other words, all the efforts to recruit the necessary numbers of individuals into the Armed Services have not met the demands of the military. Therefore, draft proposals have been initiated by the Pentagon with pressure being exerted by feminist pressure groups.

Recent administrations have all demonstrated a strong proclivity toward drafting women into the military, including combat roles. President Carter himself advocated registration of women for the draft and his appointees pushed hard for the repeal of the combat exclusion. When Congress turned down the Carter Administration's recommendation for women registration, the Supreme Court upheld Congressional authority to do so but did not expand the decision in order to negate the constitutionality of the issue itself. Unfortunately, the Reagan rhetoric notwithstanding, that administration supported the goals of the ERA and placed ERA supporter Sandra O'Conner as a Supreme Court Justice. As a member of the government-sponsored civilian (feminist) organization, Defense Advisory Commission on Women in the Service (DACOWITS) since 1951, Judge O'Conner initiated and sponsored the effort to repeal the laws that exempt women from military combat. With Justice Byron White's retirement from the Court, the Clinton Administration has furthered “stacked the Court” toward female registration and combat roles with the appointment of Ruth Bader Ginsberg.

It must be understood that individuals in the Armed Services are very much encouraged to pursue opportunities in the service but all is subservient to the needs and good of the services. Though civil society protects individual rights, the military is governed by different rules. For example, Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 ensures equal treatment by law. In contrast, no less than seven major Supreme Court decisions are distilled in these words from *Goldman v. Weinberger*:

The military is, by necessity, a specialized society separate from civilian society ... The military must insist upon a respect for duty and a discipline without counterpart in civilian life in order to prepare for and perform its vital role ... The essence of the military service is the subordination of the desires and interests of the individual to the needs of the service.

Any position which naively argues the possibility of a female draft into non-combatant status is to be faulted. Once drafted, the woman can be compelled into whatever role (combat or non-combat) the military commands for her, irrespective of her desires in the matter. In contrast, volunteer status allows a recruit a much wider range of contractual opportunities and choices. Not so the DRAFT. She would be ordered as to how and where she must serve.

II. The Question Before the Covenant Reformed Presbyterian Church:

Military and Combat Roles for Women?

The question which is before the CRPC asks whether Scripture speaks to the issue of a female draft and, if so, does it prohibit such a calling of a woman into the role of combatant? In addition, is there witness in the Confession and its attendant Catechisms which speak to this issue? If Scripture condemns such a practice then the CRPC must adopt a position of “conscientious-objection” for all women concerning a draft into the military.

III. The Covenantal Basis for Consideration of This or Any Issue: Hermeneutical Foundation

It is obvious that the New Testament does not directly address the issue before us. However, the New Testament never assumes it will specifically address each issue of life. However, the New Testament does claim that its content is grounded doctrinally and ethically in the Old Testament. St. Paul writes:

For whatsoever things are written aforetime were written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the Scriptures might have hope. (Rom. 15:4.)

The ethical and doctrinal foundations of the Church were first rooted in the Law of God ... The skeleton being the Decalogue and the Pentateuch its systemic framework. Any ethical issue, in order to be more fully studied, must begin in the Pentateuch to find its covenantal definitions. No doubt the Confession guides us in so far as our standard of interpretation is concerned:

the whole counsel of God . . . is either expressly set down in Scripture, or by good and necessary consequence may be deduced from Scripture ... (WCF 1:6.).

However, the Bible does not leave us to guess as to the principles which are used to interpret the standard.

1. God spoke to the fathers of the Church by the agency of the prophets (Heb. 1:1-2). God has chosen to speak to His people but only through the Word given by His prophets and later, His apostles.

2. Repeatedly, the prophets enjoined Israel as to their breach of the Law of God (Psa. 89:30-32; Isa. 1:10-17; 8:20; Neh. 1:4-9), called a “covenant” at Sinai (Deu. 5:1). So much was this the case that Israel learned to look to the Ark of the Covenant which housed the Law of God (Jer. 3:16). In other words, the prophets pointed to the Law (housed in the Ark) as the standard thus breached by Israel.

3. Now, we have the promise of a New Covenant (Jer. 31:31; Heb.8:6-13). Yet, we have explicit instruction that such a new covenant consists of “writing the Law upon the heart” which means the Holy Spirit will move the heart of the Christian to a fruitful and discerned application of the Law in its ethical applications and its doctrines (Pro. 1:1-9: “wisdom”, “instruction”, “understanding”, “equity”, “knowledge”, “justice”,

“judgment”, “interpretation”, “discretion”, “learning”, “wise counsels”, “law” are referenced as “ornaments” of God’s grace which, creedally, is only applied by the operation of the Holy Spirit”).

4. Thus, we begin by recognizing that the judicial administration of Israel has “expired together with the state of that people not obliging any other now further than the general equity thereof may require” (WCF 19:4.)

5. The equity of any precept makes application of its essence. For instance, St. Paul uses a law concerning oxen as equity in arguing the necessity of paying the ministry of the church (1Co. 9:9-10). Our Lord references the necessity of using the judicial laws of the Old Covenant in Mark 7 (Mat 15:1-20; Mar 7:1-23) to chastise the authorities who negated the Law concerning the sanctioning of rebellious children. Thus, our Lord upheld the judicial function, arguing the judicial function of the Law as binding upon the conscience.

6. St. Paul instructs us that “All Scripture is given by inspiration of God and is profitable for ... instruction” (2Ti. 3:16). The “all” of 2 Timothy 3:16 and the “whatever” of Romans 15:4 affirm that the Word of God in its entirety and in its particularity are profitable for our instruction.

7. Covenantal governance of a precept must be placed within the “jurisdictional boundaries” to which God ascribes it. An obvious example to consider would be the command to “love thy neighbor”. This has varying applicable precepts governing its use depending upon whether one is addressing one’s wife as “neighbor” or one’s parents as “neighbor” or one’s next door neighbor as neighbor. The commands concerning sexual relations pertain to wife and become a violation of the Seventh commandment if practiced elsewhere. A precept of God’s Law must be used only within the proper covenantal jurisdiction(s) (family, marriage, civil government, church, business, etc.) to which it was intended by God. Given the confusion of roles of the male and female as espoused even in the churches, this point is particularly important concerning the alleged “calling” of a woman into the military by her civil rulers.

8. To find the “starting point”, presuppositional (God-given “worldview” assumptions derived exclusively from Scripture) use of precept must be recognized. For instance, gender distinction is first differentiated as a function of creation. Creation defines the purpose and meaning of everything God has created. In other words, creation instructs us that God invests “meaning and purpose” to everything and it is for man to use every fact as God intends it ... but not to pervert it by using it in ways which defy God’s intent.

9. Such “intent” is specified in the Law of God as framed in the Pentateuch in such varied relations to other aspects of society. No law stands by itself. One of the problems with “women in combat” is that the subject matter involves varied relations to other aspects of society ... marriage, pregnancy, children, society, civil duty, war, etc.

IV. Presuppositional Development and Gender Distinctions: Worldview Considerations

God made man in His image. That image was designed both to know and to represent God correctly, i.e., according to His revealed Word. God instructed Adam that he was to till and guard the Garden. It was Adam’s responsibility to do both of those duties. God made woman as an “helpmeet” (“an helper suitable for him” — Gen. 2:18). This clearly indicates that man stands in a headship or position of rule over the woman. As husband and wife, they relate sexually to each other and become “one — (judicially, a union and covenantal government before God, Mat. 19:4-6). Thus, such a union becomes the basic governing unit of society with society’s very stability dependent upon the sanctity of marriage and the family. In such a relationship, husband and wife are called to represent Christ and His Bride (Eph. 5), meet one another’s needs (Prov.5), and become fruitful and multiply (Gen. 1:28).

The wife's role as childbearer and nurturer is further expounded in Scripture. St. Paul speaks of the wife as one who is specifically used of God for birthing and rearing of children (1Ti. 2:15; 5:14). But is that “exclusive” of participation in the military? In other words, could a woman be drafted despite the necessity to birth/nurture a family, even as her husband can be called up into battle despite the need of the family for its covenant head? Please note that Paul is here giving a summary statement concerning what is taught in the Law of God. Notice should be given to his comments in Romans 13 which say:

...and if there be any other commandment, it is briefly comprehended in this saying, Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself. (Rom. 13:9.)

Other such commandments do exist and Paul, as all Jews, knew that the Pentateuch contains many laws which filled in the needed details concerning the “covenant” given at Sinai. Paul knew that there are many issues in society which relate to the ongoing functions of the household. His summary statements concerning the role of a wife ought not to be in any way qualified with respect to any alleged military “calling” or order of government. The reason for such is found in Deuteronomy 20. We read as follows:

And it shall be when ye are come nigh unto battle ... the officers shall speak unto the people, saying, What man is there that hath built a new house, and hath not dedicated it? Let him go and return to his house, lest he die in the battle and another man dedicate it? ... And what man is there that hath betrothed a wife and hath not taken her? Let him also go and return unto his house, lest he die in the battle and another man take her? (Deu 20:5, 7.)

The basic argument of this passage shows that men are exclusively addressed as to a return to their homes and wives from their units in the military. In fact, the very next section sends men home from their units if they are faint-hearted, a point God instructed Gideon to obey. However, this passage is far stronger in its position concerning women and the military. Any address involving an order to the people has its foundation in a LAW issued by the civilian authorities, (e.g., the king). No such law addresses the female in the military here though the order addresses “the people.” It should be noted that the people are addressed as a whole by the authorities, yet never is there the slightest intimation of female involvement returning for any reason — including that of being faint-hearted. Later, in Judges, Barak is reproved for his shame in this regard because he, as a warrior, was afraid. He was reproved by a woman, Deborah, who shamed him because it was a man’s responsibility to fight the wars of the Lord and it was a shame for men to be afraid before the enemy. Women have no such responsibilities as soldiers which is the reason Deborah is the one to so shame Barak. (Judges 4 & 5.)

Later in Israel's history, the judge Samuel reproves Israel for the fact that the king, which they shall choose, will act as an heathen (“as the nations”) and draft women into the military, interestingly though, only in a non-combatant status. Saul was that king and the Lord would cite him for the “witchcraft” (1Sa. 15) of disobeying the Law of the Lord. It should be noted that this passage concerning the linking of disobedience to the Law of the Lord as witchcraft, though often applied by churches to disobedience in general, is actually first applied to the civil magistrate, which drew God’s wrath for violating the Law of God (Saul specifically violated Deu. 25:17-19 concerning the destruction of the Amalekites). Thus, the point to be noticed is the fact that the civil magistrate acted as an heathen in conscripting women into the military (v. 13 of this chapter makes reference to women serving the king as “perfumers, cooks and bakers” and does not specify “military service”) and, violating the Law is to act as an heathen, drawing God's wrath for its occultic propensities (1Sa. 15).

In addition, the Law forbids the violation of marriage by any party whatsoever. “What God hath joined together let not man put asunder” is the warning of our Lord. (Mat 19:6; Mar 10:9.) That warning is applicable to the state as well as any other party. Indeed, the kings and rulers of the earth are warned that they are “to kiss the Son, lest He be angry and you perish from the way when His wrath is kindled but a

little." (Psa 2:12.) Thus, the civil "heads" of society have but derived authority only and are called to represent God's administration of justice as His "ministers" and "servants" (Rom 13). As a result, St. Paul cites the use of the second table of the Decalogue in the same chapter (Rom 13). The second table concerns our duties to our neighbor. The Westminster Larger Catechism states:

The sum of the six commandments which contain our duty to man, is, to love our neighbor as ourselves, and to do to others what we would have them to do to us. (WLC #122.)

The point of St. Paul's use of the second table of the Law is designed to remind all parties addressed in the chapter (both ruler and ruled, Christian and non-Christian) of the duties man has toward his fellow man. Neither the state nor any other authority may transgress the laws of God.

In considering such a prohibition, the Law is quite specific when it says "Thou shalt not commit adultery." The Westminster Larger Catechism comments concerning the meaning of this Commandment when it teaches (for our Scriptural consideration) an interpretation which requires "the preservation of it (chastity) in ourselves and others" and "shunning all occasions of uncleanness" (WLC #138). It also forbids "adultery, fornication, rape" and "all other provocations to ... uncleanness" (WLC #139). This would have implications for the proper segregation of women and men in training situations which necessitate physical contact as well as living conditions in ships, camps, barracks and on the field so as to avoid uncleanness among troops. This would also forbid our nation or any authority from orders or governmental regulations which would "place women in situations where they may be captured and in danger therefore of rape."

Finally, God's Law is specific in the enumerating of males (Heb."zakar") for the military (Num. 1). This term, "zakar", is used in the Old Testament "for the male sex when sexual distinctions are in view." (Theological Wordbook of the Old Testament). These males are to be prepared "to go out to war" (Num. 1:3), meaning "to serve in the army". The males are explicitly in view when the army is called up for duty or cited for its responsibilities (Num. 31:3-4; Jos 1:14; 6:3; 8:3; Jdg. 7:1-8; 20:8-11; 1Sa 8:11-12, contrast verse 13).

Other Scriptures suggested:

Deuteronomy 22:5; 24:5; 1 Samuel 10:9-12; Isaiah 3; Amos 2:16; 1 Corinthians 16:13.