

# Towards a Better Solution

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IN THESE ESSAYS, writers from five different countries, belonging to the Lutheran, Presbyterian and Anglican Churches, some of them Evangelical in their leanings and some Catholic, have considered the question of the ordination of women from the biblical, the theological and the historical points of view. They have concluded, with essential unanimity, that the ordination of women to the episcopate or presbyterate is a historical novelty (R. T. Beckwith), arising in part at least out of a modern secular cult (G. E. Duffield); that it is excluded by the teaching of the New Testament (G. G. Blum), a fact which is made more significant by the manifest willingness of our Lord and St. Paul to raise the status of women in other respects (esp. H. Cavallin), and by the actual existence of female ministers in the Greco-Roman religions and among the early heretics (E. R. Hardy); they have further concluded that the support which protagonists of the ordination of women claim to find in the Bible is read *into* the text not *out of* it, by selective and subjective methods of exegesis (H. Cavallin); and that the campaign for ordination is in radical conflict with Catholic theology (M. Bruce, E. L. Mascall), Presbyterian theology (J. J. von Allmen) and Evangelical theology (J. I. Packer).

If the case made out seems impressive, some may wonder, even so, whether it could not have been made more impressive still by the inclusion of contributions from Roman Catholic and Orthodox writers, and from women writers. The Roman Catholic<sup>1</sup> and Orthodox Churches are firmly opposed to the ordination of women, and some of the strongest opponents in all Churches are themselves women. But if it had been possible to include all the material submitted for use in this symposium, there would have been two Roman Catholic contributions, two Orthodox contributions, and five contributions by women. To avoid excessive length and going into details about particular denominations, it was necessary to exclude some items, but several of those not included supplied valuable material which is utilised elsewhere.

*Theological principles and present debate*

THE authors of the book have sought to judge the question before them on theological grounds. They remain unimpressed by the current attempt to settle the matter on grounds of sex discrimination. To refuse the priesthood to women, so it is said, is 'an inhuman act of discrimination' which 'disenfranchises half the human race from the liberation' brought by the gospel.<sup>2</sup> This is the way the matter is put from within the Church. From outside, the cry is that the London Stock Exchange and the Church are the two great bastions still remaining of sex discrimination in Britain. The decision of the Stock Exchange Council on May 2nd 1972 to admit women will only vary the slogan, but should make it progressively clearer to most people that what influences those within the Church who oppose the ordination of women to the priesthood is not secular convention but theological principle.

The idea that women will never have their full human rights until they are treated in all respects as if they were not women but men has unfortunately made considerable headway in the Church. Despite the reasoned opposition of Christian leaders and thinkers like Hensley Henson, William Temple, K. E. Kirk and C. S. Lewis, the campaign for the ordination of women to the priesthood continues to make some progress. The progress made is often exaggerated, however. Between the two surveys of member-churches carried out by the World Council of Churches in 1958 and 1970, the number of Churches ordaining women rose from 48 to about 70, but as the total number of member-churches in the same period rose from 168 to 239, the proportion was hardly affected, and it is difficult to say whether it was really a case of Churches that used not to ordain women changing their practice, or simply of Churches that ordain women joining the World Council. Some member-churches are known to have changed their practice during the period concerned, but not very many, and the Churches that do not ordain women still outnumber the Churches that do by two to one.

After the crisis among the Lutherans around 1960, the matter is now coming to a head again among Anglicans. It last did so in 1944, when the Bishop of Hong Kong ordained a deaconess to the priesthood, because he could see no other way of making the Lord's Supper available to a community isolated by war-time conditions. His action incurred the disapproval of the other bishops of China, of the 1948 Lambeth Conference and of Archbishop William Temple, who in a letter to the *Church Times* editor (quoted in that journal on November 26th 1971) said that the Bishop of Hong Kong should rather have authorised the deaconess to celebrate holy communion as a deaconess for the period of the emergency. In the circumstances, the deaconess resigned her priest's orders and returned to diaconal work.

In 1967, the National Assembly of the Church of England formally voted against the ordination of women to the priesthood, and the Lambeth Conference of the following year refused to be pressed into a contrary decision, but instead asked all provinces of the Anglican Communion to study the question and report their decision (resolution 35), a request repeated by the Anglican Consultative Council in 1971 (resolution 28a). In response to these requests, the General Convention of the Protestant Episcopal Church in the U.S.A. voted in 1970 against having women priests, and in 1972 the General Synod of the Church of the Province of New Zealand also voted against having them. Only the Church of the Province of Burma has so far voted (simply in principle) the other way. However, the diocese of Hong Kong, now under a new bishop, has once again gone ahead on its own. This time, the bishop first applied to the Anglican Consultative Council for advice, and received advice, by a majority of 24 to 22, that

if he decides to ordain women to the priesthood, his action will be acceptable to this Council; and that this Council will use its good offices to encourage all Provinces of the Anglican Communion to continue in communion with these dioceses [i.e. Hong Kong and any that might act similarly (resolution 28b)].

This advice evoked stern editorial comment even in the secular press, and E. L. Mascall wrote of it

A majority of 2 votes in an assembly of 46 only shows that the Council had really no advice to give. . . . No one would hang a cat on such a vote as this; is it sufficient to justify the abandonment of the historic tradition of Christendom?<sup>9</sup>

The Council of the Church of South East Asia (Hong Kong's only quasi-provincial link, now that mainland China is under Communist control) desired the bishop to hold his hand, but he declined. In November 1971 he ordained two deaconesses to the priesthood.

Even if these purported ordinations are accepted at their face value, they undoubtedly lack almost entirely the present *catholicity* of Anglican orders. As things stand, Anglican clergy are free to move from province to province, and to exercise their orders wherever they go, provided they can conscientiously conform to the local provincial regulations. The two women priests from Hong Kong will have no such freedom. A province which has decided against changing its regulations so as to allow the ordination of women priests at home is certainly not going to change its regulations so as to allow the institution or licensing of women priests from abroad. Consequently, if other provinces of the Anglican Communion decide as PECUSA and New Zealand have done, the women priests of Hong Kong bid fair to be frozen in that diocese. It would have been kinder of the Anglican Consultative Council to have given Hong Kong this warning, separated as it already is from the rest of the province of China, rather than to have buoyed it up with delusive hopes of world wide 'communion',

which could only mean something very different from what 'communion' has meant to Anglicans hitherto. In the event, the two Hong Kong women priests, like their predecessor, may well find it necessary to resign their orders. Alternatively, they may live out their days as isolated oddities in the Anglican Communion, and leave no successors. It seems hard that two successive Bishops of Hong Kong should subject their women workers to this kind of guinea-pig treatment. One does not know whom to envy less, the women priests of Hong Kong, with their precarious future, or the non-Anglican women ministers who simply ceased to be ministers because of the inauguration of the united Church of North India in 1970.<sup>4</sup>

In the Church of England, another vote on the ordination of women is intended, perhaps because the vote of 1967 was taken before the Lambeth Conference and the Anglican Consultative Council made their requests for a consideration of the matter. To this end, Miss Christian Howard has prepared for the Advisory Council on the Church's Ministry a report entitled *The Ordination of Women to the Priesthood: a Consultative Document*.<sup>5</sup> This report is valuable for the information it contains, and does not ignore theological considerations, even if in places it approaches theology in that unbiblical and agnostic manner which is exemplified in the preface to the ill-omened report of the Anglican Consultative Council: 'There was no option but to try to play into the hands of the Holy Spirit. The problem, then, is how to test for what the Spirit wants' (*The Time is Now*, London, SPCK, 1971, p. ix).

### *Evasions of theology*

AS the debate in the Church of England and the rest of the Anglican Communion develops, it is to be hoped that theological considerations will at last be given their due place, and that the popular evasions of the theological case will be carefully scrutinised and be found to be what they really are, evasions. Thus, we shall no doubt be hearing once more that in Christ there can be neither Jew nor Greek, bond nor free, male nor female (Gal. 3: 28).<sup>6</sup> But the preceding verse makes it perfectly clear that the context of this statement is baptism, so the meaning is that all these classes equally can enter the Church and find salvation. Elsewhere, Paul takes each of the three groups, and shows that under the Christian gospel the distinctive roles of Jew and Gentile are not abolished (Rom. 1: 16; 2: 9f.; 11: 11-32), nor are the distinctive roles of bond and free abolished (1 Cor. 7: 20-24; Eph. 6: 5-9; Col. 3: 22-4: 1), any more than the distinctive roles of male and female are.

This answer at once gives rise to a second evasion: slavery has now been abolished, we are reminded, and with it the distinctive roles of bond and free. Why, then, should the distinctive roles of male and female be regarded as having any greater permanence?<sup>7</sup> Here there are

two points to be made. The first is that slavery is a purely adventitious relationship, whereas sex is grounded in human nature. The second is that Paul regarded the distinctive roles of bond and free as remaining for as long as the institution within which they were exercised (i.e. slavery) remained. He may have looked forward to the abolition of slavery: he certainly did not regard the lot of the slave as a very desirable one (1 Cor. 7: 21, 23), any more than the Old Testament did (Lev. 25: 39-55), but what he did not look forward to was masters and slaves, *within the institution of slavery*, renouncing their duties to one another. On the contrary, he insisted that as long as the institution of slavery remained, the roles and duties of the two parties within it also remained. Now, by parity of reasoning, one could not abolish the distinctive roles and duties of male and female without first abolishing those institutions, such as the family and the congregation, in which these roles and duties have to be exercised. But to abolish the family would be to abolish one of the ordinances of creation, and to abolish the congregation would be to abolish the Church of Christ.

Once again, the evasion is no sooner answered than another takes its place. The third evasion claims that the headship of the man is a relationship which does not exist outside the family, and that when the New Testament applies the relationship to the congregation, it is only concerned with the relationship of wives to their own husbands within it. But one such passage is 1 Cor. 11: 2-16, where 'woman' covers a man's mother as well as his wife (v. 12). The discussion of veiling in the passage is also significant, for it seems to have been the Jewish custom that virgins and widows as well as wives should veil themselves.<sup>8</sup> Another such passage is 1 Tim. 2: 8-15, where 'men' and 'women' in the opening two verses appear to cover everyone in the congregation, married or single. Moreover, as Bishop Kirk points out,<sup>9</sup> if the headship of the man in the congregation is rejected, his headship in the family will be gravely imperilled. How could the headship of a husband in his family be unaffected, if his own wife was ordained to headship in the congregation to which he belonged; or (supposing he was in orders himself) if his wife were appointed rector and he assistant curate, or his wife bishop and he rector? Indeed, even if a case where the wife was not herself ordained, she would be sorely tempted to arrogate to herself a position in the family equal or superior to the headship over her husband exercised in the congregation by some other woman. Besides, it is difficult to see what this evasion achieves, for those who urge it usually object to the headship of the man in the family as much as in the congregation, and often object to all headship and subordination, in every realm of life.<sup>10</sup>

A fourth evasion that is regularly heard is that Paul contradicts himself and therefore cannot be our guide. Whatever he may say in 1 Cor. 14 and 1 Tim. 2, we are told, in 1 Cor. 11: 5 he does not regard it as contrary to a due subordination that a woman should prophesy or

lead in prayer, only that she should do it unveiled. This is a dubious inference, as is pointed out elsewhere. From other passages, we can be sure that Paul would not try to quench the gift of prophecy (1 Cor. 14; 1 Thes. 5: 19f.), but his subject in 1 Cor. 11 is not women's ministry but women's dress. If it was when prophesying and leading in prayer that Corinthian women removed their veils, Paul would naturally say so, but without thereby implying any judgment on these side-issues. There is therefore no reason to think that the passage authorises the women of Corinth to lead in prayer, especially as ch. 14, vv. 33-36, and 1 Tim. 2: 8ff. seem to forbid it. If the objection comes back that Paul admittedly allowed women to prophesy, and prophecy is very much the same thing as the presbyter's work of teaching, the reply must be that it is not. The New Testament prophet, unlike the presbyter, had no human commission and no pastoral cure. He received direct revelations from God (1 Cor. 14: 30; Eph. 3: 2-5), predicted the future (Acts 11: 28; 21: 11; Rev. 1: 3, 19; 4: 1) and in other ways acted like the prophets of the Old Testament, performing symbolic revelatory acts and wandering from place to place under the leading of the Spirit (Acts 11: 27; 21: 10f.). His spiritual gift was comparable to that of the apostle (Eph. 2: 20; 3: 5), and was an expression of the freedom of the Spirit to breathe where he will, and to show himself not bound (except where he so desires) by the rules that he makes for us. Thus, God can send women prophets if he wishes, but we cannot send women presbyters.

### *Temporary factors and permanent factors*

ALL these evasions and others will doubtless be in evidence once more as Anglicans debate the matter. In exposing them for what they are, however, the opponents of women's ordination are left with considerable freedom of action. They must preserve the principles of Paul's teaching, but this does not mean that they cannot adapt its application to changed cultural conditions. Paul's main concern in the three classic passages is undoubtedly that the created relationship of the sexes should be faithfully observed (1 Cor. 11: 7-9; 14: 34; 1 Tim. 2: 13f.), not that it should be expressed in any particular cultural manner. Provided, therefore, that the due relationship of the sexes is maintained, and is expressed in appropriate contemporary ways, cultural expressions of that relationship which have now passed away, such as veiling and keeping silence in public, need not be considered as any longer obligatory upon Christians. With regard to both these practices, Paul refers to contemporary custom (1 Cor. 11: 16; 14: 33, 36), and this has since changed. Today it is no disrespect to a man if a woman appears before him with her head uncovered, or opens her mouth in his presence: the very suggestion seems absurd. Indeed, at university

level we are now used to women not just opening their mouths in the presence of men but teaching men, without this implying at all that they are exercising authority over those they teach. It is only when the task of teaching is combined with an authoritative office that the question of exercising authority over men comes into the picture today. The presbyterate, however, is certainly an authoritative office, as its biblical titles of *elder* and *overseer* imply, and as passages like 1 Tim. 5: 17; Heb. 13: 17, 24; 1 Pet. 5: 2f. deliberately state. Even in New Testament times, therefore, when it was normal for a congregation to have a college of elders, not a sole-pastor, the presbyterate was manifestly an authoritative office, and it could not be less so today, when there are inevitably many sole-pastorates in small congregations, and when colleges of presbyters would be expected to have a president. It would only be creating problems, not solving them, to admit women to the presbyterate but to stipulate that they must not be sole-pastors or presidents of group-pastorates, and this would in no way satisfy the protagonists of women's ordination, who regard it as 'discrimination' when women ministers are not reckoned equally eligible for the presidency of group-pastorates.<sup>11</sup> The same negative reaction would undoubtedly meet any suggestion that women should be admitted to the presbyterate but not to the episcopate. The straightforward and consistent course is not to admit them to the presbyterate at all.

### *Special cases*

THE case of prophetesses, already considered, shows that the rule of the subordination of women is not a rule without exceptions. There have often, in fact, been charismatic exceptions to the rule, where God gives women a gift of leadership in the Church which cannot be denied, but which speaks for itself and does not need ordination to secure its recognition. Again, there are exceptions due to necessity. In places where women missionaries have laboured alone, because of a dearth of male missionaries, they have often been faced with the necessity of either performing for themselves ministerial tasks normally reserved to men or of letting them go by default. When they have chosen the latter option, harm has sometimes at least resulted, as when infant congregations have grown used to managing without holy communion. Archbishop Temple's idea that it would be better, in case of necessity, to authorise a deaconess to celebrate holy communion than to ordain her priest, is relevant here. Bishops could perhaps have a recognised power of dispensation in such exceptional cases. Thirdly, there are exceptions due to God's uncovenanted mercies. If the Church breaks one of God's commandments, he does not necessarily refuse all his blessings in consequence. The work of a woman presbyter is not *ipso facto* fruitless. Fourthly, we have today become used to many

secular exceptions. This is not an age when the Church can give laws to the state, and to find women in positions of authority over men is a common, though not perhaps a universally accepted, feature of contemporary life. In such a situation the powers that be are still ordained of God, but the Church must set an example to the state, not conform to the state's example. It is a Christian duty to obey women in positions of secular authority. It is also a Christian duty to assist women in achieving their genuine human potentialities and rights. But a duty still remains to warn them (by example as much as by precept) against the error of usurping headship over men.

### *Possible lines of development*

IT is not enough, however, to be negative. If it has been established that the ordination of women to the priesthood is a mistake, there still remains the important task of indicating directions in which the ministry of women can properly proceed. Since women are women not men, they have a unique ministry to perform. And since, even after all the progress of the past century and a half, there are undoubted grounds for dissatisfaction with the conditions under which the ministry of women has to be exercised today, it will not be sufficient simply to repeat what is said elsewhere about the ways in which women have exercised their ministry hitherto, but it will be necessary to indicate the points at which change and development are called for. If grounds for legitimate dissatisfaction did not exist, the tendency to claim for women admission to the presbyterate might be much less widespread than in fact it is. Having said this, one is bound to add that the situation varies somewhat from country to country and from denomination to denomination, and that what follows will apply mainly, though not exclusively, to the Church of England.

One of Hensley Henson's many provocative remarks was that 'the world wants desperately, not female priests and bishops, but Christian wives and mothers',<sup>12</sup> and the ministry of women will probably always remain primarily a ministry in the home. Nevertheless, as chapter two indicated, this has never been the only place where women have ministered, and it is emphatically not the only place today. There is the vocation of the female missionary. There is the call to community life, now spreading far outside Roman Catholic and Orthodox circles. There are a variety of parochial ministries, full-time and part-time, including that of the deaconess. There are the openings as Church social worker, director of religious education, trained youth leader, Sunday school organiser, chaplain's assistant, lay worker attached not to a parish but to a deanery or a team ministry, and teacher of theology. This is the sort of existing basis from which all further progress begins.

The need for development and reform is occasioned partly by the



changing conditions of society and partly by defects in the inherited pattern of women's work. In either area, reform is often hindered by male conservatism and conceit.

The effects of changing conditions have been various. For one thing, the number of unmarried women has been reduced by the altered ratio of women to men in the population and by early marriage. This means that the Church must look to married women even more than it has done in the past. At the same time, now that smaller families are normal, married women are more able to take on employment outside the home, even though the burdens of housework remain considerable. This means that the Church must look to married women for more professional service and less voluntary service. Not only must offices like those of deaconess and Church Army sister be opened to married women (as they now have been), but training suitable for married women with other responsibilities must be provided.<sup>13</sup>

Another change is that advances in medicine are prolonging life and checking disease and debility. This offers new scope for the historic ministry of the widow.

Yet another change is that professional openings for unmarried women have vastly increased in number over the past hundred years. For a considerable time, therefore, the Church has been looking to them for professional service and not simply for voluntary service. It has not, however, made the provision for their professional service which it might have done. The lack of any security of tenure beyond three months' notice, ambiguous status, and a grudging attitude which treats their services as a second best and imposes arbitrary restrictions upon them, are hardly encouragements to the vocation of the woman parochial worker.<sup>14</sup>

This brings us on to the subject of defects in the inherited pattern of women's work. The basic defects here are theological. It has been pointed out by Alan Richardson that the call for the admission of women to the priesthood takes the priesthood as a fixed point, whereas the priesthood is one of the matters which needs to be rethought.<sup>15</sup> If the call for the admission of women to the priesthood were heeded at this stage, the problem of women's ministry would be solved only temporarily, and only for that small number of women who offered themselves for the priesthood, while the problem of the priesthood would not be solved at all.<sup>16</sup> Another matter which needs to be rethought is the diaconate (and with it the office of deaconess), as several recent Anglican reports on the ministry of women emphasise.<sup>17</sup> A third such matter is the laity. The ministry of the laity is a topic which has only recently begun to receive from theologians the attention which it deserves.<sup>18</sup> Everyone now knows that, according to the New Testament, all laymen have a ministry. But much more progress needs to be made in determining what that ministry is, and in making it a reality, both for men and women. At present it is still an effective

argument that the only real ministry is the ordained ministry, and that consequently there can be no real ministry for women without them being ordained; and a pseudo-theological colouring is given to the argument by describing the ordained ministry as a representative priesthood, exercising the priesthood of the whole Church on the Church's behalf.<sup>19</sup> Further study of the ministry of the laity is the more urgent because, if all laymen have a ministry, this raises acutely the question, What is distinctive about the ministries of presbyters and deacons? Thus, not only is there a question whether women should be ordained to the presbyterate: there is also a question what the presbyterate is. Again, not only is there a question whether the deaconess is a female deacon: there is also a question what the diaconate is. In short, ministry as a whole needs a comprehensive review. Obviously, nothing of the kind can be attempted in this essay. The questions involved deserve treatises of their own, and would tend to receive different answers in different denominations. Only the most tentative answers can be given here.

There is reason to think that a comprehensive review of ministry in the Christian Church would do much more to satisfy the aspirations of women than the easy and misguided step of admitting them to the priesthood. Only a comprehensive review would take account of the gifts of all women, not just a few, and would order the ministry of the Church in a really carefully considered, permanent and well co-ordinated fashion. It is a mistake to think that Christian women are itching for the priesthood. Among parish workers, there is some frustration at restrictions of the kind listed in note 14, and at the lack of scope given in certain parishes and certain dioceses, but uncertainty seems to be more widespread than frustration. There is naturally some concern to have a more clearly defined status. There is also some desire to be able, not just to preach and baptise, but to celebrate holy communion. It is felt by a number that, within the present framework, ordination to the priesthood does seem to be the only way to the exercise of a full ministry, but it is recognised also that the present framework is under review, and that admission to the priesthood at this stage might simply delay fuller and more adequate reform. One should note that Head Deaconess Gurney has recently denied in the press that the deaconess order is 'some kind of spearhead' for the cause of ordination to the priesthood (*Church Times*, January 28th, 1972).

Although the New Testament teaches us that all Christians have their own spiritual gifts from God, and by consequence their own ministry to perform for the benefit of the whole Church, it also singles out certain ministries from others and gives them a unique status. Presbyters (or bishops) and deacons are singled out from all other ministries in a variety of places in the Acts and Epistles, qualifications are prescribed for these ministries alone, and appointment by men as

well as by God is required for them (Acts 14: 23; Phil. 1: 1; 1 Tim. 3: 1-13; 5: 22; Tit. 1: 5-9; etc.). The titles *Presbyter* (or elder) and *bishop* (or overseer) imply seniority and authority in the congregation, and it is clear from this and from Acts 20:28; 1 Thes. 5:12; 1 Tim. 5:17; Heb. 13:17,24; 1 Pet. 5:2, that all other ministries are to be exercised under their guidance and rule. In addition, they have an important teaching function (1 Tim. 3: 2; 5: 17; Tit. 1: 9). Deacons (or servants), from being singled out in the same way and linked with the presbyters, but being regularly mentioned second (when mentioned at all) and bearing a less dignified title, appear to be their assistants in their ministry. Deaconesses appear to be female deacons (1 Tim. 3: 11).<sup>10</sup>

It may be that the office of deaconess, seen as a female deacon, and in the context of the perpetual diaconate now in process of being restored throughout the Christian Church, will go a considerable way to solve current perplexity about women's ministry. If this were to be the pattern of the future, it would not, of course, exclude a large variety of lay ministries for women, but rather assume them. Nor would it exclude ordination for women, but to an order which would work in an assistant way under the leadership of presbyters or bishops. Still less would it exclude the celibate vocation, which would be the calling of some deaconesses and of some laywomen, living either privately or in community. Whether deaconesses would work full-time or part-time is a comparatively minor question. In the New Testament, presbyters enjoy the right to have their material needs supplied (1 Tim. 5: 17f.) but are sometimes called to forego the right (Acts 20: 33-35), and the same doubtless applies to their assistants. The 1968 Lambeth Conference envisaged both deacons (whether male or female) and priests having the choice of working professionally or voluntarily (resolutions 32 and 33). The practical outworking of all this would have to be thought through and put to the test, but each of these possibilities has some claim to be allowed for in the Christian Church, and each has some contribution to make to the life of the whole body.

One aspiration which the proposals so far made would not satisfy is the desire of some women workers to be able to celebrate holy communion. The New Testament does not tie the celebration of holy communion to the episcopate or presbyterate, and ancient tradition does not do so quite as exclusively as is often supposed.<sup>11</sup> Certainly the ministry of the word and sacraments should normally be combined, and if deacons and deaconesses were authorised, in the absence of the priest, not only to baptise but to celebrate holy communion, this would be no greater innovation than the ordination of women to the priesthood. But the proposal would certainly be a very controversial one, and it is put forward here simply as one of the matters which would need to be considered in the comprehensive review of the Church's ministry for which we ask. It may be that as a result of such a review

the aspirations of Christian women would be fully satisfied without this particular change being made.<sup>22</sup>

In these tentative suggestions we have looked at some of the changes that could be made in our pattern of institutional ministry. But we must, in conclusion, return to our main point that the review of ministry which is required is a comprehensive review of *all* ministry. It will therefore cover the ministry of the laity as well as the institutional ministry, and will seek to identify and distinguish the special gifts of ministry given by God to Christian men and Christian women. God made men and women different; it is perverse and, indeed, dehumanising to both sexes to pretend otherwise. Only in contexts of action into which personal qualities do not enter at all, therefore, will it be possible to treat men and women as simply interchangeable. But in the church's fellowship of mutual ministry Christians are called to be persons to each other—women, therefore, to be distinctively womanly and men distinctively manly. Nobody who ministers, whether lay or ordained, may do so as a cipher, a servant of a system whose personality is wholly sunk in his or her official role (a special twentieth century form of worldliness): such behaviour quenches the Spirit. Women's ministry must be womanly ministry. The questions to start with are: what, in Christian and personal terms, is woman? and what personal qualities and gifts of service are distinctively 'her'? and then, when these questions have been answered, it will at last become possible to reason sensibly about the order and pattern of ministry within which her gifts can best be used. But it does not appear that enquiry into these prior questions has really begun. Is it too much to hope that it may start soon?

#### NOTES

- <sup>1</sup> This is not, of course, to deny that a certain amount of Roman Catholic literature in favour of the ordination of women to the priesthood has recently appeared. A good account of it may be found in *Herder Correspondence*, October 1969.
- <sup>2</sup> W. J. Wolf, in *Journal of Ecumenical Studies*, Winter 1972, pp. 231, 235. See also Marga Bührig, 'Discrimination against Women', in *Technology and Social Justice*, ed. R. H. Preston (London, SCM, 1971).
- <sup>3</sup> 'Some Reflections on Ecclesiastical Assemblies,' in *Theology*, May 1971, p. 209.
- <sup>4</sup> One wonders whether this precedent will be followed in union schemes elsewhere. The Methodist Church of Great Britain, despite its decision in 1966 that women may be ordained, has hitherto refrained from ordaining them, so as to facilitate union with the Church of England. This is not in principle any different from the action of the uniting Churches in N. India when they withdrew recognition from their women ministers in order to make the Church of North India possible. What will now happen about the union schemes in the USA and New Zealand, where the Anglicans have so recently reaffirmed the Anglican position on the ordination of women?
- <sup>5</sup> The preparation of this report was the occasion of Professor von Allmen's letter to her, which constitutes chapter nine of the present work.
- <sup>6</sup> On Gal. 3: 28, see the essays by G. G. Blum and Hans Cavallin.

- <sup>7</sup> For the latest statement of this objection, see G. B. Caird, 'Paul and Women's Liberty' (*Bulletin of the John Rylands Library*, Spring 1972), which Dr. Caird kindly lent to the writers in proof form.
- <sup>8</sup> See Joachim Jeremias, *Jerusalem in the Time of Jesus* (London, SCM, 1969), pp. 358-363; Alfred Edersheim, *Sketches of Jewish Social Life in the Days of Christ*, 1876, p. 154.
- <sup>9</sup> *Beauty and Bands* (London, Hodder and Stoughton, 1955), pp. 179, 186f.
- <sup>10</sup> See Michael Bruce's essay.
- <sup>11</sup> See Brigalia Bam, *What is Ordination Coming To?* (Geneva, WCC, 1971), p. 78.
- <sup>12</sup> *Bishoprick Papers* (London, OUP, 1946), p. 10.
- <sup>13</sup> See *Women in Ministry* (London, CIO, 1968), pp. 56-58.
- <sup>14</sup> See *Women in Ministry*, *passim*. Remuneration has improved in the Church of England in the last decade, but arbitrary restrictions remain. Instances are the permission to read some non-sacramental services but not others, the permission to preach on some occasions but not at the Holy Communion service, and the withholding of permission to distribute the elements at that service. Most of these restrictions are in process of being removed by the further revision of Canon D1 now before the General Synod, assuming that diocesan bishops will take full advantage of it.
- <sup>15</sup> In *Women and Holy Orders* (London, CIO, 1966), p. 125f.
- <sup>16</sup> There is no reason to think that the number of women offering themselves for the priesthood would be very large. The experience of Congregationalists is here instructive. A distinguished Congregational theologian, Nathaniel Micklem, points out that, though they have admitted women to ordination for many years, there is little demand for women ministers, and only with the greatest difficulty do they receive a 'call' from a congregation (*Congregationalism and Episcopacy*, London, Independent Press, 1951, p. 18f.). Where the number ordained and called is larger, the reason can be of the worst kind. The Remonstrant Church of Holland is said to have found it necessary to stop ordaining women because congregations were calling women to their pastorates rather than men simply in order to get a minister at a cheaper rate.
- <sup>17</sup> *Women and Holy Orders*, pp. 32-37; *Women in Ministry*, pp. 39-50.
- <sup>18</sup> See, for example, Michael Green, *Called to Serve* (London, Hodder and Stoughton, 1964), ch. 2; J. R. W. Stott, *One People* (London, Falcon Books, 1969); and the literature there cited.
- <sup>19</sup> This is the theory of R. C. Moberly. For a consideration of it, see J. I. Packer's essay, and chapter two in R. T. Beckwith, *Priesthood and Sacraments* (Marcham Manor Press, 1964).
- <sup>20</sup> It must be remembered, however, that Dr. Blum does not interpret 1 Tim. 3: 11 of deaconesses but of deacons' wives, and that Dr. Hardy holds that even in Rom. 16: 1 the title *deaconess* is purely honorific.
- <sup>21</sup> See *Didache* 10; Tertullian, *Exhortation to Chastity* 7; Hippolytus, *Apostolic Tradition* 10: 1f.
- <sup>22</sup> The writers of this essay are indebted to a number of ladies engaged in training women workers and in supervising women's work, but who prefer to remain anonymous, for much helpful information about women's work and women's views. The responsibility for the proposals that the essay makes lies wholly with the authors, however.