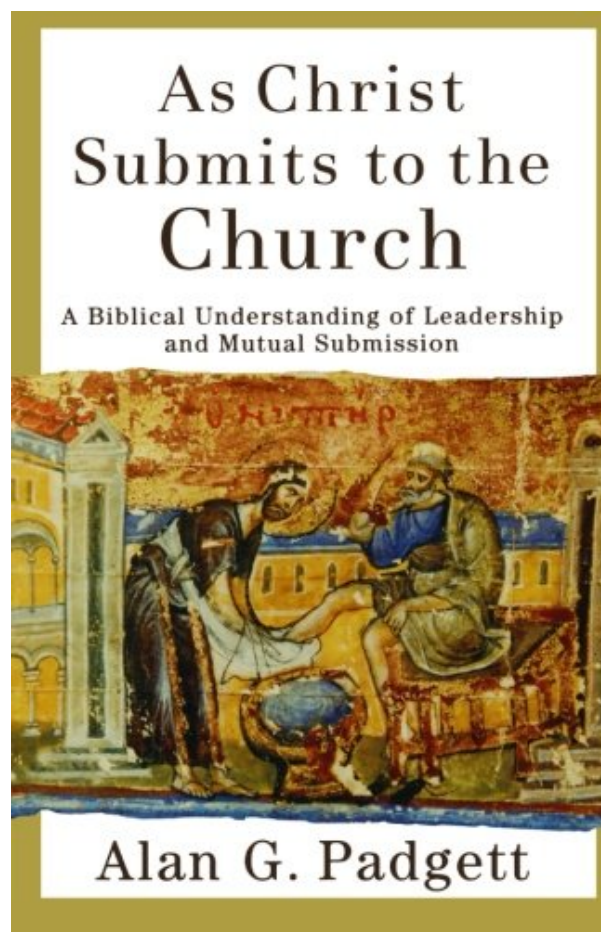


**AS CHRIST SUBMITS TO THE CHURCH: A
BIBLICAL UNDERSTANDING OF
LEADERSHIP AND MUTUAL SUBMISSION
BY ALAN G. PADGETT**



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As Christ Submits to the Church

A Biblical Understanding of Leadership
and Mutual Submission



Alan G. Padgett

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From the Back Cover

Does Christ submit to the church? Should Christians submit to one another? What about husbands and wives?

As Christ Submits to the Church offers a fresh look at the ethics of submission, gender roles, and servant leadership in the New Testament. Through his careful interpretation of Paul's letters and broader New Testament teaching, theologian Alan Padgett shows how Christ's submission to the church models an appropriate understanding of gender roles and servant leadership. As Christ submits to the church, so all Christians must submit to, serve, and care for one another. Padgett articulates a creative approach to mutual submission and explores its practical outworking in the church today, providing biblical and ethical affirmation for equality in leadership.

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About the Author

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What does the Bible really say about gender, the ethics of submission, and malefemale roles? In this book, well regarded theologian Alan Padgett offers a fresh approach to the debate. Through his careful interpretation of Paul's letters and broader New Testament teaching, the author shows how Christ's submission to the church models an appropriate understanding of gender roles and servant leadership. As Christ submits to the church, so all Christians must submit to, serve, and care for one another. Padgett articulates a creative approach to mutual submission and explores its practical outworking in the church today, providing biblical and ethical affirmation for equality in leadership.

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Most helpful customer reviews

4 of 4 people found the following review helpful.

Complementarian or Egalitarian: Which is it?

By DLionBrook

This is an important, concise and enjoyable read for all of us who find ourselves somewhere in-between in the complementarian/egalitarian debate. Padgett adds to the literature on the topic a very helpful discussion of the ethics of roles. He identifies two types of roles, a Type I in which submission is obedience to an external authority, which can be voluntary but often is not. This first type is external, hierarchical and legal. The Type II is internal, personal and a kind of grace. In this second type, submission is the voluntary giving up of power in order to take up the role of a slave, so that one may serve the needs of another person. Padgett demonstrates throughout that Christ lived and displayed and taught Type II submission and never Type I submission which was the common practice of his day.

The author traces the recent literary history of the gender debate. He also offers us a helpful ethic of how we read Scripture Christo-centrally. He argues that an evangelical theological hermeneutic must include a threefold sense of Scripture: (1) the conventional 'literal' sense, (2) the canonical 'spiritual' sense, and (3) the contemporary 'application' sense. Intertwined in this review of literature and discussion of hermeneutic, Padgett offers an interesting discussion of trinitarian theology and how it impacts the gender debate. The author argues, from the trinitarian perspective, that the submission of Christ was temporary and not "functional-eternal" as many try to argue. Many who insist upon the historical, literal, or plain reading of scripture as alone authoritative for the church today may be prone to an excessive kind of narrow literalism that veils the truth of Scripture. Padgett speaks of a "spiritual" reading of Scripture that seeks to carefully navigate between the two ditches of narrow literalism and an excess of the allegorical.

Padgett tackles the most difficult passages in the gender debate. His exegesis and discussion of 1 Timothy 2:8-15 and 1 Corinthians 11:2-16 are especially noteworthy. His thinking on these texts, while refreshing and novel for most of us, will cause the reader to pause, reflect and examine again their core assumptions and understanding of biblical gender roles. This is an important read for all of us who desire to drill down to the core issues underlying the debate over the biblical/theological and practical outworking of gender in our contemporary contexts.

6 of 7 people found the following review helpful.

Mutual submission, only a dream?

By James A. Lee

Hot button topics. I love them. One of my favorites concerns leadership and authority in the contemporary Church.

As Christ Submits to the Church: A Biblical Understanding of Leadership and Mutual Submission by Alan G. Padgett presses that button. Actually, he presses that button to the tune of each page in this release from

Baker Academic.

The author engages in an excellent cumulative style that makes the academic data accessible for most readers. Far from an easy read, the information is systematically made digestible with a summary and review style at the end of each chapter. This approach to the data disseminates and repeats the information previously read. The author accomplishes his task of proving his thesis very effectively and I would enjoy reading more of his works for the fun of it.

This book was paced efficiently and remained concise while breaching a topic that is broad and expansive in arena of Christian conversation. Far from a tome owed to the topic of leadership, authority, and mutual submission, this concise volume contains satisfactory references in the footnotes and a bibliography to keep any reader busy for an entire year. The measure of the author's resolve concerning this topic is summarized in some his closing statements at the end of this book:

"Against too many church leaders in the evangelical movement, we must resist reductionist proof-texting in our efforts to understand the full will of God. Only the whole of Scripture, read as a whole, is a firm foundation for the reform of the church and the life of daily discipleship."

As the author embarks on a journey to survey the evangelical approach to gender roles, male dominion, mission and submission, headship, and justice for today, he keeps several topics in the common denominator. Christ's earthly ministry, relationship with mankind, and his association with the disciples. Through these areas of concern the author illustrates the posture of submission Christ intended for his Church. Alan Padgett begs the question in each chapter by demonstrating the power of Christ's ministry and posture toward others as a tool of understanding true submission. In the end, the book's title proves its worth and earns its placement on the front cover.

I found this book helpful for my own personal study. Endeavoring to discover the required posture of submission, whether it be in my relationship with my wife or members of the Church, I am eager to replicate Christ's behaviors and desires for mutual submission to one another. The engaging style, diligent academic study, and careful attention to detail regarding the Lord's life and ministry in this book will provide an effective and refreshing new approach to an age-old debate. I did not agree with all points made with the author, even when he was making them well. I did appreciate this book and would recommend it to anyone interested in resolving their own view concerning submission in today's Church.

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful.

Excellent book on mutual submission

By Canuck Monk

A valuable book in the gender roles debate within the Church. Alan Padgett critiques the complementarian views of folks like John Piper and Wayne Grudem by pointing to the necessity of contextual analysis of verses that involve the relationships of men and women in the church. He focuses particularly on Ephesians 5, 1 Corinthians 11-13 and the Pastoral Epistles. While Padgett admits that some verses appear to indicate male authority upon first glance, the actual circumstances of the writings need to be more closely examined; for instance, in Ephesus, wealthy women were being led astray by false teachers and thus Paul demands that they "remain silent" because they are teaching error to their fellow believers. He refutes the "creation-order" argument and spends time looking at specific Greek words; for instance, one Greek word often translated as "authority" can also have the alternative meaning of "origin," which drastically affects how a particular verse may be read. Padgett seeks to present Jesus Christ as the ultimate model for leadership and submission. Jesus washed the disciples' feet and submitted himself to the Cross for the sake of the Beloved, his Bride, the Church. In Padgett's mind, mutual submission means the temporary role of servant towards those whom we

love and seek to serve, not a consistent, once-for-all hierarchy. This is essentially the same as "servant leadership." Padgett concludes that by looking at the Bible as a whole, instead of cherry-picking individual verses, an egalitarian view is the outlook best presented.

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