

Seminary Magazine Describes 'Biblical' Womanhood

"Biblical" women submit to their husbands, value homemaking over a career and dress modestly, according to Southern Baptist Theological Seminary's current issue of its alumni magazine.

The seminary in Louisville, Ky., dedicated its winter 2003 issue of *Southern Seminary Magazine*, also known as *The Tie*, to "The Beauty of Biblical Womanhood."

"For too long, those who hold to the biblical pattern of gender distinctions have allowed themselves to be silenced, marginalized and embarrassed when confronted by new gender theories," seminary President Albert Mohler wrote in the magazine's opening editorial. "Now is the time to recapture the momentum, force the questions and show this generation God's design in the biblical concept of manhood and womanhood."

Bruce Ware, senior associate dean of the School of Theology, wrote the title article saying that men and women are equal before God but were created for different roles.

One Bible passage supporting that view, Ware says, is Gen. 3:1-7, where God seeks out Adam in the Garden of Eden even though Eve was deceived and tempted to eat the forbidden fruit first and then gave it also to Adam. "God approaches Adam, not Eve, as the one ultimately responsible for the sin," Ware says.

Most "complementarians," Ware says, believe Gen. 3:16 does not mean the male-female relationship of authority and submission is the result of the Fall, but rather that sin undermines that established order by tempting women to "usurp the man's rightful place of authority." The fallen man, meanwhile, is inclined either

toward “sinful abdication of his God-given authority, acquiescing to the woman’s desire to rule over him” or “abusing his rights to rule through harsh, cruel and exploitative domination of the woman.”

A sermon on Titus 2:1-8 by Daniel Akin, senior vice president for academic administration and dean of the School of Theology, who was elected last week as next president of Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary, said one part of God’s “assignment” for a younger woman is to be “busy at home.”

“Her home is her primary base of operation and the main focus of her attention,” Akin said. ... “This woman is not seduced by the sirens of modernity who tell her she is wasting her time and talent as a homemaker, and that it is the career woman who has purpose and is truly satisfied.”

Akin attributed a recent trend of women leaving the workplace and returning home to “a reflection of what God planted in the heart of a wife and mother when he made her a female in his image.”

“The blessings and joy she will discover as a wife, mother and homemaker can never be matched by a career that in the end cannot make good on its promises,” he continued. “Being a homemaker is not an institutionalized form of bondage and slavery. It is the greatest context for a woman to experience liberation and liberty as she is set free by the plan of God to be the woman God created and saved her to be.”

Mary Mohler, wife of the seminary president, contributed an essay saying the Bible instructs women to dress modestly, especially at church. “If you arrive at church dressed in such a way that by the end of the service the people around you, by no fault of their own, now know the color of your underwear and they have watched you do a shimmy dance as you try to get your too-short, too-tight skirt to go under you, there is a big problem,” she said.

“Don’t blame the men around you who happen to be unfortunate enough to be within sight and say they need to get their minds out of the gutter.... Ladies must

remember what battles men face to stay pure as they are stimulated visually by women. They should never have it flaunted in their faces, and to have it done at church is an abomination.”

Mohler said the time to begin modeling modesty starts when mothers take their daughters shopping. “Am I saying that my teenaged daughter cannot wear jeans, T-shirts, shorts, a bathing suit or skirts that are above her knee? No, there are times when certain garments in those categories are appropriate.

“Am I saying that never, ever, not even once can she wear a halter top, tube top, cropped top, mini skirt, skin-tight shirts, anything that shows cleavage or midriff, hip-hugger jeans and shirts that don’t meet, that she can’t even go into an Abercrombie store, that she can’t keep Clinique in business when she’s 14, and that her Sunday clothes are going to be different from her other clothes? Yes, that is exactly what I am saying.”

Mohler said while parents are supposed to love and nurture their children, they are also supposed to be an authority figure to them. She and her husband’s standards for acceptable attire “wouldn’t matter if her father was a seminary president or a ditch digger. The rules would still be the same.”

[Bob Allen](#) is managing editor of [EthicsDaily.com](#).