



John Dickson

28 August at 16:05 · Sydney · Edited ·

Well, here's my final - yes, my final - reply to [Matthias Media's](#) critique of the argument for women preaching in church: "HOW CAN ONE GUY BE WRONG IN SO MANY WAYS? The awkward decision 'Women, Sermons and the Bible' forces us to make".

<http://bit.ly/1zIBVwH>

It begins ...

I naturally expected Matthias Media's *Women, Sermons and the Bible* to contain a vigorous exegetical defence of the no-women-preaching case. I also imagined it would offer genuine challenges to my interpretation of key biblical passages. (And, in some places, that is what we find.) I did not, however, expect to be told repeatedly that the case for women preaching sermons in *Hearing Her Voice* rests on "basic linguistic errors", obvious "flaws", and simple "exegetical fallacies", as if the argument need not detain us and Dickson would be well advised to head back to Moore College for a refresher course!

WSB is a very unusual book. Instead of standing at the crease, as it were, and skillfully batting away serious arguments with better arguments, the authors of WSB choose to describe perfectly reasonable exegetical observations—made by numerous experts—"fallacies", "errors", and so on. This is not a healthy mode of argument among friends, especially friends who know that each of us has spent considerable time gaining some familiarity with the New Testament, Greek grammar, history, and so on.

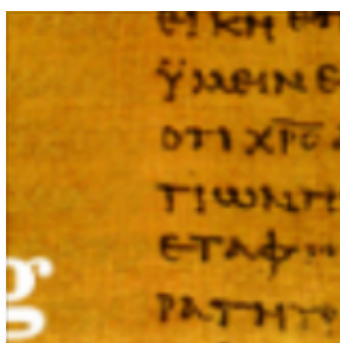
I suppose it is possible I have presented nothing substantial in *Hearing Her Voice*—that the evidence for my case is "vanishingly small", as the editor declares it. But some readers must be wondering: How can one guy be wrong in so many ways!? One senior academic friend quipped that WSB manages "to articulate your position into a quadrivium of error." Somehow, I have apparently found every possible way to go astray in New Testament studies—grammar, syntax, linguistics, exegesis, history, theology, not to mention application. It's quite an achievement!

The zero-sum, overreaching strategy of WSB has some rhetorical force, but it does not progress the conversation very far. And in several cases it risks the plausibility of WSB itself. For if it can be

shown that much of what this book declares to be plain error is, in fact, regarded by New Testament experts as pretty standard, readers will be forced to make an awkward judgment: Either the scholarship of WSB is uniquely authoritative, or the book is guilty of an exaggerated and obscuring mode of argument.

In this final response to WSB, I will confront some of the book's key exegetical and linguistic criticisms. To treat them all, in a point-by-point manner, would be laborious and probably unnecessary. My main aim in what follows is to demonstrate that, despite the multi-author team, copious footnotes, and frequent self-declared 'victory', WSB trades more in discrediting arguments than wrestling with them.

I can only hope that the authors will one day agree to a moderated public discussion where this intellectual 'trench warfare' can give way to a genuine, human conversation about this important topic. Until that happy day, this is my last formal reply to Matthias Media's Women, Sermons and the Bible ...



How can one guy be wrong in so many ways? The awkward decision "Women, Sermons and the Bible"...

I naturally expected Matthias Media's Women, Sermons and the Bible to contain a vigorous...

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David Buddrige and 40 others like this.

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John Dickson Again, very happy to take any questions or disputations, but I do want to leave this behind after this week. Special prizes for anyone who makes it to the end of this ridiculously long final reply!

28 August at 16:07 · Like · 2



Hefin Jones Still reading... can't but help notice that this is clearer on some important points than either incarnation of HHV.

28 August at 16:26 · Like · 3



John Dickson I'm glad. That's the beauty of interaction, right: you learn how people "hear" your argument and respond with greater clarity. In any case, the bulk if this final piece does much more than clarify, I think you'll agree. I'm counting on you, **Hefin**. Not many

others will endure these 10,000 words. The force be with you.

28 August at 16:30 · [Like](#) · 3



Hefin Jones How long was HHV #1?

28 August at 16:36 · [Like](#)



John Dickson I had your remarks from Tuesday in mind, [Jackson Stace](#), as I put finishing touches in this final one. Thanks for the caution against overstatement. Not sure if I managed, but I thought about it!

28 August at 16:37 · [Like](#) · 1



Stephen Parker wow - wish I could write 10,000 words of that quality in 2 days!

28 August at 16:39 · [Like](#) · 2



John Dickson [Hefin Jones](#), HHV1 21k, HHV2 32k, WSB about 50k, these 7 replies 30k. Cheers.

28 August at 16:41 · [Like](#)



Hefin Jones Thanks!

Everybody else's FB commentary.... ??K 🤔

28 August at 16:41 · [Like](#) · 5



John Dickson [Stephen Parker](#), nah, I wrote both of these final replies in a week's holiday last month. I just polished since Tuesday. Cheers.

28 August at 16:42 · [Like](#)



Stephen Parker ha ha - still impressive, but much healthier

28 August at 16:43 · [Like](#) · 2



Hefin Jones This one (#7) is the important one... one could almost ditch blogs 1-6.

28 August at 16:46 · [Like](#) · 1



Scott Goode Thanks John, the books (urs and MM) and subsequent blogs have been very helpful for me and many other 'quiet observers' to think through this issue better.

28 August at 16:57 · [Like](#) · 6



Philip Taylor So what should I read? This blog post or your book?

28 August at 17:02 · [Like](#)



Hefin Jones HHV #2 and Blog 7 (this one).

28 August at 17:03 · [Like](#)



Huntly Gordon John, Although you are too (!) much, I will read this latest riposte from you. 😊

28 August at 17:09 · [Like](#) · 1



Roselyn Drake I read it!

28 August at 17:32 · Edited · [Like](#)



John Dickson Huh, [Hefin](#)?

28 August at 17:33 · [Like](#)



John Dickson Definitely my book, [Philip Taylor](#).

28 August at 17:36 · [Like](#)



Hefin Jones I was giving my view on what Philip should read.

28 August at 17:40 · [Like](#)



John Dickson No, [Hefin](#), I was complaining about 'ditching' blogs 1-6!

28 August at 17:52 · [Like](#)



Robert Forsyth Overkill as usual

28 August at 17:52 · [Like](#) · 2



John Dickson Suitably poliguous, Bishop [Forsyth](#)!

28 August at 17:57 · [Like](#)



Hefin Jones Forgive me, while I'll be glad to have the pdf of all seven blogs, and have already saved them all + Tim Harris' + Lionel's in Zotero, I think HHV #2 and this last one are the best parts of the discussion. I think I understand why #1-6 'had' to be written from your point of view. Speaking solely for myself I think much of the earlier blogs could have been left unsaid or said elsewhere. Anyway I am, yet again, transgressing my own stated preference to stay away from too much meta-discussion!

28 August at 18:04 · [Like](#) · 2



John Dickson Fair enough, [Hefin](#). Cheers.

28 August at 18:12 · [Like](#) · 1



John Dickson By the way, tomorrow I will be posting a link to a PDF containing all 7 replies. Then I'm done. Monkey off back.

28 August at 18:16 · [Like](#) · 3



John Dickson I don't quite follow that, [Ken](#). Feel free to restate. Blessings.

28 August at 19:23 · [Like](#)



Joanna Vandersee Thanks for this last post (!) which I think really sums it all up. The use of strong language by WSB authors is of most concern especially for people as they are with great potential to influence. Bless you John - and keep writing, speaking and scholarising!

28 August at 19:31 · [Like](#) · 5



John Dickson Thank you, [Joanna](#).

28 August at 19:39 · [Like](#) · 1



Ken Rathbone I guess, I meant to say, 1. a focus mostly on the one word 'teach' in this passage is always going to lead to disagreeing parties ... I reckon Paul was commanding and teaching a creation order of adam and eve to avoid this scenario in ephesus ... to avoid a situation that detracts from the gospel 2. important secondary theological disputes have the potential to divide because they are important, so public figures must consider how far they want to go with their convictions ...

28 August at 19:46 · [Like](#) · 1



John Dickson Okay, [Ken](#). I understand. I have considered that I want to go precisely this far - 7 replies, then I'm done. I'm done! Blessings.

28 August at 20:21 · [Like](#) · 2



Rae Clark Love the symbolism of seven replies!

28 August at 20:39 · Like · 4



John Dickson Yes, **Rae Clark** - though this last reply probably should have been three!

28 August at 21:33 · Like · 1



David Buddrige Hi John, thanks heaps for all your work on this - it has been most helpful to understand these passages and has helped me enormously to get what Paul means when he talks of teaching. You've said your happy to receive questions - and there's one part of (one of the key passages in this debate) 1 Timothy 2:9-15, that has long puzzled me, and I was hoping to hear your thoughts on it. My question is: Why does Paul start talking about childbirth in verse 15 and what is its connection to teaching (I struggle to see how it fits into the flow of his argument - what does it have to do with anything that he's talking about)? Could you give me your take on that part of the passage? thanks heaps, David

28 August at 23:07 · Like · 1



Hefin Jones FYI Saucy's article referenced by **John** in his last few paras is readily available online.

http://www.etsjets.org/.../37-1/JETS_37-1_079-097_Saucy.pdf

28 August at 23:14 · Like · 1



Roselyn Drake The emphasis on transmission of knowledge , who, how, what, was important because it was an oral culture. Does this mean these carefully prescribed limits haven't mattered since the Gospels (and/or NT) were written down?

29 August at 07:53 · Like



Mike Wharton F

29 August at 07:55 · Like



John Dickson **David Buddrige**, it is a very difficult addendum to Paul's thought, I agree. The commentators are divided. It could be a reference to the "birth of the child", i.e., Christ who saves. Thus, Paul wants to say that while women became sinners in the fall, they (just like men) can be saved through the coming of Christ. On the other hand, he could just mean that women, while bearing the pain of childbirth referred to in Gen 3, will nonetheless be saved through faith (just like men). Either way, the effect of v.15 seems to be to balance positively the negative thing he says about women in v.14. Cheers.

29 August at 09:22 · Like · 1



John Dickson **Roselyn Drake**, some do argue that. I don't quite.

29 August at 09:24 · Like · 2



Hefin Jones I think the "quite" has engendered a significant part of the debate 😊

29 August at 09:39 · Like



John Dickson I can't help it if people don't appreciate nuance, **Hefin**

29 August at 10:10 · Like · 1



David Buddrige Thanks **John Dickson** 😊

29 August at 10:27 · [Like](#)



Hefin Jones I think that the differences in the way the options were presented at the end of HHV #1 and #2 make a significant difference to the reception of the argument.

29 August at 10:41 · [Like](#) · 1



John Dickson **Hefin**, can you explain what you mean. WSB had HHV2 and it didn't seem to change their reception of the argument.

29 August at 12:01 · [Like](#)



Hefin Jones Look I am loath to speak about the whys and wherefores of WSB. (Which I've still only partly read - mainly the 'offending' bits).

Speaking for myself I think that the way you posed the options for application at the end of #1 and #2 really 'come over' quite differently. I hear what you've said about not wanting to be prescriptive, and to try not to foreclose people's thinking by being too overt about your preferences. The rhetoric in #1 though seems to lean away from the third option, which by the time we got to HHV #2 is your preference.

Now, rightly or wrongly, the apparent preference for the second option in HHV #1 (note "apparent preference") might have coloured the way I read the rest of the book(let). You were un-keen (understandably) to engage in discussions pertaining to eldership/ordination in HHV #1 - but the relative paucity of discussion about them combined with what looked like a preference for "all sermons are open to suitable men and women" seemed to undercut any kind of meaningful complementarianism within my congregationalist ecclesiology.

Not only have you significantly modified the rhetoric regarding the options for application, but partly through conversation and partly through highlighting in HHV#2 it is clear that it's not your intention to call into question the key role that certain qualified men have as elders.

The 'modest proposal' of HHV #1 seemed to me to be a solvent for complementarianism at least for those of us operating in a Baptist/Congregationalist setting.

29 August at 12:22 · [Like](#) · 2



Hefin Jones Speculating for a moment: the influence of more congregationalist and also of less typically Anglican (?) ways of thinking about eldership might have played into the wider Sydney discussion. Pure speculation on my part.

29 August at 12:28 · [Like](#)



John Dickson Thanks for explaining, **Hefin**. It sounds like you hadn't realised that I actually changed my mind between editions 1 and 2. When I wrote HHV1, I felt that teaching (in any strongly analogical sense) had ceased. Then, through the help of FB interactions and correspondence with scholars in Jan-March 2013, I came to see that this probably wasn't right and was, in any case, completely unnecessary for my case to stand. In part, this is what lies behind the production of the second edition.

When I wrote the first edition, I was still leaning toward application three offered in my Conclusion - but only as an application of the theological principle of complementarianism, which I still held, rather than as a result of a belief that 'teaching' still continued. I put that application last in order to emphasise it, but didn't want to do much else to indicate whether I condoned application 2 or 3. In the second edition, however, I decided to make my affirmation of application 3 crystal clear, partly because I felt I should more strongly indicate my complementarian assumptions and partly because it really is the best (but not the only) application of the conviction I arrived at that teaching, in the strict Pauline sense, really does have a modern counterpart in (some) sermons. Hence, when you say, "the way you posed the options for application at the end of #1 and #2 really 'come over' quite differently", you are dead right. That is intentional. I hope that's clear. Blessings.

29 August at 15:46 · [Like](#) · 3



Lionel Windsor John - I posted the following as a comment on your blog, but given the various technical issues you have been experiencing with your blog failing to notify you of comments awaiting approval and truncating them when they are eventually approved (NB my comment from two weeks ago is also awaiting approval) I thought I should post it here too.

30 August at 10:54 · [Like](#)



Lionel Windsor Dear John,

I am, as you know, one of the "authors of WSB" whom you are addressing in this blog post.

You write: "the authors of WSB choose to describe perfectly reasonable exegetical observations—made by numerous experts —“fallacies”, “errors”, and so on. This is not a healthy mode of argument among friends"

As I have already pointed out on your previous blog post, this reference to the "authors of WSB" is a very strange way to talk about this. Indeed, it obscures the real dynamics of what is going on.

I did not "choose to describe" your work this way. The person who chose to describe it this way is Claire Smith. It is true that I, along with other authors, read Claire's work before it was published, and offered her feedback. It is also true that I did not choose to dispute Claire's descriptions. But I must insist, yet again (since you never mention it in your blog post), that the person who made the choice to describe your work this way is Claire Smith.

Why am I insisting on this? Not at all because I want to distance myself from Claire Smith. In fact, quite the contrary. Rather, because I want to make it perfectly clear who it is who is making these linguistic observations about your views of the meaning of teaching vocabulary in the Pastoral Epistles. It is Claire Smith - the Claire Smith who has written an exceptionally careful, exceedingly detailed book studying the overlapping semantic domains of teaching vocabulary in 1 Corinthians and the Pastoral Epistles. She is not merely a "keen linguist", as you described her in a previous blog post. She is an expert on the semantics of and the nuanced differences between various words relating to educational activity - including *didaskō* and *paradidōmi*, etc. - in the pastoral epistles. The book she wrote is based on her doctoral thesis that was examined

by Professor Edwin Judge and Dr Jim Harrison, who helped her to improve it and encouraged her to publish it. For those who are interested it has recently received an excellent review in Themelios (<http://themelios.thegospelcoalition.org/.../pauline...>)

In your blog post, you describe the situation as if it is simply a group of colleagues in ministry who have had the hubris to take it upon ourselves to give you a private lesson in linguistics. No. The person (singular) who has critiqued your linguistic observations is Dr Claire Smith - and this is right in the middle of her scholarly field of expertise. I'm quite happy to say that Claire (through these essays) also gave me a lesson in the semantics of *didaskō*. My attempt to discuss the semantic field of the word 19 months ago (http://www.lionelwindsor.net/.../teaching-in-the...) was inadequate in this regard. Reading Claire's essays has been genuinely helpful to me.



Themelios | Pauline Communities As 'Scholastic Communities': A Study of the Vocabulary of...

themelios.thegospelcoalition.org

Wissenschaftliche Untersuchungen zum Neuen Testament 2.335. Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2012. xiv + 555 pp. £94.00/\$160.00.

30 August at 10:54 · Like · 1 · Remove Preview



Lionel Windsor The problem is, as I read this blog post, you don't seem to be truly wrestling with her argument at all. You repeatedly affirm that there is a connection between *didaskō* and the idea of traditioning as if this is something Claire is denying. But nobody is disputing that there is a connection. Indeed there is at times a close connection. However, a connection is not synonymity - and Claire's point is that you are often treating the words as synonyms. Claire's published thesis discusses the connections between AND the differences between the two semantic fields of "core-teaching" words like *didaskō* and "traditioning" words like *paradidōmi* and *paratithēmi* (among others). Yes, you quote from various commentators (although it is not at all clear that they, like you, would "resist expanding the referent for 'teaching' to include further elaborations based on the apostolic deposit" - as you wrote on my blog last year). However, in this particular (admittedly highly specialised) field, the key expert you need to grapple with, beyond commentators, is Dr Claire Smith. I know you have read her monograph, since you refer to it in your own book. Of course, refute her thesis, if you like. But Claire Smith's work is the one you need to be citing here.

30 August at 10:54 · Like · 1



Lionel Windsor More to the point, I still do not think you have even grasped Claire's argument in her essay in WSB itself, either about the meaning of the word *didaskō*, or how it is connected to yet differs from "traditioning". I will give one example of where you have not understood Claire's argument.

Commenting on 2 Tim 2:2, Claire says in her essay in WSB (yes, you quote this in your blog post, but you do not quote the paragraph in full, and the context matters here):

>> If any word in 2 Timothy 2:2 means something like 'laying down

and preserving', *this* is the word [i.e. paratithēmi]. But does its presence in this verse mean that the word 'teach' (*didaskō*) that follows it means basically the same thing, as Dickson argues? The first word (paratithēmi) refers to the care of an object handed over for preservation, and the second (didaskō) refers to an activity that causes learning in people. [this is where your quotation of Claire ends, but she continues in the next sentence:] It is clear that the activities they denote are *related* in terms of their purpose and the content concerned--in fact, Timothy most likely *entrusted* the gospel to these reliable people by *teaching* it to them--but there is nothing in 2 Timothy 2:2 to suggest that Paul is changing the widely attested first-century meaning of "teach" to make it a synonym of "entrust". In fact, the meaning of the sentence changes significantly if we replace "teach" with "entrust", or vice versa.

Note that Claire says that traditioning and teaching are clearly related; indeed she says that the traditioning occurred in this case through teaching.

However, you do not seem to acknowledge this. Indeed, you go on to say basically the same thing, as if it somehow refutes Claire's position. You say: "How did Paul the "teacher" give Timothy his "pattern of words" and "good deposit"? Surely, as the Teacher, he taught him." You also claim that Claire "balk[s] at admitting that the verb "teach" refers to educating people in this deposit" which you say "seems arbitrary and unnatural.". She doesn't balk at admitting it - she says it clearly. You, also claim about Claire's essay in WSB:

>> Strikingly, on several occasions in Paul's letters, the words "teaching/learning" appear in direct connection with the words "handing over / receiving" traditions (Rom 6:17; Gal 1:12; Phil 4:9; Col 2:6-7; 2 Thess 2:15). This proves what WSB denies: that "to *teach*" and to *be taught*, no less than to 'receive' and to 'deliver', are used in connection with Christian tradition," as Ronald Fung puts it (*The Epistle to the Galatians*, 52).

"WSB" - i.e. Claire Smith - is not denying the connection at all. You have not understood her point. Her point is not about whether the words relating to "core-teaching" and "traditioning" are connected in certain cases (of course they are!); it is about whether the words are effectively synonymous - which is what your argument in HHV hinges upon.

30 August at 10:55 · [Like](#) · 1



Lionel Windsor So let me reiterate: I do not think a further long and detailed discussion about your views on this matter would be at all helpful for anyone. Claire Smith, whose field of study is in the overlapping yet distinguishable semantic domains of teaching vocabulary in 1 Corinthians and the Pastoral Epistles, has written three excellent essays in WSB responding in quite careful and nuanced detail to your claim about the semantic domain of the verb "teach" in the Pastoral Epistles. You have caricatured the essays here rather than engaged with them. I would like to urge readers to read your book first, then read Claire's essays in WSB, and not to rely on this blog post to describe them.

30 August at 10:55 · [Like](#) · 4



Lionel Windsor Having said all this, I'm done for now.

30 August at 10:55 · [Like](#) · 1



John Dickson I've dealt with all that, [Lionel](#). Keep reading.
I endorse your sentiment for people to read everything. That will only be to my advantage. Thanks for interacting.

30 August at 10:58 · [Like](#)



Joanna Vandersee [John Dickson](#) GO AND WALK IN THE RAIN!

30 August at 11:00 · [Like](#) · 3



Jason Hobba [Lionel](#), you make some useful corrective points above. I acknowledge Claire Smith's expertise in the semantic domains of teaching vocab and really look forward to sitting down with her thesis/monograph.

You're right about Claire Smith's being THE most significant contributions in WSB when it comes to understanding the NT concept of "to teach". I wasn't 100% convinced of her argument in WSB (nor am I 100% convinced of John's either).

One of the questions, it seems to me, is what you've outlined above: "to teach" is not synonymous with "to entrust" (paratithemi) (or "to pass on/hand over (a tradition)" [paradidōmi]?).

Now, I'm a bit rusty on linguistics, semantics, sense, etc-- I need to go back and read Cotterell and Turner's "Linguistics and Biblical Interpretation" again. So I venture the following as questions I have for clarification for Claire Smith's essays.

The verbs "to entrust" and "to pass on (a tradition)" are metaphors in these contexts, aren't they? (That is, they don't literally "pass on" an object; nor do they "entrust" an object). So, here's my question: it seems obvious that the metaphors don't have exactly the same "sense" as "to teach," because they would cease to function as metaphors. They may denote the same activity. BUT, do the metaphors *connote* similar things as "to teach" in the context in which Paul uses them that John draws on to establish his point? However, the metaphors also have added connotations that give more content and complexity to the idea being conveyed than "to teach"--e.g., the importance of the material, the notion of "guarding", care required etc etc, which is what gives colour to a metaphor over a plain verb, right?

If so, to say "to teach" and "to entrust" don't have the same "sense" is a hollow victory for Claire Smith over John, because that would be obvious simply by virtue of the nature of a metaphor?

30 August at 11:31 · Edited · [Like](#) · 1



Lionel Windsor Hi Jason, thanks for the question. I'll keep it short since I've said I'm done for now and I want to stick to it 😊 Claire's argument doesn't just rely on the nature or connotation of the words, and therefore it doesn't fall on the basis of an observation about the nature or connotation of the words; she uses a whole lot of other pieces of evidence to show that the words have different though overlapping semantic ranges. See also the refs in her monograph, pp. 64-65 and pp. 137-141.

30 August at 13:01 · [Like](#)



John Dickson Claire's monograph is professional and interesting, but it has no relevance to my argument. This would explain why one of the examiners who passed her thesis thought it perfectly

reasonable to then write such a nice commendation of my Hearing Her Voice: Dickson "has uncovered Paul's lost teaching" (Edwin Judge).

30 August at 13:23 · [Like](#) · 2



John Dickson The more you write, [Lionel](#), the less confident I am that we're finding clarity. The following two claims seem misplaced and confuse things:

1. Dickson's case rests on 'hand over' and 'teach' being synonyms
2. Dickson claims that WSB does not admit any connection between 'hand over' and 'teach'

This allows you (a) to think you've disproved my case if it can be shown that 'hand over' and 'teach' are not synonyms, and (b) to claim I have misrepresented WSB if you can find a spot where WSB sees some connection between 'hand over' and 'teach'.

No, Lionel. There are more accurate ways to describe the issues.

First, only once in HHV do I say that 'hand over' and 'teach' have a synonymous relationship, and even then in just a couple of passages. I say, "Paul sometimes places the word 'teaching' in synonymous parallel with 'delivered/received'," and then offer Gal 1:12 and 2 Thess 2:15 as examples where this is so. The 'sometimes' is significant, surely. And this is the only time I refer to 'synonymous' relationships between the words, which is not the same as saying they are synonyms, of course. Indeed, in the very next paragraph of HHV I write, "I am not saying 'teaching' is an exact synonym for the traditions 'delivered/received'". Moreover, in my seventh/final response to WSB I go over and over this point: they're not synonyms. I don't need them to be synonyms. All I need to show - and I believe I have shown it - is that 'teach' in the Pastorals and elsewhere in Paul is very closely related to 'hand over', so that both are core traditioning language. That is the point disputed by WSB. It is the point of difference. And it makes all the difference.

Secondly, I do not say WSB admits no relationship between 'teach' and 'hand over'. The confusion comes simply because I see a very close connection between them and WSB sees much less of a connection between them.

Here is the central issue that gets lost in these overlong posts: I think the connection between 'teach' and traditioning language is so close that we can be very confident when Paul forbids a woman to 'teach' he is referring not to all kinds of teaching God's truth in church but to the specific task of authoritatively transmitting the apostolic deposit intact so that believers learn it; whereas WSB thinks the connection between 'teach' and traditioning language is distinct enough for us to think that when Paul forbids a woman to 'teach' he is referring to an activity additional to, or much more general than, transmitting the apostolic deposit, including things like exhorting and applying God's will on the basis of that deposit.

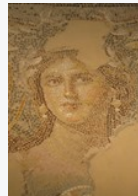
I lament that WSB did not choose to focus on that debate, focus on trying to show that 'teach' is not fundamentally a traditioning term. Instead, WSB tries to blow the ship out of the water by making truly extreme statements about how my exegesis and linguistic observations involve 'fallacies', 'basic errors', and so on, when in fact my observations are well supported in scholarship over decades. I am glad for a debate, but I do not believe WSB has given us one. And so I repeat my desire to have a public forum where we can stop lobbing tomes at each other and instead converse, learn from each

other, and come to an appreciation of the strength of each other's case, even if in the end we fundamentally disagree about whether women can preach in church.

30 August at 15:50 · Like · 4



John Dickson By the way, at this link I have added PDF's of the commentary on this debate by Andrew Judd, Ian Powell, and Craig Blomberg. <http://bit.ly/1vsosvj>



DefendingHerVoice
www.johndickson.org

The following PDFs may be downloaded and freely distributed in print and electronic format. 1. A4 PDF for printing and copying. 2. Large font PDF for eReading on devices

30 August at 17:01 · Like · 2



Lionel Windsor John, I agree that we're not gaining clarity. Indeed, you have not accurately summarised the key points Claire or I made either. I won't repeat them again.

As you know, you and I have talked about this in person, one to one, and I don't think we achieved clarity then. I can't really see why you think a "public forum" is going to make things any clearer. As I've already said to you, in person and online, I think that your stated position on a number of matters keeps changing.

I can't speak for Claire, but if you want to dismiss her research with the claim that it has "no relevance to my argument" I could easily see why she wouldn't be confident to be part of such a public forum either.

30 August at 18:01 · Like · 1



Dani Treweek John,
I find it very disappointing that you have been so quick to dismiss the voices of the two women who have offered a public response to your argument in 'Hearing Her Voice'.

You summarily dismissed the validity of my critique by stereotyping me as a woman who had made an emotional (rather than thoughtful and well considered) response... a response which supposedly played right into the hands of Tony Payne and Peter Bolt, both of whom who were ready to exploit and manipulate my (unwitting) voice.

It was no fun being portrayed as a woman who is unable to think for herself and who is merely the pawn of the men around her (especially given that you, and another who said it, hadn't even met me at the time). However, because I AM a woman who can think and act for myself, and because those who know me know this to be true, I took it on the chin.

However, it isn't just my voice which has been dismissed. Now it is Claire's turn.

John, you have refused to allow Claire ownership of her own voice. Chapters 3, 4 and 5 of WSB were not written by 'WSB'. They were written by Dr. Claire Smith. In those chapters, WSB didn't 'tell us' things. WSB didn't 'describe things'. WSB didn't 'speak' or 'suggest' or 'think' or 'argue'. Dr. Claire Smith did. This intelligent, godly, respected woman has spoken at length and you have insisted on

denying her the ownership of her own voice.

Not only that, but you have belittled her voice. Dr. Claire Smith is more than a 'keen linguist'. She hasn't just 'gained some familiarity with the New Testament, Greek grammar, history and so on'. The unfortunate exegetical errors she believes you have made are not based on the fact that like you, she too 'read Don Carson's "Exegetical Fallacies" in first year Moore College'. Claire is a highly respected scholar and academic. She is an author and international speaker. She has completed her PhD in the field of New Testament Greek linguistics. She has had a 500+ page dissertation published. Her voice should be granted the due respect that it deserves rather than being subtly mocked as if she is just dabbling in New Testament academia.

Finally, and perhaps most importantly, you have dismissed the unique and important insights her voice offers as being 'interesting' but irrelevant. Claire has spent years engaged in post-graduate research and writing regarding the semantics of teaching vocabulary as it is found and understood in Paul's pastoral epistles. And yet you claim the knowledge that she has gained as a result (as conveyed in her monograph) has no relevance to your argument in HHV – the same argument which centres around the semantics of the verb 'to teach' in Paul's pastoral epistles. You are, of course, well within your rights to disagree with the insights and conclusions she comes to as a result of her research and their application in her critique of your argument. However, to dismiss them as 'professional and interesting, but [as having] no relevance to my argument' and claiming that she has offered no 'genuine debate' is simply bewildering to me.

John, I genuinely DO believe you when you say that you want more women's voices to be heard more often. I genuinely DO find that very encouraging ... because I'm a woman who has a voice and who believes that (sometimes!) she has things to say that are worth hearing. And so it is just so disappointing and disheartening to see that the two women who have had the courage to speak on this topic (and for my part, it DID take courage) have had their voices so summarily undermined and dismissed.

I'm sure this comment of mine is going to generate a fair amount of negative response towards me from some of those reading this thread. And that's OK - as long as the response is people engaging with what I have said rather than simply dismissing my voice as not having anything worth saying.

For my part I've said what I felt I needed to say and I'm content to now silence my voice on this matter.

Your sister in Christ - Dani

30 August at 18:08 · [Like](#) · 9



Floyd Legge i have followed this discussion from a distance, but there are things that stick out for me. [John Dickson](#) , why did you change you mind between book versions, if you thought you understood your text well enough id hope you gained the understanding from the bible. how after close to 2000 years of the first manuscripts of bible, you get a fresh meaning of the text. I would be greatly disappointed if you were just trying to have the message of the bible change to suit our changing cuture. and also you have been critical of Matthias media defence of their position, if

you are wrong in many ways, which im not qualified to make a judgement on, they should come out strongly against your position.

30 August at 18:12 · [Like](#) · 1



John Dickson I'm not sure your message is clear to me, [Floyd](#). But if you're suggesting I changed my mind because of culture and that I am upset that Matthias Media criticised my argument, I can only say these seem very far from reality to me. But perhaps I missed your sense. Cheers.

30 August at 18:20 · [Like](#)



John Dickson [Lionel](#), as someone else has pointed out previously, the "Dickson keeps shifting his view" line really just sounds like a 'line'. I gladly accept that I was improved by people's criticisms between HHV version 1 and 2 but my central argument is unchanged: 'teaching' in the Pastorals refers to transmitting the apostolic deposit and cannot be equated with all sermons, therefore women may give some sermons. Simple.

I will clarify just one more of your statements, lest people get the wrong impression from your statement, "you want to dismiss Claire's research with the claim that it has 'no relevance to my argument'." My point is not that her research expertise has no relevance to my work but that the argument of her monograph does not touch upon - positively or negatively - the things I argue in Hearing Her Voice. I was explaining to you why Edwin Judge could pass her PhD thesis one week and then glowingly endorse my little book the next. I fear you re-interpreted me to be dismissing her expertise per se. That would be terrible. Thanks.

30 August at 18:31 · [Like](#)



John Dickson [Dani](#), there are so many twists of language (and of my own words) in your post that I don't know how to respond. Worse, you have now somehow made this into a meta-debate about gender rhetoric. This seems like an unfair card to play.

30 August at 18:42 · [Like](#) · 3



Ben Skinner I agree. From an outsider's perspective, Dani's post seems highly manipulative...

30 August at 19:43 · [Like](#)



Cindy Cagney all of the above articles seem to be just another excuse for a couple of blokes to try and impress readers with a whole lot of hot air.....I am reminded that Jesus warned against those folk who put themselves up as religious experts and scholars.....I wouldn't waste 5 minutes of my God-given time on earth reading either book

30 August at 20:29 · [Like](#)



Ben Skinner How unfair. Just what is it John is doing that is solely trying to 'impress' people? Jesus is WARNING us against people like him? No, Jesus warned against hypocrites, those that set themselves up as teachers yet lived against the heart of the text they taught from.

Better get to reading your bible in the original Greek as well Cindy because if it wasn't for some of these scholar-types we wouldn't even have a Bible in English. Oh and forget knowing about Salvation by grace through faith too because the reformation was built on scholarly critique as well.

30 August at 21:49 · [Like](#) · 1



Michael Jensen [stupidly puts on peace-maker's hat...] Dani and Lionel - I think to be fair you are mis-taking John, here. He wasn't dismissing Claire Smith's expertise, or her qualifications. He was merely saying 'I've read her PhD, but the argument of the PhD doesn't have a direct bearing on this discussion'. I did not take that as a cavalier dismissal of Claire in the slightest. I think your reaction is based on a misunderstanding, if I may say so. I think using WSB is entirely ok too, and isn't indicative of a dismissal of a woman's voice - the volume wasn't pitched as a 'collection of essays by a bunch of people who may or may not agree' but as a sustained attempt at a unified argument in response to John. Fair enough. Great, even. But it then seems fine to call it 'WSB' - since it has an editorial unity to it. Doesn't it? (I say this also to those who 'liked' Dani's post)

31 August at 14:52 · Edited · Like · 8



Lionel Windsor Hi Michael - before I answer can I just check that you've read the chapter on "core-teaching" words in Claire's monograph?

31 August at 15:10 · Like



Michael Jensen No. Not my field! That's not my point though... I didn't take this as an offensive dismissal by John. Sure, argue that's he's wrong (it IS relevant), but there seems to be an unwarranted high dudgeon here, is all. I know he's actually read it, and that he genuinely respects Claire as a scholar, etc.

31 August at 15:20 · Like · 1



Lionel Windsor Michael, the chapter provides a scholarly, rich, comprehensive and multifaceted view of the activity of "teaching" as it is described in 1 Corinthians and the Pastorals which is directly relevant to John's proposed limiting of the referent of the word. Since John has read this chapter, he should well understand me when I said: "if you want to dismiss her research with the claim that it has "no relevance to my argument" I could easily see why she wouldn't be confident to be part of such a public forum either."

31 August at 15:47 · Like



Lionel Windsor John, What I mean is that I can no longer be confident that your language clearly expresses your views, because your language keeps changing. Here is one example - just to show I am not simply running a "line", as you suggest.

When John Starke reviewed HHV1, he summarised part of your view this way:

>> "the "teaching" office no longer exists in the local church"

When you responded to him, you very quickly took issue with this description. You said that he had got you wrong. You said:

>> Another way 'teaching' continues in the modern church will surprise those who have read John's review but not my book. Some sermons will function as conscious mandating – laying down – of the apostolic doctrine.

<http://www.patheos.com/.../john-dicksons-response-to.../>

That is, you blamed your reviewer for misunderstanding you. You said you believed 'teaching' does continue in the modern church through some sermons and that it should not be surprising to anyone who has read HHV1. You implied that John Starke had led

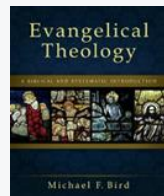
his readers astray about you on this score.

But earlier on this thread you said to Hefin:

>> When I wrote HHV1, I felt that teaching (in any strongly analogical sense) had ceased ... When I wrote the first edition, I was still leaning toward application three offered in my Conclusion - but only as an application of the theological principle of complementarianism, which I still held, rather than as a result of a belief that 'teaching' still continued.

So at one point, when you wanted to criticise a reviewer for misunderstanding you, you insisted that you believed "teaching" continues when you wrote HHV1; but just now, explaining yourself to Hefin, you said that you believed "teaching" does not continue when you wrote HHV1.

My problem is that I can never be sure that your language means what it clearly seems to mean. Furthermore, you consistently blame readers for reading what seems to be your plain language and coming to the "wrong" conclusion. This is what gives me no confidence that we will achieve clarity by any kind of back-and-forth dialogue.



John Dickson's Response to John Starke's TGC Review

www.patheos.com

The most awkward rejoinders are those you write to your friends and theological kin; doubly so when you feel you have to point out to them that they have not correctly described the argument of your book or, where they have, how they seem to have overlooked the parts that anticipate and answer the...

31 August at 16:03 · [Like](#) · [2](#) · [Remove Preview](#)



John Dickson Am I wrong to picture you, [Lionel](#), beaver away in your office, scouring the Internet, trying to find inconsistencies of language in Dickson's interactions with a host of interlocutors, across a variety of forums, over many months, in the hope that you will show me to be a little muddled?

The points you raise above are ones you've mentioned before. You didn't like my explanation then; I can't see that changing. If anyone else is curious for an explanation, I'll happily oblige.

More importantly, my key argument has never changed. It goes like this: what Paul restricts to men in 1 Tim 2:12 is, 'teaching', i.e., the authoritative task of carefully transmitting the apostolic deposit. Since contemporary sermons cannot be wholly equated with this activity, women may give sermons.

31 August at 16:48 · [Like](#) · [1](#)



John Dickson Oh, I just reread my reply to John Starke's lovely (though critical) review and realised that it provides the best answer to Lionel's charge of inconsistency. Cheers.

31 August at 16:57 · [Like](#) · [2](#)



Lionel Windsor Yes John. You are wrong to do that. That is all I will say right now.

31 August at 19:10 · [Like](#) · [3](#)



Roger Wenden



31 August at 21:55 · [Like](#)



Ian Powell Dear Lionel W and Dani T and the WSB team
Wondering quite seriously if you can help some of us?

1 September at 13:47 · Edited · [Like](#)



Hefin Jones Monday's definitively a new week...

1 September at 15:12 · [Like](#)



Ian Powell Weeks don't start on Monday - do they?

1 September at 15:35 · [Like](#)



Hefin Jones If there's any uncertainty they certainly have started by Monday 😊

1 September at 15:36 · [Like](#) · 3



Ian Powell WSB Team

1 - I was genuinely surprised at the "root and branch" demolition attempted in WSB.

2 - We were assured that even the scholars JD used to support his understanding, actually, disagreed with JD and that he had "misled" us (Dunn, Marshall and other extreme heavyweights) Oops John

3 - Then John gets emails from these giants (Dunn and Marshall) Effectively "adjudicating" on the use by HHV + WSB use of their work. Dunn and Marshall clearly disagree with WSB and agree that HHV interpreted them honestly. Oops

It looks like WSB had accidentally misled us and were wrong about JD and these scholars.

I felt embarrassed for WSB at this fairly humiliating revelation.

So WSB team - can you let us know if there is Anywhere, that John's blog pieces, esp Blog 6, have been dealt with carefully.

There seems to have just been a terribly deafening silences.

It does look as if you might NoT be responding to some fairly startling awkward facts - in the hope that no one notices. "nothing to see here folks.

So regarding Blog 6 and the use of elite scholars, WSB should either show JD mistaken or apologise - Ignoring seems not the best - unless i have just be unable to find the detailed discussion that is required

1 September at 16:26 · [Like](#) · 3



Nathanael Small At this point given MM's continued inaction as publisher to facilitate any kind of colloquium or written response as publisher, and the extreme risk of miscommunication in written form, with the best humility I can muster, I hesitantly suggest the following as a way forward:

1. [John Dickson](#) to meet with Claire and Dani either individually or together to talk through the specific areas of contention in scholarship as they apply;

2. Either / Both publish their reflections either separately or jointly.

I think anything else risks increasing the chance of further miscommunication, misunderstanding and unintentionally hurting people by claiming to know another's motivation or heart with the words becoming flesh.

If both parties can leave the past disappointments aside (JD's of WSB not tackling HHV2.0; WSB authors wanting to be singled out in JD's critique rather than being labelled as the whole book) prior to meeting, that might also be helpful.

I can appreciate that MM produces many different resources, and in seeking to be good stewards face significant challenges in maintaining a viable ministry in this digital age (the sad news about the end of the Briefing being indicative of this).

However I do believe that technology has also changed the nature of publishing which requires authors and publishers to be prepared to support a more organic and dynamic response to their work.

MM should at the very least especially consider this when going to publish a work that has as its sole focus the refutation of another author's work.

They've done much more when taking on people whose doctrine they disagree with - Wimber and Hillsong are two examples at either end of MM's history).

Anyhow, I'm grateful that John sees this as a long term effort and look forward to see how his and others orthopraxis flows out from their orthodoxy.

1 September at 21:45 · [Like](#)



Mike Doyle I'm quite late to this discussion - most likely a good thing. But thought I'd add a couple of minor thoughts to the discussion - as minuscule and mediocre as they may be.

2 September at 13:31 · [Like](#)



Mike Doyle John - you first used "gender rhetoric" when you used the title "hearing her voice" and "defending her voice". That [Dani](#) has called you on your use of gender rhetoric (on several occasions) seems fair game to me.

2 September at 13:33 · [Like](#) · 1



Mike Doyle Ian - can I encourage you not to describe what WSB tried to do as a "root and branch demolition attempt"?

It's not what they claim they have tried to do. It may fit your narrative, but it doesn't encourage people to engage with the work on it's own terms - something we all want to happen.

It also treats their arguments as "one voice" instead of what it is - several - several gifted and talented scholars - some are the top of their field, and this field is their speciality. They've found what they believe are some major issues with HHV - and have responded and attempted to point out these many issues.

I did have more to say about how "clear cut" John's reply is - but I've decided this is a quagmire I don't want to get into. However, let me say I am not as convinced that things are as cut and dry as you and John claim they are.

2 September at 13:47 · [Like](#)



Ian Powell Thanks Mile - your talk of things "fitting my narrative" is, well it doesn't sound good - can you tell me what my narrative is ?

I am simply saying how it really did seem to me, and I was surprised to find that John, according to WSB is wrong on pretty well everything isn't he? I may well be, and frankly hope I am, wrong on that, but can you suggest a few things that WSB commends John for, or which of his major points that are NOT argued against as being wrong and a result of poor work? If not I think it fair to call it as I saw it - it is a root and branch attempt

If you can help me see my error I will repent - honestly..

Also Mike - are you aware of anywhere the writers of WSB have answered the issues I specifically asked about. That scholars John referenced and was then chided for misleading us on, have commented agreeing with HHV use of their work and disagreeing with WSB?

2 September at 14:05 · Edited · [Like](#)



Mike Doyle Ian - "everything" is a big claim. Not even John claims that.

Some of the authors have responded in the various posts JD made, as well as on their own blogs. Some prefer to let their work stand on its own. I think that's fair of them. In fact - it's certainly not unusual, and not looked down on in other spheres.

As for the scholars - as John himself points out - the fact they accept one point in his argument doesn't mean they give unlimited support.

2 September at 14:11 · [Like](#)



Ian Powell Mile - your last paragraph really doesn't need to be said as I wasn't for a milli- second saying that, and I am not a "platform thinker" 😊

As I thought I made clear John used a number of specific parts of some elite scholars to show his understanding of NT ideas was pretty normal, WSB argued that he had misunderstood them and misled the readers. Then Dunn and Marshall wrote to Dickson saying that he was correct in his useage. And had not misled us. At that point an apology seems appropriate. HHV can still be wrong in its basic case but WSB seems to have been shown to have been wrong in this. As it has been on at least one other major factual assertion.

2 September at 14:20 · [Like](#)



Ian Powell "Everything" Not even John... He is a scholarly chap and does understate things. I have complained of this to him about some of his earlier books, but Mike find me a few, even a couple of his major points that WSB doesn't attempt to demolish and I will happily recant

2 September at 14:23 · Edited · [Like](#)



John Dickson Mike Doyle, there is nothing in my book that plays the gender card: not the title of the book, nor any lines (in context) in the book. I will gladly reflect on any examples you can provide. I believe Dani's gender-play in the post above (and in her chapter) was mischievous, and have said so. But I could be wrong. I could be chauvinistic and can't see it. Others will have to judge.

Also, you are surely overstating things to describe any of us in this particular debate as "the top of their field". We are competent, even expert, but we are all - even Peter Bolt - small fry in these vast fields. Your perspective shows loyalty more than reality.

And, for the record, [Ian Powell](#), there is a nice section in WSB (near the beginning of chapter 3, I think) that briefly lists the 4-5 things WSB agrees with: that there was such a thing as oral tradition, and so on.

2 September at 15:06 · [Like](#) · 1



Ian Powell Thanks - I stand corrected and will check it. That does ring a bell. So maybe one branch survives 😊

2 September at 16:55 · [Like](#)



Mike Doyle John - it's true - I am a loyal guy. It's one of my good points.

However - for a little booklet aimed at a local discussion - those who wrote essays critiquing it are our local "top" of the fields. That's reality.

It's a complement that MM and these guys accepted your invitation to the discussion. It's no small thing to be critiqued by the best.

2 September at 16:57 · [Like](#) · 1



Ian Powell I recall my joy at the old Moore Books about 10 years ago or more when. I picked up a serious looking book by an excellent publishing house that on cover said "the worlds leading evangelical minds explore ..." An not one of them was a Sydney scholar. I found that confirming and gave me some perspective.

2 September at 16:58 · [Like](#)



Mike Doyle Ian - I'll leave the discussion here. Both sides have made claims - let people read it and make up their own minds.

2 September at 17:00 · [Like](#)



Ian Powell Loyalty is at best a mixed virtue (this an old idea I am repeating) loyalty is the cause of much corruption in police forces, many cover ups in government, deadly group think at NASA. Loyalty is areal good in a relative sense - only. It's like patriotism. mike - I do honour loyalty and seek to be a loyal friend, but it can and is a cause of terrible errors - this is not an add for Judas or Brutus

2 September at 17:01 · [Like](#)



Ian Powell And the silence to further very relevant facts is a sad speech.

I appreciate your interaction, I expected to get none, but I guess my query has been answered

2 September at 17:03 · [Like](#)



John Dickson I won't quibble with that, [Mike Doyle](#).

2 September at 17:04 · [Like](#) · 1



Mike Doyle Ian - it's a shame my best virtue is so mixed - but that's life.

2 September at 17:08 · [Like](#)



John Dickson Yes, my best quality is also my worst!

2 September at 17:09 · [Like](#)



Ian Powell Come on Mike - that does seem a little manipulative or game-playing. Nasty Ian has criticised your best quality (it seems to have up in significance since a few minutes back)

As I think I made clear, I also like to think of myself as a loyal brother and I am sorry if you felt I was really kicking your best quality. I was chatting with brothers. If I am wrong on the mixed nature of that virtue I apologise. But it seems much wrong is done due to over-rating "loyalty" Though treachery is perhaps one of the worst evils. Hard to get this truth in love thing working at full strength though I am sure we are all working on it

2 September at 17:19 · [Like](#)



Ian Powell Our deep unity is probably reflected in our identical use of the Arabic N

2 September at 17:20 · [Like](#) · 1



Mike Doyle Ian - it's true - it has raised itself up in significance. It was only one of my good points - but since I consider my other good point is my beer gut - on reflection I thought I'd better stay with loyalty.

But with more seriousness - I'm sorry it looked like I was taking a cheap shot at you - I didn't mean to. I thought your reply had a heavy dose of cheekiness to it - and I attempted to reply in kind. Sorry for overstepping the mark.

2 September at 17:55 · [Like](#) · 1



Scott Goode Mike i may not be alone in feeling a little uncomfortable in the sentiment that 'both sides have made claims - let people make up their own mind.' The journey feels a little incomplete to me. The nature and strength of the claims by respected people within our 'family' are such that things probably ought not to be left here. It's early days I guess, but I think a lot of family members may be quietly waiting for some clarification in light of John's fairly substantial response to the critique of his book.

2 September at 18:00 · [Like](#) · 5



Ian Powell Mike - I have been out away from the phone on way to a Jesus Brings event and regretting my comment to you and I thought I'd remove the M-word. I still want to take down the word "manipulative" - it is too harsh. But I will leave it up, not because anyone will think "yeah Mike was" but so that my on-going struggle with Jerkness remains on display. I think we share a certain bluntness and even polite fireyness - blessings and thanks for your kindness

2 September at 18:06 · Edited · [Like](#) · 1



Scott Goode And I want to add that revisiting and clarifying/retracting any unfair critique would be the most uncontroversial and natural thing for us to do as Christian family

2 September at 18:50 · [Like](#) · 2



Kirsten Pratt As an average non academic Christian woman I have found these discussions and issues / main points very difficult to follow over the past few months. Someone ([Tim Harris](#) 😊 [Michael Jensen](#)) needs to put out a summary of the main points / differences as I am finding it near impossible to read and "make up my own mind" even though I really want to. Something tells me I'm not alone in this.

2 September at 22:26 · Edited · [Like](#) · 4



John Dickson It's simple, [Kirsten Pratt](#): I said women can preach sermons in church; Matthias Media said they can't; I was right and

they were wrong! 😊

2 September at 22:30 · [Like](#) · 7



Lachy Firmstone I'd be lying if I said I was following this debate at all, but good on ya anyway John. The fewer sexist/etc traditions in the church, the better.

2 September at 22:37 · [Like](#)



Roselyn Drake Given that I will never have to make a practical decision on this I will go with it's OK now it's written down because it reduces my being annoyed with St Paul.

Yesterday at 06:01 · [Like](#)



Mike Doyle Scott - it's a hard - and uncomfortable issue you raise. When Christians disagree, and continue to disagree, at what point do we let sleeping dogs lie?

JD published a book, then another book. A bunch of academics wrote some essays in response claiming he got lots of things wrong. JD claims they got lots of things wrong in their response. Some who published the essays have replied with counter claims.

Of course those making claims and counter claims have claimed that their claims are of the utmost importance, and represent "facts" and yada yada yada.

There have been blog posts. Essays. Books. Booklets. Revised booklets. Lots and lots of huff and puff on Facebook. Lots of commenting. Lots of baiting.

In my humble opinion, as interesting as the discussion has been, not much light has been brought to the subject. There has been lots of dust raised. And unfortunately, many of the "issues" raised have seemed (to me) to be at best minor quibbles, at worst, simple misunderstandings.

The authors (on both sides) have spent hundreds of hours. Blood. Sweat. Tears. Anguish and plenty of anxiety talking about this issue. Blood has boiled. Motivations questioned.

There's been plenty of claims by both sides that their "real" arguments have been dismissed, ignored, or not actually engaged with.

So at what point is it OK for the authors (on either side of the discussion) to step back and say "I will let my argument stand for itself - make up your own mind". At what point is it OK to say that stirring up the mud further will not advance the discussion and will not bring clarity?

There has not been silence by either "side" - but at what point is a dignified silence for the sake of not building dissension a good thing?

Again - in my humble opinion - we're well beyond this point.

And note - I don't speak for MM or any authors here.

23 hrs · [Like](#) · 1



John Dickson [Roselyn Drake](#), that is Jim Packer's view (do you know that name?) so you're in good company.

23 hrs · [Like](#)



Roselyn Drake Thanks , yes don't always agree with j Packer but c'est la vie

23 hrs · [Like](#)



Scott Goode More than just dust has been raised Mike. IMO, It has been valuable to look carefully at the speaking ministries of the NT and re-visit our theology of preaching.

The rest of what you say I agree in part [Mike](#) - Some aspects of the conversation can rest, but others I believe need some closure.

As I see it:

1. Both sides of the debate have made their exegetical and hermeneutical cases - let it rest as you say.
2. You are right that there are various quibbles and apparent misunderstandings - I am optimistic that generous reading can clarify here.

However [John](#)'s blogs have (in my opinion) raised three important issues that do require clarification:

1. The rhetorical approach of WSB has felt uncomfortable for me (at times) as a model of engagement.
2. The sum total of WSB's critique seems to me to be that the position of HHV is untenable. Yet our own doctrine commission and important voices within evangelicalism (and most importantly the Bible itself :) connect at various points with HHV's arguments and conclusions. I reckon a generous reading of HHV could acknowledge that better.
3. And most importantly to me, the use of other scholars (Judge, Dunn etc): WSB has raised questions about John's credibility as a researcher and author. John's defence of this is substantial and ought I think to be clarified by the authors/editors of WSB. As I said before, we are a family and we need integrity in our debate between such respected family leaders as we have involved in this debate.

Btw, we ought to give some time for a response (John has only just completed his responses). And just to clarify, before I posted this, I passed these last two points onto one of the authors (if they thought it would help) to pass on to the editors of WSB.

21 hrs · [Like](#) · 1



Mike Doyle Hey [Scott](#) - likewise - I mostly agree.

Yes, I overstated - more than dust has been raised. I have been thankful for the books and essays in reply.

I'm going to take my own advice - and leave people to make up their own minds.

19 hrs · [Like](#)



