

WIC Resource Letter

F O R P C A W O M E N I N L E A D E R S H I P



WIC 201

reprinted from Summer Quarter 2000 Vol. VIII, No. 3

WIC Purpose Statement

The purpose of
the Women in the
Church is that
every woman know
Christ personally and
be committed to
extending His
Kingdom in her
life, home, church,
community, and
throughout the
world.

Dear Sisters,

Following the '99 WIC conference, the Women's Advisory Sub-Committee took a deep breath and began to ask questions. What have we done during the last several years? What do we need to do next? Have we completed our task? The result of that discussion is presented in the enclosed brochure and explained in this *Resource Letter*.

In 1997 we produced a *Resource Letter* that we called WIC 101. This *Resource Letter* is WIC 201. There is nothing new here. That is not an apology. Actually, it is a celebration because we are grateful that God graciously led us step by step and protected us along the way so that we don't have to undo what we have done. WIC 201 is just the next step in the process.

When I became Director of WIC Ministry, the Women's Advisory Sub-Committee and the CE/P staff decided that we needed to develop resources that would present a biblical perspective of womanhood and that would help churches craft women's ministries that are consistent with the standards of the PCA. Everything that was done during the first fifteen years of the PCA gave us a foundation upon which to build. As we began this pilgrimage, there were several non-negotiables:

- The authority of God's Word.
- Our commitment to the Reformed faith.
- Our high view of the Church.
- Our belief in male headship in the home and church.

We were convinced that these commitments would not deter us. We believed they would give us the framework to address the topic of biblical womanhood with substance and integrity, and to develop a women's ministry that is covenantal rather than individualistic.

We learned and developed these resources piece by piece. As we learned, we cast the vision with the various WIC conferences and we produced written materials to teach the vision. Now we can present it as a whole as *Biblical Foundations for Womanhood (Foundations)*. We are very grateful to Charles Dunahoo, Coordinator of CE/P, and the CE/P Committee for their leadership and oversight.

We are not unaware that the role of women in the church is a volatile and current topic. We are not ignoring that fact, but we are continuing what CE/P has always done. Since the beginning of the PCA, the WIC ministry has proactively taught biblical womanhood from a covenantal perspective. We believe this positive approach will guide women away from error and toward truth.

Please join us in praying that PCA women will continue to boldly embrace biblical womanhood and to nurture a generation of young women to do the same.

For the glory of our King,

Susan Hunt

An Explanation of Biblical Foundations for Womanhood

Susan Hunt

The books that comprise *Biblical Foundations for Womanhood* attempt to present a biblical apologetic for womanhood and for a women's ministry in the church.

The discussion of biblical womanhood must be put in the larger context of creation, fall, and redemption.

Creation: Creation establishes our purpose and authority. God created man and woman in His image with the capacity to live in fellowship with Him and to reflect His glory. That is our chief end. As Creator, He is the ultimate authority.

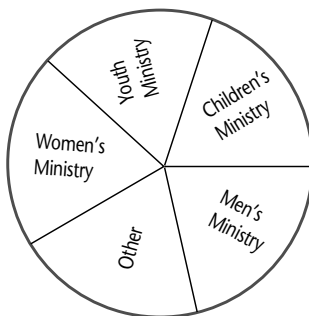
Fall: When our representative sinned, he lost the ability to live in God's presence and to reflect His glory. His fallen nature was passed on to all his posterity.

Redemption: Through the covenant of grace, God made the way for His people to be redeemed from sin and to live in His presence. In this covenant, Christ is our representative. He kept the terms of the covenant for us. God's covenant promise is that He will be our God, we will be His people, and He will live among us.

Woman was created to be a helper. This helper design has pervasive and practical implications for how redeemed women glorify God individually and collectively as women in God's Church. The helper design is not just about our various roles. It is intrinsic to who we are as women.

God provided the church as the place and the covenant family as the people who are to teach His redeemed daughters how to fulfill their creation design. In Titus 2 He says that the church is to equip older women for this ministry. A covenantal approach to women's ministry will equip women to express their love for Christ in ministries of community and compassion, and our helper design uniquely equips us for this mission.

A covenantal approach will also view a women's ministry in the church as one part of the whole educational ministry.



Against this backdrop, the books in *Foundations* have six primary objectives:

- Teach women a Biblical perspective of their relationship with Christ, family, and church.
- Challenge women to fulfill their helper design.
- Help women examine the implications of the covenant in their relationships.
- Train women to cultivate community by obeying the Titus mandate to nurture one another for God's glory.
- Train women to be channels of compassion by obeying the Micah mandate.
- Equip women for leadership roles in the women's ministry of the church.

The LORD God said, "It is not good for the man to be alone. I will make a helper suitable for him." Gen. 2:18

Why does CE/P think this is the resource they should provide?

First, we are compelled by Titus 2 to teach biblical womanhood. In our particular time, this is essential since the cultural notions about womanhood are antithetical to biblical womanhood.

Second, we are committed to helping churches develop a covenantal approach to all educational ministries in the church. A covenantal approach to women's ministry is essential because

- It will build God's church and advance His kingdom rather than separate women from God's church.
- It is consistent with the standards of our church.
- It is not program, project, or personality driven so it is a lasting legacy we can give to the next generation. It will outlive any specific program, project or personality.
- It is not dependent on any specific structure. *Foundations* is not a structural model but a teaching resource that is adaptable to any ministry model.

Foundations challenges women to think and live covenantally rather than individualistically.

What is a Covenantal Approach to Ministry?

A covenantal approach to ministry is a relational model that flows out of the realities of covenant theology. A covenantal approach seeks to balance an educational and a relational component. If a ministry is just educational, it is academic. If it is just relational, it is anemic. Biblical discipleship combines teaching the content of the covenant in the context of covenantal relationships that validate the gospel of grace. Biblical discipleship imparts a way of life as we live in community with God's covenant people.

This concept is explored in detail in *Heirs of the Covenant, A Place of Grace*, and *The Micah Mandate*, all of which serve as a backdrop for *Foundations*. What follows is taken from those books and is applicable to any educational ministry in the church, but we will make specific application of the principles to the women's ministry.

What is the covenant?

A covenant is a binding agreement. The covenant of grace is the sovereignly initiated arrangement whereby fallen sinners are restored to a relationship with the God of heaven and earth. In this covenant, Christ is our representative.

"For there is one God and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus . . ." 1 Timothy 2:5.

The Westminster Confession of Faith states: "The distance between God and the creature is so great, that although reasonable creatures do owe obedience unto Him as their Creator, yet they could never have any fruition of Him as their blessedness and reward, but by some voluntary condescension on God's part, which He hath been pleased to express by way of covenant" (VII, 1).

The condition for life in God's presence is the same for us as it was for Adam and Eve in the Garden: perfect obedience. The terms of the covenant must be met. Our first representative was a covenant breaker, but Jesus kept the covenant terms for His people. This is grace—God's kindness, love, and mercy to undeserving sinners.

For this reason Christ is the mediator of a new covenant, that those who are called may receive the promised eternal inheritance—now that he has died as a ransom to set them free from the sins committed under the first covenant. Hebrews 9:15

The covenant motif runs throughout Scripture. The word is mentioned almost three hundred times. The biblical covenants give the framework of Scripture. Without understanding this framework, our approach to understanding and applying God's Word will be cursory and convoluted.

What Difference Does the Covenant Make?

The covenant *provides the way* for us to again live in the presence of glory and thus to fulfill our reason for being—reflecting that glory.

Jesus answered, "I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me" (John 14:6).

The covenant *provides the power* to fulfill our purpose.

"For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ, for it is the power of God to salvation for everyone who believes, for the Jew first and also for the Greek" (Romans 1:16-17 NKJV).

The covenant *provides the motivation*.

"For Christ's love compels us . . ." (2 Corinthians 5:14-17).

Does it really matter whether a women's ministry is based on a covenant model?

In *The True Woman*, I refer to a penetrating question asked by a woman at a WIC leadership training seminar. It is *the* question that must be considered:

As we pursue our desire to train women for kingdom work through the women's ministry of our churches, what is to keep us from spinning out of control and going the way of so many other women's movements? Is it wise for us to organize and mobilize women?

That is, indeed, our vulnerability. A covenantal perspective of ministry is our protection from this tendency. A lack of theological focus results in lives that are performance-oriented and ministries that become program-driven. We forget why we are doing what we are doing. Theological ignorance leads to individualism and autonomy, which are rebellion against God's authority.

The covenant of grace is what we believe, so the nature of the covenant must determine what we do, why we do it, and how we do it. One way to think covenantally about ministry is to consider

some of the characteristics of the covenant. Covenantal ministry is an expression of covenant theology, so these characteristics should guide us as we live our lives and as we craft our ministries.

What are the characteristics of the covenant?

Obviously there are many characteristics of the covenant, but we will look at some that are particularly pertinent to this topic and give examples of some practical implications for a women's ministry.

The covenant is sovereignly initiated and sustained, and thus eternally secure:

The more we understand this Divine initiative, the more we understand that we deserve nothing but have been given everything. It is a covenant of grace. Our confidence is not in self but in God.

Implications for life and ministry:

This knowledge produces a humility that frees us to "Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit, but in humility consider others better than yourselves. Each of you should look not only to your own interests, but

You must teach what is in accord with sound doctrine. Teach the older women to be reverent in the way they live, not to be slanderers or addicted to much wine, but to teach what is good. Then they can train the younger women to love their husbands and children, to be self-controlled and pure, to be busy at home, to be kind, and to be subject to their husbands, so that no one will malign the word of God.

Titus 2:1, 3-5

also to the interests of others" (Philippians 2:3-4). We have the security to cast our cares on the LORD knowing that He will sustain us (Psalm 55:22).

A covenantal perspective begins with God—who He is and what He has done for us. Then we consider our covenant privileges and responsibilities because of who He is and what He has done. This perspective helps keep us from getting trapped in moralism or legalism. We must be careful to teach Scripture from a covenantal perspective whether it is a verse by verse study or a thematic study. This may seem obvious, but often churches have a sound pulpit ministry while in the Christian education program people are studying materials from all over the theological map.

Teaching from a covenant perspective means that we teach about God's grace and we develop ministries that are done in the power of grace and that cultivate environments of grace. In 2 Corinthians 8 Paul says that he wants us to know about the grace that God gave the Macedonian churches. Then he says that they gave out of the most severe trial and extreme poverty. He says they gave beyond their ability. If we minister out of the strength of our own resources, it is just self-effort. It is not until we get beyond our ability that it becomes a ministry of grace.

The covenant is relational:

The God of heaven and earth is a personal God who enters into an intimate relationship with us.

Implications for life and ministry:

Our relationships with each other are to mirror His relationship with us. This is not a relational model built on sentimentalism and felt-needs theology. It is a relational model built on the covenant of grace. There is a huge difference.

The reference point for a needs-based model is experience and feelings.

The reference point for a covenant model is the character of God as He shows Himself to us in His Word.

This is a relational model built on doctrines such as justification and adoption. God declares us to be just in His sight on the basis of the merits of Christ. He adopts us as His children and accepts us into His family not because of our performance but because of His grace. This is the basis for the covenant community. These are the reasons we accept and love one another.

Our relationships in the covenant community are not about living up to each other's expectations. They are about accepting one another and reflecting God's grace to each other as we are being transformed by the power of the gospel.

People today are unusually primed for covenantal ministry because they want meaningful relationships. They have seen the relationships around them crumble and they want substantive, lasting relationships.

Meaningful, lasting relationships are characteristic of the covenant of grace. Only grace can move us beyond self-serving relationships.

Titus 2 relationships are covenantal. Without this framework, they will become self-focused and self-serving.

The covenant is familial:

From the beginning, God worked through families. The covenant promise was given to Abraham and his seed.

One generation will commend your works to another; they will tell of your mighty acts. They will speak of the glorious splendor of your majesty ... They will tell of the power of your awesome works ... They will celebrate your abundant goodness and joyfully sing of your righteousness. The LORD is gracious and compassionate, slow to anger and rich in love. The LORD is good to all; he has compassion on all he has made Psalm 145:4-9

Implications for life and ministry:

As we teach women about marriage and parenting, it should be from a covenantal perspective. The Christian family is to exist within the context of the covenant family, the family of families, the church.

It is imperative that we understand this context because our notions about family are usually shaped more by culture than by Scripture, and we live in a culture of individualism, selfism, and materialism. We must teach women to think covenantally

about the family. We must teach the interdependence of individual families and the household of faith. We acknowledge our commitment to God's design for families by helping those who are married to build strong families—whether we are married or not. One of the things I love about the novels by Elizabeth Prentiss is that they tell about unmarried women who encouraged, equipped, and helped young married women to be good wives and mothers.

The covenant is corporate:

Salvation is personal, but God does not just deal with us as individuals. God deals with us as His children.

Implications for life and ministry:

We are a family and there should be a deep oneness that reflects the unity of the Trinity. God's Word is to be taught in the context of a loving community. Every ministry in the church, including the WIC ministry, should be diligent in seeking to cultivate a sense of community throughout the entire church family.

A covenantal perspective has a high view of and love for the church. A women's ministry should teach women about the beauty and protection of the church. Even when people in the church fail us, our Savior calls us to love His bride and to pursue her peace and purity. This should be reflected in any ministry of the church.

A covenantal perspective means that we are our sister's keeper. We have covenant privileges and responsibilities to one another. Titus 2 says that older women have responsibilities to nurture, encourage, and instruct younger women.

The covenant is generational:

Throughout Scripture there is the emphasis that one generation is to tell the next generation the praiseworthy deeds of the Lord and the wonders

He has done. This is the covenant way. This was not just the responsibility of the parents. It was the responsibility of Israel. In Titus 2 this is gender specific, but it is the same covenant principle. This is why this instruction was given to the pastor of the church—it is a church issue.

Implications for life and ministry:

In our WIC ministries, this may mean that we develop programs to equip women to spiritually mother other women and that we actually match women. It may mean that we enfold teen girls into this ministry. But doing Titus 2 work will not be limited to such programs. We will challenge and equip women for a lifestyle of Titus 2 ministry to one another.

The covenant is compassionate:

God is a God of compassion, and we are to be a people of compassion.

Implications for life and ministry:

In our WIC ministries, we must care for women and we must teach them to love and care for others. We must provide opportunities for involvement in ministries of compassion. It's the covenant way of life.

The covenant is integrative:

The covenant is the thread that holds Scripture together. The covenantal framework of Scripture shows the purpose, harmony, and connections of Scripture. It is all about Jesus. The ultimate question of life is how we relate to Him, for it is "in Him [that] we live and move and have our being" (Acts 17:28). "For from him and through him and to him are all things. To him be the glory forever! Amen" (Romans 11:36).

Implications for life and ministry:

This integrated framework of Scripture gives us an all-encompassing worldview so that we can think about God's truth and apply that truth into all of life.

A covenantal approach to ministry means an integrated approach to ministry. All ministries of the church are to be united in purpose, vision, philosophy, and strategy.

Classes or ministries are often clustered by ages or interest, and there is nothing wrong with that. However, we must be intentional in merging the vision for the various ministries into a whole.

A word of caution: it is easy to become so zealous for integrated ministry that we go to the extreme of saying there should be no specific ministries for men, women, children, or youth. That is *not* a covenantal approach. It fails to take into account the corporate nature of the covenant. It fails to take Titus 2 into account. Our son is a Director of Children's Ministry, and when someone challenged him with the idea that children should remain with their parents and not have separate classes, his response was: "From the time our children arrive at church they are with family. Whether they are in a class, walking down the hall, or in the gym, they are with their covenant family. They are with people who love and care for them and who are committed to telling the next generation the praiseworthy deeds of the Lord. We do not want our children to be deprived of this covenantal inheritance, and we want parents to have a way to tap into this inheritance."

I am convinced that an integrated approach to ministry must *begin with the pulpit*, but I am just as convinced that it must not *stop with the pulpit*. Too often there is a huge disconnect between what is preached and what is happening in the programs of the church. We must be careful that the WIC ministry does not function independently of the rest of the church. We are to be helpers who cultivate community and who are channels of compassion to the whole church.

How do we apply foundational truths about womanhood and the characteristics of the covenant to our WIC ministry?

He has showed you, O man, what is good. And what does the LORD require of you? To act justly and to love mercy and to walk humbly with your God.
Micah 6:8

First, pray for wisdom to think biblically about our creation design as women and to think covenantally about our privileges and responsibilities to the covenant community.

Second, be intentional in planning every study, event, project, and activity. The following questions will help a leadership team to be self-consciously covenantal as you plan and implement your ministries:

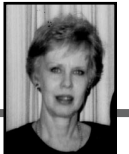
- Why are we doing this?
- How will this glorify God by reflecting His character?
- What is this teaching women about the biblical perspective of womanhood?
- What is this teaching women about living covenantally and reflecting grace to one another?
- Do our activities or tasks flow from Scripture?
- How will this build community among the women?
- How will it build community with other members, age groups, and ministries of the church, presbytery, denomination?
- How does this advance God's kingdom in the world?
- How does this demonstrate the compassion of Jesus?
- What characteristic of the covenant does this express?
- How are we showing our answers to the above questions to participants in the ministry?

Every activity or ministry will not accomplish all of the above, but each activity should accomplish some of the above.

The *Westminster Confession of Faith* meticulously teaches the content of the covenant, and then gives a magnificent description of covenant life in the chapter on the communion of the saints:

All saints that are united to Jesus Christ their Head, by His Spirit, and by faith, have fellowship with Him in His grace, sufferings, death, resurrection, and glory; and, being united to one another in love, they have communion in each other's gifts and graces, and are obliged to the performance of such duties, public and private, as do conduce to their mutual good, both in the inward and outward man.

May God give us grace for the task before us.



❖ **HOW IS FOUNDATIONS DIFFERENT FROM WHAT WAS REFERRED TO AS THE CORE CURRICULUM?**

Foundations consists of the same studies with new purpose and understanding of the collective and foundational aspect of the studies. The studies were written in “fits and starts.” When the materials were completed, the WASC and CE/P staff recognized the comprehensiveness and practical application for framing women’s ministry in the local church.

❖ **HOW IS FOUNDATIONS DIFFERENT FROM OTHER RESOURCES FOR WOMEN’S MINISTRY?**

Foundations is a collection of studies that is based on covenantal theology and reflects the distinctives of the Presbyterian Church in America. This title was given to the collection of studies to communicate that *Foundations* is a basic starting place for women’s ministry and is not the total of women’s ministry. The title establishes the fact that the Bible clearly speaks to women’s roles and daily life.

❖ **WHAT IS THE PURPOSE OF THE BROCHURE?**

The brochure was developed to give the big picture application of *Foundations*. It may be used to present *Foundations* to local church and Presbytery leadership. It is also a helpful way to give an overview to individual women.

❖ **WHO SHOULD READ AND/OR STUDY FOUNDATIONS?**

- Pastors and ruling elders, especially those with specific responsibility for oversight of the women’s ministry.
- Women in leadership in the church, including teachers, women who serve on church committees, women on a church staff, and those who coordinate the women’s ministry.
- All women in the church for training in biblical concepts of womanhood.

❖ **WHY SHOULD THESE GROUPS STUDY FOUNDATIONS?**

Biblical ideas regarding God’s creational design have been almost completely obliterated in contemporary Christendom. Much of what is being written for and about women in the church is prescriptive and self-help based.

Foundations uses the Word of God to clearly propound the role of a Christian woman in her home and in her church. Women who are motivated by a desire to please the Lord must study and apply His Word in all areas of life, including their perspective about womanhood.

Foundations is a practical and useful collection of studies from which the local church may develop a doctrinally sound standard for women’s studies and activities. *Foundations* is a starting place and a touchstone for establishing, sustaining, and renovating a women’s ministry.

❖ **IS FOUNDATIONS ALWAYS THE PRIMARY TEACHING SOURCE? HOW FREQUENTLY SHOULD THESE BOOKS BE STUDIED? IS THERE AN ORDER?**

CE/P recognizes that each local church and presbytery establishes vision and mission specific to its ministry. Women’s ministry should be an integral part of that vision and ministry, so the goals and objectives established by the leadership will determine the use, frequency, and order of *Foundations* studies. *Foundations* is the resource that CE/P provides to give practical help for women to carry out their biblical design in the church, home, and community.

Foundations is not offered as the only study material for women, and a church may determine that it is not the primary study material they will use.

Foundations can be used as a starting place for women new to the faith or to covenantal theology as well

as training in biblical principles for women of the rising generation.

Even after studying these materials, many women will occasionally desire refresher courses.

Generally it is better to study them in the order they are listed, but each church needs to make this decision based on its situation.

❖ **HOW WILL FOUNDATIONS HELP BIBLE STUDY LEADERS WHO ARE TEACHING OTHER MATERIALS?**

Foundations is offered as a framework for women who teach and lead other studies. In other words, since authority accrues to women in teaching ministries, they should be women who understand and apply the principles of biblical womanhood in their own lives so that they have a basis on which to make application of Scripture in the lives of other women.

❖ **WHAT OTHER RESOURCES SHOULD BE USED FOR WOMEN’S STUDIES? WHAT ABOUT THOSE WICS THAT ONLY STUDY BOOKS OF THE BIBLE?**

CE/P provides resources to *help* the local church and presbytery to fulfill *their* responsibility to choose literature and studies for church members. It is not CE/P’s goal or responsibility to mandate a particular type of study for the local church. *Foundations* is a resource that may be used by gatekeepers who are effectively and biblically selecting studies and training teachers in the local church.

❖ **SOME WOMEN RESIST TOPICAL STUDIES. THEY ASK IF THIS IS JUST A CREATIVE WAY TO PROMOTE THE BOOKS BY SUSAN HUNT AND SHARON BETTERS. HOW DO WE ANSWER THIS RESISTANCE?**

CE/P does not present *Foundations* as a resource that will meet the need or request of every church or every woman. Susan and Sharon penned

these studies with the collaboration and oversight of the CE/P staff as well as the input of many godly women. The Christian Education and Publications staff and permanent committee view *Foundations* as a means of promoting a biblical perspective on womanhood. CE/P also offers *Foundations* as a method for facilitating the purpose of WIC in the PCA that every woman know Christ personally and be committed to extending His kingdom in her life, home, church, community, and throughout the world.

❖ **SO TAKE ME THROUGH STEP BY STEP. WHAT SHOULD WE DO IF OUR CHURCH DECIDES THAT WE WANT FOUNDATIONS TO BE THE FOUNDATION FOR OUR WOMEN'S MINISTRY?** We'll give an answer, but you must adapt it to your church.

First, the leadership should be committed to this approach to women's ministry. You should also request a meeting with the pastor and/or elders to present the brochure and explain why you want *Foundations* to be the foundation for your WIC.

Second, the leadership should determine whether it would be helpful to offer these studies to all of the women in your church, or whether you will just use them as the grid for leadership decisions and for Bible study leaders.

If you only use them for leadership women, decide how they will study them. For example, you can assign each of the books to a different woman and ask her to present the principles at a training retreat for your leadership women. Or you can ask all of the women to read all of the books and come prepared to share common themes.

If you decide to offer them as an ongoing study in biblical womanhood to all of the women in your church,

decide how you can reach as many women as possible. The commonality of studying the same material will cultivate a sense of unity between the women even though they are in different groups.

Then, in all of your planning, push every event, activity, and project through the grid of the objectives of *Foundations* by asking strategic questions:

- Why are we doing this?
- How will this glorify God by reflecting His character?
- What is this teaching women about the biblical perspective of womanhood?
- What is this teaching women about living covenantally and reflecting grace to one another?
- Do our activities or tasks flow from Scripture?
- How will this build community among the women?
- How will it build community with other members, age groups, and ministries of the church, presbytery, denomination?
- How does this advance God's kingdom in the world?
- How does this demonstrate the compassion of Jesus?
- What characteristic of the covenant does this express?
- How are we showing our answers to the above questions to participants in the ministry?

Finally, determine what you can do to keep *Foundations* alive and well. What do you need to do so that these foundational principles for women become a way of life in your church. Perhaps you will offer ongoing refresher courses. You may want to challenge those who complete the studies to take an individual or a small group through them in a more informal way. At every event you may have a personal testimony from a woman about how some principle has permeated her life, or a

testimony by a woman who has been spiritually mothered by another woman. What you do will depend on the size and growth of your church.

❖ **SHOULD WE DO THE STUDIES AGAIN IF WOMEN HAVE ALREADY STUDIED ONE OR MORE OF THESE BOOKS?**

Remember that these are not studies to complete and put on the shelf. This is a way of life. So the question is—Have women learned the principles and application of biblical womanhood? Are they passing this legacy on to others? If not, perhaps you should re-visit them. Often women tell us that it was the second time around when things clicked for them.

❖ **DO YOU HAVE ANY OTHER RESOURCES TO HELP US IMPLEMENT THIS APPROACH TO MINISTRY?** We were hoping you would ask. Just look on page 11.

❖ **AND WHAT'S NEXT?**

We do not know what God would have us to do next. Nor did we know a year ago that *Foundations* was around the corner! We do believe that this is what He would have us to do now by affirmation from His Word, the leadership of His church, and His Spirit's abiding with us. The feminist culture is pushing its way into the evangelical church. *Foundations* is one way the PCA is taking a stand against this powerful cultural tide. As women in the church, we must stand alongside the male leadership and rejoice in the creational design God has given His daughters. This last ten years of the WIC pilgrimage has led to the writing of *Foundations* that CE/P believes is vital for the time in which we find ourselves. We trust that God will continue to guide, but only He knows the next step of the journey.



I GOT IT!

Kathy Cheely

WASC representative for the Southeast Region

At last. . . I really got it!! Not the measles, but the message! Being a pastor's wife hadn't helped. Serving as a director of women's ministries failed to give insight. Being on the PresWIC Council didn't give me the answer. Even serving with the WASC couldn't clear the fog.

So exactly what did help me understand all the talk and excitement in recent years about how "significant" the "core curriculum" is?

It all came together with WIC's recent establishing of a new focus and a new name for the core curriculum - *Biblical for Foundations Womanhood*.

Seeing and comprehending the word "foundations" caused the light bulb to come on. For the first time I understood that these resources are not an end in themselves, but rather a resource—a foundational resource—a commentary if you will, that expound the principles of Scripture specifically related to the Daughters of the Covenant.

These resources are not the exhaustive principles for faith and life; they deal with principles specifically targeting women. These books are not seeking to replace Scripture; the Word of God is our only rule of faith and practice. These volumes are not to be taught over and over again in our women's Bible studies; they are to be used strategically where they can meet needs in the women's ministries of our churches. These books are not exclusive resources expounding these portions of Scripture, but they are written from a Reformed perspective by denominational leadership we can

trust. These books are not a how-to for developing our women's programs; they are a biblical standard to help us stay on track and to protect us from stepping outside Truth as the world would encourage us to do.

How thankful I am for those who love our Lord Jesus and His Church and are committed to moving me forward in my walk with the Lord with thought provoking, contemporary, and relevant examination of God's precious Truth to his daughters.



WE'RE REMODELING

JoAnn Hackenberg

WASC representative for the Mid-South Region

At the Leadership Training Seminar 2000 each region was asked to decide how we would "unveil" *Biblical Foundations for Womanhood* in our PresWICs and local WICs. The Mid-South Region approached this challenge using a method from *Leadership For Women in the Church* which involves creating a metaphor.

"Once you create a metaphor for your problem, the solutions also emerge as metaphors. The next step is to say, "Now how in real life do I accomplish these things?" (cf pg70)

Using an architectural metaphor we determined there are three basic WIC designs in our region. First, there is the "Gated Community" with its "NO TRESPASSING!" sign. This is in reality the church where women resist WIC organization and resent being given answers to questions they aren't even asking. To gain access to a gated community one needs permission from one person living there.

Therefore we determined to seek out and cultivate a relationship with one sister in this church with the hope that there might be a future opportunity to directly or indirectly introduce the basic concepts of *Foundations*.

We called the second structural design "Instant Housing." This is the new church that is just starting its WIC ministry and wants an instant, factory-built house delivered on a truck. In this case we must persuade them how crucial it is to build a solid foundation before any structures are erected and that the beauty of a custom designed home is that it is uniquely appropriate to the needs of those who will live in it as well as to its physical locality. One lady called this the "Have I got good news for you" approach.

Our most common design in the Mid-South is the "Castle in the Air." This WIC has an elaborate superstructure consisting of layers and layers of tradition, a crumbling foundation and visibly collapsing structures. We rejected sending in a demolition crew (That is not loving leadership!) and decided instead on the architectural method called retrofitting a foundation. This involves building a new foundation with the existing structures (programs, meetings, etc.) continuing on carefully suspended and supported in the air. This also requires the help of expert sub contractors (WIC Trainers, retreat and annual meeting speakers). Once the foundation is in place the superstructure is lowered and renovation begins.

Unveiling *Foundations* to these three basic WIC designs, although requiring different WIC approaches, has three things in common that are of vital importance. All three require a thorough knowledge of *Foundations*, great patience, and, most importantly, commitment to perseverance in prayer.

THEY GOT IT!

Sharon Better

Make Love, Not War

My granddaughters love sweets and given the opportunity, they will scrape off the gooey top layer of a cake and leave the bottom layer behind. They absolutely refuse to eat both layers together proclaiming “it tastes better this way!” The way these little girls view eating sweets is not unlike the way many churches view women’s ministry. They see it as a program that is one layer of the church, rather than a vital ingredient that is marbled into the whole community, an ingredient that is critical to the peace and prosperity of a local church and denomination.

I understand that thinking. When we joined the PCA in 1986, I resisted attempts to pull me into a denominational women’s program. Our church is in the Northeast. At that time the leadership of WIC seemed to hail mostly from the south. Surely their lives were different from ours. What could people who did not know the women of my church teach us about women? What changed this narrow view?

An article in the *Resource Letter* grabbed my attention. According to Susan Hunt, Women in the Church is not a program—it’s a ministry that is organized by each individual church in a way that reflects the personality and calling of that church. Articles in future *Resource Letters* challenged me to think of our women’s ministry as part of a bigger picture, not only in our local church but in our denomination. Though intriguing, such thinking sounded like a whole lot more work for me. I needed to know if these principles were rooted in Scripture. At my first leadership conference, I listened carefully to Susan Hunt teach *Leadership for Women in the Church* and realized she was singing my song. *Leadership for Women in the Church* provided a structure—the “why” of what we do, a theological basis for women’s ministry. I went home, eager to put a name on the goal of our women’s ministry—eager for our women’s ministry to help create a safe place for wounded people and to see ourselves as women gifted by God to contribute to the strength and peace of our local church. Suddenly I realized that our women’s ministry was not just one layer in our local church. We could actually have an impact on other ministries by seeing ourselves as partners rather than as separate entities. Such teaching grabbed the hearts of the women in my church. Through the biblical teaching of each succeeding book of the *Foundations*, we received additional tools with which to build on that strong foundation. Those tools became our “weapons”—not to wage war, but to take on the enemies of peace in the covenant community. Let me explain.

Resolving the Great Tea Debate

I described the following scenario at a seminar and asked for a gut response. One attendee exclaimed, “I’m a pastor’s wife and I say, ‘Shoot



the pastor!” Everyone laughed, but her words reflected how difficult it is to respond biblically to conflict.

Picture this. After carefully considering the church events in December, the WIC placed their Christmas Tea event on the church-wide calendar, one year in advance of the event. We expected over 500 church and community women to attend. As the special night grew closer the committee learned that the dates of the Christmas Dramatic Musical had been changed and conflicted with the Tea. In addition, the Senior Pastor (my husband) had scheduled a Pastors for Revival luncheon for the very day of the Tea without realizing the date conflict. All three events had been publicized and could not be changed. Although the Tea Committee had reserved the whole church for their event, they now had to share the facility with two other groups. Any woman reading this understands the potential for long term conflict.

Make Love Or War?

My initial response reflected a layered ministry perspective. We had the date first. The building should have been ours. But our WIC Chairman reminded me that true biblical women see themselves as partners in ministry. How could we partner with the other ministries rather than claim our rights? Threaded throughout the women’s ministry of our church for the past thirteen years have been the scriptural values of the philosophy of women’s ministry as taught in the *Foundations*. In our hands and hearts were the weapons for waging war against this potential conflict that could have long-lasting impact:

1. The women’s ministry is not one layer of the ministry cake. It’s part of a marble cake so anything the women do affects the rest of the covenant community.
2. The women’s ministry is a helper ministry—a core value is servanthood, not only serving the women of the church but partners in serving the whole church.
3. The women are daughters of the King, therefore they have a connection to the other sons and daughters of the King and need to see conflict as an opportunity to act as responsible family members who believe the best about their spiritual brothers and sisters.
4. The women are also spiritual mothers and need to see conflict as an opportunity to act as mothers rather than wounded women who feel betrayed by their church leadership.

In light of these core beliefs, The WIC Committee Chairman challenged the Tea Committee chairman to understand the grave responsibility of presenting the other ministries to her committee in the best possible light. She needed to see herself as a helper that would find ways to enable all of the ministries to achieve their particular goals. Through honest communication, the Tea Committee chairman learned that rumors about the Senior Pastor and Music Minister’s unwillingness to cooperate were false. As a result of the desire of all people involved to glorify God, all three events took place within the context of a “helper” atmosphere and the Kingdom of God was extended. Each woman believed the best about the other ministry leaders and prayed for those ministries to glorify God. And, having all three ministries “marbled” in need, reminded the women to

pray intentionally for the community pastors attending the luncheon and for the unbelievers who would attend the dramatic musical.

Marbleizing Mercy Ministries

Picture This: Over thirty women from our church attend the 1999 WIC Conference on Mercy Ministry. Though we longed to share the message of mercy with our church, we realized that we might sound like “reformed smokers.” We did not want to sound as though no one in our church was involved in mercy ministry except for us! The same core values listed above were the context in which we approached this dilemma.

Because of the core values of Women In the Church (that we are not a ministry unto ourselves, we are not one layer of the church, we are integrated intimately—marbleized, if you will) we concluded we could not just start programs and expect others to join us. We needed to see ourselves as partners in ministry with other ministries. Our Session agreed that the whole church would benefit from seeing the conference videos but also cautioned us not to come to those videos with our own agendas. The end of the story has not been written but a mercy ministry mindset now exists within our church. Not only women, but men and children are thinking mercy ministry. Out of that corporate mindset will come mercy ministry programs.¹

What does a marbleized mercy ministry environment look like in the context of daily church life? The Christian preschool teacher reaches out to an unchurched mother whose husband has left her. The teacher contacts the Children’s Ministry Director who offers programs for the children in which they will be nurtured. Another woman invites the betrayed wife to MOPS. There she meets a friend who picks her up and brings her to the WIC Bible Study where she is mothered in a small group Bible study and learns how to respond biblically to the home crisis. Her heart is touched by the practical mercy extended to her and she begins to attend worship services and brings her children to Sunday school. Another family invites her to bring her children to the Christmas Dramatic Musical. There they respond to the message of God’s mercy and an elder prays with them as they repent of their sins and experience salvation. The elder and his wife help them get involved in a House Church that becomes an extension of their family.

This is not the picture of a women’s program that is one layer of church life. It is not layered ministry—it’s marbleized mercy ministry.

¹. To read more about how this local congregation integrated the conference into the whole church, see articles in the March/April 2000 issue of *Equip for Ministry* and the Winter 2000 *Resource Letter*.

My Final Answer

Susan Hunt

Is all of this really important? Is it worth all the effort?

That’s the question I ask myself—a lot. And you may be asking it about now.

When I am in this questioning mode, our patient Heavenly Father reminds me of the final answer.

Sometimes He reminds me by taking a portion of His Word and putting it right in my face. That happened recently when Psalm 72:18-19 jumped off the page and into my heart:

Blessed be the LORD God, the God of Israel, Who only does wondrous things! And blessed be His glorious name forever! And let the whole earth be filled with His glory. Amen and Amen.

Lord, You have done a wondrous thing in my heart. You have shown me Your glory. Please use me to let the part of the earth where you have put me be filled with Your glory.

Sometimes He reminds me why it is important to pass a legacy of biblical womanhood to the next generation by giving me a peek at results in lives of others. Recently, within just a few days, I heard from several women in the following situations:

- A woman called to tell me that her husband had left her.
- Another woman wept as she told me about the turmoil in her church.

- A woman emailed me that her son is on drugs.
- A young woman wrote about an unusual choice between a life filled with possessions and luxury and a life of obedience to God’s calling.
- And a grieving widow told me about her husband’s homegoing.

These were different women in different situations, but there was a transcendent commonality. With extraordinary steadfastness each woman told me how God was empowering her to glorify Him in her situation. Then they told me the rest of the story. And here, the commonality left me breathless. They all told me their stories because they wanted me to know that they are in churches where they have been taught biblical womanhood in the WIC ministries. Over and over I heard, “a few months ago, I would have reacted differently,” or “I would have crumbled,” or “I would have made a different decision.”

Sometimes God reminds me through a grandchild. That happened recently when a granddaughter told me she was punished because she had been bad. “Then we must go to Jesus and repent, and ask Him for grace to be obedient,” I replied. “But I get so tired,” she said quite wearily. “Of course you do,” I said. “We get very tired when we try to be good in our strength. We must ask Jesus for grace to glorify Him.”

And this grandmother rejoices that because of God’s grace I can pass a legacy of grace to the next generation. It’s the covenant way.



Be WIC-Wise

A bit of history . . .

When the PCA was formed, the General Assembly assigned the ministry of Women In the Church to Christian Education and Publications. The purpose statement on page 1 was approved by the General Assembly, and CE/P has diligently endeavored to provide resources and training to help churches equip women for this mission

The lingo . . .

PCA - Presbyterian Church in America
CE/P - Christian Education and Publications.

The WIC ministry is part of CE/P because CE/P's purpose is to train and equip.

WIC - Women In the Church - the female population of local PCA churches

WASC - The Women's Advisory Sub-Committee. Eight women, selected by the Christian Education Committee, represent different regions of the denomination. Their function, under the oversight and authority of the CE/P Committee and Coordinator, is to advise the CE/P Committee regarding needs and ministries of women. They work closely with PresWIC Presidents in their region. They also work with the Director of WIC Ministry in planning and implementing training opportunities, materials, and programs for women.

PresWIC - Presbytery-level WIC

Foundations - *Biblical Foundations for Womanhood*

The WIC Love Gift - The purpose of the annual WIC Love Gift is to give the women in the church the opportunity to learn about the overall ministry of the PCA and to contribute significantly to the life of our denomination. This gift rotates between all of the committees and agencies of the denomination.

WIC Resource Letter and The WICK . . .

This is mailed to local WIC Presidents, PresWIC Presidents, and pastors' wives. *Resource Letters* generally include *The WICK*, a bulletin insert to be reproduced and distributed to all women in the church. There is no issue of *The WICK* in this *Resource Letter*.

Resources

To order and check prices call: 1-800-283-1357

Order online: www.cepbookstore.com

Also, request a PCA Bookstore catalog for a full listing of WIC studies.

BOOKS

Heirs of the Covenant

Leader's Guide

A Place of Grace

Leader's Guide

The Micah Mandate

Teen Resource Manual

Equipping God's People for Kingdom Praying

- Theological Foundations of Women's Bible Studies - Paige Benton (2 tapes)

- Yes, Virginia, You Can be Creative - Kathy Cheely

- Redeeming Your Marriage - Carol Arnold

Other tapes are available from other conferences. Look for them on www.cepbookstore.com

LEADERSHIP TRAINING TAPES

• *Leadership Training Seminar 2000*

Tape 1: Life after the Core Curriculum - Barbara Thompson

The Vision -The Covenant - Susan Hunt

Tape 2: Character of Leadership - Barbara Thompson

Leadership Skills - Various Speakers

Tape 3: Community - Karen Grant

How to Evaluate your Situation

for Mercy Ministry - Yvonne Sawyer

• *Viewing Women's Ministry Through the Grid of Foundations* - Susan Hunt, Four sessions - set only

• *WIC '99 Conference*

Pre-Conference Seminars, (audio only)

General Sessions audio , video

The video of Bryan Chapell's sermon should be viewed repeatedly by every WIC leadership team.

• Leadership Development (these are tapes selected from various conferences that are particularly applicable to developing leadership)

- Creative Compassion - Karen Grant

- Sharing the Turf - Barbara Thompson

CONSULTATIONS

Call Jane Patete at the CE/P office

678-825-1146 or email: jpatete@pcanet.org

You may also request a copy of WIC 101 from Jane.

WIC TRAINERS

These women are trained to help a WIC leadership team evaluate your ministry and determine your strategy to implement a covenantal approach to ministry. For information on scheduling a trainer, call 678-825-1146.

WEB SITE

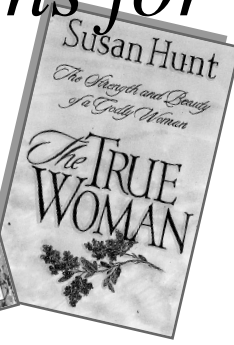
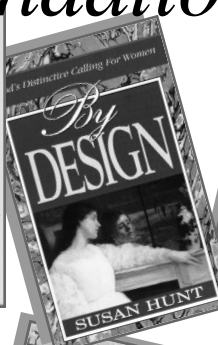
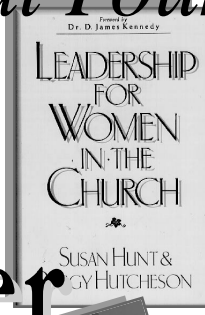
Visit our web site for current information and ideas: www.pcanet.org/cep

Attention PresWICs: If your PresWIC has a web page and you would like a link on the WIC page of the CE/P web site, send your web URL to Billie Underwood (bunderwood@pcanet.org) or 678-825-1132).

Biblical Foundations for Womanhood

To order

from the
CE/P Bookstore:



Call 1-800-283-1357 or
visit: www.cepbookstore.com

1700 North Brown Rd, Suite 102 / Lawrenceville, Georgia 30043

CHRISTIAN EDUCATION AND PUBLICATIONS
Presbyterian Church in America

Women In the Church



NON-PROFIT ORG.
U.S. POSTAGE PAID
MONTGOMERY, AL 36117
PERMIT NO. 312