

SETTLED IN HEAVEN

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The Scottish Episcopal Church, after some serious discussions, “unveiled a new service in which all masculine pronouns have been replaced with a gender-neutral variety, while the trinity of ‘Father, Son, and Holy Ghost’ is now ‘Creator, Redeemer, Sanctifier” (according to womensrights.change.org). There is at least one reason for this change. According to the same article, “...to refer to God as male will always make it difficult for women to achieve full equality even in a progressive denomination like this one.” Continuing in the next paragraph, “...God has been painted with a beard for centuries because when churches referred to him in male terms, they meant that he is male. This also came in handy for excluding women from church hierarchy.”

Some, when announcing changes, will refer to a process of “much study, prayer and discussion,” no doubt thinking that this justifies their changes. Nothing justifies changes that are not God-ordained. If these discussions were centered upon the Word of God, rather than on pleasing men, God’s Word would be upheld and followed.

In the sight of God, man and woman are equal in Christ. Paul wrote, “THERE IS NEITHER JEW NOR GREEK, THERE IS NEITHER BOND NOR FREE, THERE IS NEITHER MALE NOR FEMALE: FOR YE ARE ALL ONE IN CHRIST JESUS” (**Galatians 3:28**). Christ died for all. John wrote, “THE NEXT DAY JOHN SEETH JESUS COMING UNTO HIM, AND SAITH, BEHOLD THE LAMB OF GOD, WHICH TAKETH AWAY THE SIN OF THE WORLD” (**John 1:29**). And, again, “AND HE IS THE PROPITIATION FOR OUR SINS: AND NOT FOR OURS ONLY, BUT ALSO FOR THE SINS OF THE WHOLE WORLD” (**1 John 2:2**).

Though in Christ we are all one, we still retain our gender. And, no matter how many discussions there may be, there is still the gender difference in some of what God has for His children.

For instance, no matter how many discussions might be had, God still has placed men in the “overseer” position. Paul wrote, “THIS IS A TRUE SAYING, IF A MAN DESIRE THE OFFICE OF A BISHOP, HE DESIRETH A GOOD WORK. A BISHOP THEN MUST BE BLAMELESS, THE HUSBAND OF ONE WIFE, VIGILANT, SOBER, OF GOOD BEHAVIOUR, GIVEN TO HOSPITALITY, APT TO TEACH” (**1 Timothy 2:1-2**).

The Psalmist penned, “FOR EVER, O **LORD**, THY WORD IS SETTLED IN HEAVEN” (**Psalms 119:89**). The word settled means, “to station, to appoint, to erect, to take a stand, Abraham’s servant stationed himself beside the well to find a wife for Isaac (**Genesis 24:13**); Jacob set up a stone pillar (**Genesis 35:14, 20**); the people stood up when Moses went out to the tent to meet God (**Exodus 33:8**); God established the boundaries for Israel” (from The Complete Word Study Dictionary: Old Testament, AMG Publishers , 2003, All rights reserved). God’s word is erected in heaven; no man has the right to change what God has already erected.

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Beloved, Jesus said, "MY MOTHER AND MY BRETHREN ARE THESE WHICH HEAR THE WORD OF GOD, AND DO IT" (**Luke 8:21**). May all of us "hear' and "do" God's Word.