

Northwest Argue *meants*

Pastor's Communiqué
from President Don Argue
Northwest College

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My calling in ministry has always been to the Church. As president of Northwest College, I am a pastor first and an educator second. With a full schedule of ministry in our churches and districts, I am aware of the many changes in pastoral ministry. During the years as president of the National Association of Evangelicals I listened to leaders and pastors from forty-nine denominations and many independent churches. Now, when we travel in ministry, we listen to pastors asking all kinds of questions. We have pastoral couples into our home in order to hear their hearts, discuss current "issues," and learn, learn, learn.

THIS ISSUE'S FOCUS:

Women in Ministry

*The new School of Ministry here at Northwest College, led by Dr. Jack Rozell, was born out of a desire to prepare people for full-time vocational ministry positions who are aware of today's tensions and issues. Northwest has been doing this all along, but our desire is to shore up any weak spots with **practical experiences, mentoring, and an intense internship placement program.** All of which means a stronger connection to the local church.*

In some areas there is reluctance in the body to release women who are gifted by God and well prepared as leaders to do God's work among us.

Our denomination, the Assemblies of God, has affirmed the biblical New Testament model of equality, but many church members seem confused, reacting to secular feminism in our culture at large.

Pat and I have discussed this issue often. We have read much of the literature (and there is plenty) discussing the pros and cons of women serving in the church. We have read the diaries of women who followed God because of His calling, even when male church leaders gave no help or dismissed them altogether. We have traveled outside of our country and noted how effectively God is using women in other parts of the world. We also meet many young women who are called to full-time ministry, but are confused and pained by the various teachings on the role of women in ministry. We wonder what we can do ourselves to help release women students into the harvest field.

One thing is evident. It does little good to have this issue taught and discussed at women's retreats, women's Bible studies, women's college classes, and not have the men learn how Jesus turned things around during His life by His example.



Pastors are the key to teaching biblical equality. God's plan for women shows up from Genesis through Revelation. The pulpit is the place to teach the whole congregation.

Pat and I have teamed up together to further discuss this subject in the following article: "**Women in Ministry.**"

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Don Argue'.

POINTS of Argue *meant*

Here are some of the books that I have been recommending to Christian Leaders:

Equal To Serve: Women and Men Working Together Revealing the Gospel by Gretchen Gaebelein Hull. This book is a must read for every church leader who desires the full potential of women's leadership to be realized in the local church. Gretchen's book is balanced, biblical, and hard-hitting in her examination on the truth as to the role of women in today's church.

Daily Light On the Daily Path by Zondervan Publishing House. This is my favorite devotional book. Morning and evening devotions are centered around a theme and are 100% scripture. This is an excellent resource for hospital visitation, with the scripture ministering directly to the patient.

Face-To-Face: Praying The Scriptures For Intimate Worship by Dr. Kenneth Boa. Pat and I are using this excellent daily Devotional. The format is scripture and then directive for prayer, which includes: adoration, confession, renewal, petition, intercession, affirmation, thanksgiving, and closing prayer. The book is very practical in nature.

Papal Sin: Structures Of Deceit by Gary Wills. This book will help every pastor in dealing with issues relating to the Catholic Church. Subjects include: Celibacy, Marian Politics (The Doctrine of Mary), Catholic Sacraments and the political structure of the Roman Catholic Church. This is a very hard-hitting critique, written by a Catholic. Although I do not agree with some of the positions taken by the author, you will find the book to be a valuable resource.

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COLLEGE

Women in Ministry

When Jesus lived and ministered on earth, the traditional Jewish male prayer prayed three times daily was, "Blessed art thou, O God, who has not made me a Gentile (or Greek), a slave, or a woman." Paul emphasizes the difference Jesus made in Galatians 3:28. "There is neither Jew nor Greek, slave nor free, male nor female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus." Christianity stood in opposition to the cultures of the day, which placed women in a lesser category than men.

Early Egalitarian Efforts

The founding mothers of the movement to improve the status of women in the Western World, who wrote from the 1840s to 1940, generally portrayed women as capable, intelligent human beings who knew their own interests. All they needed to make a contribution to society commensurate with their talents was an even break. The results of this effort were enormous. Eighty-six years ago, women could not vote. Today they can. Just forty-six years ago,

American women could claim no guarantees of equal access to employment, housing, education, or credit. Today their rights in these areas are enshrined in law, and barriers of all kinds are crumbling in spheres of work and public life.

The strong women of those pre-1950's days were our mothers,

grandmothers and great-grandmothers; women who helped to develop a nation, working alongside the men, loving God and family. This was the time of the Women's Missionary Movement that sent women around the world to take the light of the gospel to dark places. During those 100 years, the Salvation Army was founded (completely egalitarian) and Florence Nightingale founded modern nursing care. Men and women read books on holiness written by such women as Hannah Whitall Smith and Phoebe Palmer and other women who were also known for great preaching.

And then, into this new day for women burst the Pentecostal revival. Both of our families came into Pentecost during the early days. We both have mothers and aunts who ministered, preached, and even pastored churches before marriage. From this connection we have counted over two dozen women, some now retired or in heaven, who have served in

full-time pastoral ministry. In a practical way, growing up with these women preachers around us was a positive example.

It was in seminary that Pat first encountered, to her amazement and great pain, those who did not think she, as a woman, could be used in the preaching ministry. Pat never desired to be a preacher. The idea that she was unworthy before God to be used in that way was so painful. Our eyes were opened. Together we studied the biblical texts very carefully. Now, without hesitation, we seek to do whatever we can to enable both young men **and** women to follow God's calling without reservation. **Who are we to question what God wants to do through someone else's life?**

Liberated From Secular Feminism

What happened in recent years? Katherine Kersten, in an article in Christianity Today, June 1994, says that post 1960 feminist theory portrays women as the, "empty vessel." She is a timid, weak, and bewildered creature defined by her

suffering and victim status. Radical feminism claims that women's supposed emptiness is caused by social institutions created by men who seek to retain power for themselves by alienating women from their true, spontaneous selves.

For many, feminism has become a religion. Feminism in its religious guise-the sort of feminism that seeks to find ultimate meaning in the self-is fundamentally incompatible with Christianity and it exerts an increasingly destructive influence in the church.

Christians have an answer for the feminist who despairs because she does not know **who she is**. We say, "She is a child of God, made in God's image, as all of us are"(Ge.1: 27). We are also fallen creatures in a fallen world, but Jesus Christ said, "I am the Way, the Truth, and the Life"(Jn.14: 6). We can know this truth and it will set us free. We will never be happy as long as we are preoccupied with self.

Young men and women in our churches need to understand God's ways. Are we keeping a careful watch over what is being taught in Sunday school classes and in our youth meetings?

In this article we are not discussing the marriage relationship, but something more fundamental. Marriage relationships need to be worked out between two people under Christ. Every marriage is

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a unique entity. Relationships vary in how any two people function. Hopefully each person seeks to see the other develop his or her God-given giftedness.

At Northwest College, we are trying to be forthright in the classroom, in the chapel pulpit, and by example that women are equal partners in the Church of Jesus Christ.

In our concern to see the Church revived or "set on fire," it is interesting to note two precursors to moves of God that continue through the revival:

- 1. A renewal of holy living, accompanied by prayer**
- 2. The releasing of women from cultural boundaries to be used by God as He wills.**

Of course, it is biblical for all to come under the authorities instituted by God. We do not suggest that every woman or man who declares a calling should be automatically placed in some position of authority. In the local congregation pastors who want to free women in their giftedness to be elders, deacons, etc. and find resistance from the body may find that gentle, consistent teaching over time is the only way to affect change.

We may be missing a large pool of resource personnel in our churches. Are we opening places of service to widows of pastors or women who have really co-pastored with their husbands but due to the death of a partner or even divorce find themselves invisible? Think of the years of experience that such women could bring to a ministering staff.

What about the skilled, well-educated women that have made a mark in their chosen fields but now are leaving the workforce to enjoy families, nurture relationships and "smell the roses." The U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics indicates that women of childbearing age are leaving their jobs and returning home in significant numbers. This is a new pool of capable volunteers. Churches are wise to take notice of this group. Young couples want the church to define the role of women in clear and practical ways. Some will not attend where women are not considered equals.

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Jesus and the Role of Women

Jesus was revolutionary in His treatment of women. Even today orthodox Jewish men do not look into the face of women, except in their own families. Various sects have a variety of rules, but Jesus looked at women.

1. Jesus treated women as persons of worth and dignity.

A. Jesus healed women, often touching them or even being touched by them.

1. Peter's mother-in-law (Matt. 8:14-15 and parallels).
2. The daughter of Jairus and the women with the 12-year flow of blood (Matt. 9:18-26 and parallels) –amazing when we consider the ritual uncleanness of the Levitical law.
3. The woman crippled for 18 years whom He called a "daughter of Abraham" (Lu. 13:11-17). "Son of Abraham" was used for men. However, "daughter of Abraham" was not in the literature of the day.
4. Raising the widow's son at Nain (Lu.7:11-17). Widowhood was bad enough, but Jesus knew that losing a son was a final blow to this woman's future.

B. Jesus affirmed the sexual integrity of women challenging "sexual putdowns."

1. He forgave women of sexual sin in the presence of condemning males (Lu. 7:36-50; Jn. 7:53-8:11).
2. He spoke with the Samaritan woman, to the embarrassment of his male disciples (John 4).

Here we have the longest personal conversation in Jesus' life recorded in Scripture.

He considered her as capable to have this in-depth theological discussion. He even revealed His true identity.

3. He elevated the repentance of sinful women above the pride of religious leaders (Matt. 21:31-32).
4. He places blame for lust on men (Matt. 5:27-30).
5. He places Ge.2: 24 above Deut: 24:1-4 in the dispute about divorce. In Matt.19: 5,6, He refers back to creation.

C. Jesus used women as positive examples in His teaching.

1. Women in parables:
 - a. The Lost Coin (Lu. 15:8-10) There is a beautiful balance here. Right before this is the parable of the shepherd – a male.

*Jesus gave
women a
new status.*

- Both male and female are used to teach.
- b. The Leaven (Matt: 13:33 and parallel). This follows the man in the "mustard seed."
 2. Women portray persons of faith:
 - a. The Widow of Zarephath (Lu. 4:26). In His inaugural sermon Jesus speaks of a gentile woman from the time of Elisha.
 - b. The Persistent Widow (Lu.18 1-8).
 3. Women commended for faith:
 - a. The Canaanite woman (Matt. 15:21-28 and parallel).
 - b. The widow's mite (Mk. 12:41-44 and parallel).

2. Jesus accepted and taught women as disciples.

A. The group of women who followed

(akoloutheo) Jesus. This word in italics is used often in a discipleship sense – as when telling disciples "follow me."

1. They had been healed by Jesus, traveled with him and the Twelve, and supported them financially (probably upper class, relatively wealthy).
2. Three are mentioned by name in Luke 8:1-3: Mary Magdalene, Joanna the wife of Chuza (and official under Herod Antipas), and Susanna; and there were many others.
3. They were active at the crucifixion, burial, and resurrection of Jesus (Matt. 27:55-56; 27:61-28:1 and parallels).
4. Presumably among the 120 in Acts 1-2 where we read of Mary the Mother of Jesus being in attendance.

B. Mary and Martha of Bethany.

1. Mary assumed the posture of a disciple, sitting at Jesus' feet, and Jesus welcomed the fact that his audience was female. In Jesus' day it was unheard of for a woman to be educated at all, especially in matters of religion. Religious training was of the males, by the males and for the males (men and boys). For Jesus to welcome – even commend – Mary's sitting at his feet to be a learner was a very significant statement on his part (Lu. 10:38-42; Jn. 11, 12).
2. Martha's confession of Jesus in Jn.11: 27 paralleling that of Peter. This is remarkable theological dialogue. Martha learns resurrection truth.

3. Women proclaimed the good news about Jesus and theologically interpreted Jesus' birth.

A. Women theologically interpret the birth of Jesus.

1. Elizabeth (Lu. 1:41-45)
2. Mary (Lu.1: 46-55)
3. Anna (Lu. 2:36-38)

B. The Samaritan woman: many believed in Jesus through her testimony (Jn. 4)

C. Women were the first witnesses to Jesus' resurrection (All of the Gospels). Women could not be instructed in the law or bear witness in court, yet women were the ones God used to tell the others that Jesus was risen.

1. The angels speak to them and commission them to go tell the male disciples of the event.
2. Mary Magdalene is commissioned by Jesus to report the news to the male disciples.

Conclusion

Jesus gave women a new status. The story told in Mk.14:3-9 bears this out. In those days, women who appeared in public with their hair unbraided or uncovered, were regarded as seductive and were promptly divorced - no questions asked!

In this situation Jesus was at dinner, reclining on a couch. As this woman came in, the people were thinking that if Jesus were truly a prophet He would see right through her. The woman starts to cry, and then – disgraceful as it was – she uncovered her hair and used it to wipe the feet of Jesus. Jesus did not rebuke her. He ignored the social implications of her loose hair. Because Jesus saw her heart, he recognized her not only as a female and a seductress, but also as a person whom God loved. He elevated not only her status, but also the status of all women in general. Jesus came to undo the results of the Fall. Remember, men and women were not cursed, but rather, punished. **The serpent and the ground were cursed.** Not only was the perfect relationship Adam and Eve had with God broken, but now a terrible tension was set up between all men and women. Jesus came to heal this tension and repair our broken world. He made it clear that He brought a new day for women and men. That is why Paul could write to the Galatian church, "...there is neither male nor female; for you are all one in Christ."

Pat Argue holds a Masters Degree in Theological Studies from Bethel Seminary in St. Paul, MN, has taught at the college level in Church History, and developed a new class for Northwest College entitled, "The Christian Woman in the 21st Century." She is a sought after conference and leadership speaker and musician. Pat can be reached at pat.argue@ncag.edu



Ground Breaking on New Duplex November 2000

When President Don Argue puts on his hard hat and climbs into heavy equipment... watch out!

In a ceremony attended by students, faculty and staff, College officials broke ground for the first of seven duplexes for faculty and staff housing being built on the campus' north perimeter. The duplexes will provide for convenient, affordable housing and be dedicated especially to new staff and faculty in transition to Northwest College.

Dan Neary, Vice President for College Advancement, directed the festivities and explained: "Ground breaking for a duplex may not seem like a significant occasion... but it really is. This will be the first building built under the College's new Master Plan." The Master Plan has been in process for several years and will provide for expansion that will include student housing, academic center, recreation facility, student center (with dining hall), and chapel.

Neary also explained, "Sometimes we do these kinds of ground breaking events with gold shovels... gold shovels are for ceremonies, this is a REAL groundbreaking. For that we needed a REAL shovel." Crews began work on the site within days of the ceremony.

Those in attendance took note of Dr. Argue's talent for operating the backhoe. He happily turned the operation of heavy equipment over to qualified professionals.



Cross-Country Makes it to Nationals November 2000

The Northwest College Women won the Cascade Conference Cross-Country Championship, beating Southern Oregon University and Eastern Oregon University (both nationally ranked) in dramatic style. Northwest scored 20 points on the strength of a top 5 that finished 1st, 3rd, 4th, 5th and 7th. Southern Oregon finished second in the conference with 52 points, while Eastern Oregon finished third with 56 points. By winning the conference meet, the Northwest College women automatically qualified for the NAIA National Championships.

This victory marks several "firsts" in Northwest College history: This is the first Cascade Conference Championship (for any sport) in Northwest College history. This is the first team in Northwest College history (of any sport) to qualify for the NAIA National Championships. Danyel Longmire is the first Cross-Country Conference Champion in Northwest College history.

Board Approves Comprehensive Funding Campaign: Northwest Partners

The Northwest College Board of Directors made landmark decisions at their meetings November 29 and 30. With overwhelming support, the Board unanimously approved a seven-year, \$39 million comprehensive funding campaign.

President Argue remarked, "By faith, we see a new campus." The majority of the campaign goals provide funding for four new buildings on campus.

"These goals are certainly huge steps of faith," said Dan Neary, Vice President for College Advancement. "Northwest College has never received gifts of this magnitude. We believe that this is what God is calling us to... and our faith is strengthened by a good start." Northwest has already received \$2.3 million in gifts and pledges in the year 2000 toward the campaign.

The campaign goals anticipate increased giving of all types, in several categories, from a wide range of sources.

Northwest Arguements

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"..., there is neither male nor female; for you are all one in Christ Jesus."
Galatians 3:28 (NAS)

"It is not the occupation but the spirit that makes the difference. The question is whether a thing is done *with* God or *without* God."
Florence Nightengale, Founder of modern nursing

"It is not how much you do but how much love you put into the doing and sharing with others that is important."
Mother Teresa

The general shook his head, "The battlefield is no place for a woman. You couldn't stand the rough life. Anyway we are now doing everything that can be done for our soldiers. No one could do more." "I could," Clara Barton declared.
The Angel of the Battlefield, The Book of Virtues

Rob Vatter, Director for Church Relations, is available to respond to questions and needs related to the local church. He is available to represent Northwest College to churches, missions conventions, and conferences. You can reach him at 425.889.5205 or rob.vatter@ncag.edu



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