

Do Some Christian Men Really Hate Women?

Lee Grady is a real champion for **women in ministry**—and in women in ministry leadership. So when I saw his column “7 ‘Reasons’ We Don’t Empower Women Leaders,” I was more than a little interested in reading what he had to say.

Grady wrote his column against the backdrop of the Church of England overturning centuries of tradition by voting to allow women as priests and bishops. That’s the highest office in the age-old church. While many celebrated the move, Grady notes, others rose up with strong words against it despite the fact that Queen Elizabeth II is the ultimate leader in Britain.

Grady may have put it mildly when he said women leadership is a “hot-potato” issue in the church. Some Protestant denominations don’t believe women should serve in any leadership capacity, much less stand in the pulpit. **Pentecostals** and **charismatics**, by contrast, have seen the likes of Aimee Semple McPherson, Kathryn Khulman, Marilyn Hickey, Gloria Copeland, Joyce Meyer and many others lift their voices for the cause of Christ—with warm welcomes from men and women alike.

You’ve got to read Grady’s seven “reasons” why we don’t empower women leaders, because it’s chock-full of important insights for today’s church—and world. But I want to zero in his final, and perhaps most shocking, point: Some Christians hate women.

“It’s sad but true. Misogyny is alive and well, and sometimes it is even preached from pulpits. In one prominent evangelical church in a Central American country, the pastor often jokes about women and seems to trivialize adultery. It’s no wonder domestic violence thrives in that country,” Grady writes.

“Until some brave men have the guts to challenge the sexism of the good ol’ boy network, abuse will remain a problem among Christians. (I am not saying that there aren’t women who hate men, or that men are never abused—but statistics show the majority of abuse cases involve women victims.)”

Indeed, but do some Christian men really hate women? Hate, after all, is a strong word. Is it appropriate in this context? Yes, I believe it is. Let’s consider Kate Kelly, a lifelong Mormon who was excommunicated on apostasy charges for challenging the status quo of women in the church, and Meriam Ibrahim, who was sentenced to death for apostasy and refused to recant her faith in Christ.

You might expect this misogyny from Mormon men or Muslim men, but from Christian men? Yes, from Christian men—or at least some who claim to be Christians. In an article I wrote last year called “Why Traditional Religion Is Threatened by Women in Ministry” I got all sorts of nasty responses. One commenter called “A Man,” said “I do think it’s dangerous to have women in powerful positions, just from a practical standpoint, because women are more emotional, subject to fashions... When you have a standard policy of women in leadership, you end up with women bending the rules because of what they feel.” Another commenter, who refused to identify himself, wrote, “A female minister’s husband was having an affair. Yes, he was wrong, but I suppose her calling was so great it didn’t discern her husbands needs.”

As I wrote my Watchman on the Wall column “Yes, Christians Spew the Most ‘Hateful Internet Speech,” I’ve received attacks from supposedly righteous men about the way I look and more than one has cursed me, insisting God was going to slam the gates of heaven in my face in the name of a “gentle rebuke.”

Hate is a strong word? Is it appropriate in this context? Yes, I believe it is. I’ve displayed the kinder comments I’ve received from misogynous men. I’m not a feminist, but I’ve

certainly felt the hate from Christian men—and from spiritual forces—in trying to do what God has called me to do. This is an ancient issue, and it boils down to religion. Religion is a murdering spirit that respects neither male nor female, and it comes directly from Satan, who is probably still mad because an uncompromising woman birthed the Messiah.

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