



CFTU

Christian Feminism To You

Speakers Bureau

Gender in Genesis—From Adam to “He Shall Rule Over You”

Most of the problems for women in Genesis 1-3 are caused by mistranslations of Hebrew words; if we look more closely, we can dispel the mythology and misogyny that has oppressed women for centuries.

Following the work of Phyllis Trible and others, Anne examines three key Hebrew words: *adam*, *adamah*, and *ezer*. *Adam* is not a man’s name but a term to refer to human beings. It’s connected to the word for soil or earth. Linstatter asks her listeners to think about the two creation accounts separately, rather than blending them. Women are clearly equal in Genesis 1:27, because the Hebrew says that God created humans, male and female simultaneously, in God’s image, not just man. Even in Genesis 2:7, there’s no indication that God made a human with male genitals first; the Hebrew word *adam* is from *adamah*, the earth, as the verse itself explains. When this earth creature needs an *ezer*, there’s no basis except centuries of misogyny for interpreting that “help” as a subordinate assistant. God is called *ezer* many times in the Hebrew Bible. Then Anne leads the group to look carefully at what the Bible says and doesn’t say in the oft-retold story of the apple, the snake, and the curse. For example, the words “he shall rule over you” may be a prediction of male oppression rather than Divine permission to bully and misuse women forever after.

Includes a PowerPoint presentation.

Presentation can be adjusted from 30 to 60 minutes plus 10 or 20 minutes for Q & A. This presentation can also be combined with other lectures over the course of a weekend, with group time between sessions to examine Bible passages.

Anne Linstatter is a writer and scholar who lives in Santa Monica, California. She has taught English literature and Women and Religion at California State University, Northridge, and other colleges. She earned a doctorate in English literature with specialization in medieval women. After identifying as a feminist in 1968 and struggling to reconcile feminism with her born-again commitment to the Bible, she found *All We’re Meant to Be* by Letha Dawson Scanzoni and Nancy Hardesty in 1974, and met them later that year, becoming a founding member of Evangelical and Ecumenical Women’s Caucus now known as Christian Feminism Today. She collected and edited personal stories for a pro-choice book, *Abortion—My Choice, God’s Grace: Christian Women Tell Their Stories* (New Paradigm, 1994). She’s the mother of three daughters and blogs at <http://marthaymaria.blogspot.com>. Read more at <http://annelinstatter.com/>.



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