Christian Men: The Intersection of Masculinity and Religion

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INTRODUCTION

Evangelical Christians are an influential group with a significant and controversial impact on American society and politics. For example, evangelical Christians have catalyzed laws in some states protecting their right to refuse services to specific people based on their religious convictions. Evangelicals claim that being restricted from refusing services in this manner is a form of religious persecution, though others respond that their views are patriarchal, exclusionary, and foster inequality. This demonstrates how evangelicals are “appropriating the language of ‘equal’ rights…[for] their own purposes” (Sarat and Scheingold 2007:198). It is important to understand how this group forms and acts out their beliefs, but extant research tends to study evangelicals as a homogenous group. Through participant observation and the use of focus groups, this study looks at how religion shapes Southern Baptist and United Methodist men’s views on what it means to be a man in today’s society, their expectations of women, and how this influences their daily lives. It illustrates significant differences in attitudes towards the Bible and definitions of masculinity between these groups. As one example, the Southern Baptist group used the Bible to explain that husbands are the head of their homes and that their wives should submit to them, while the United Methodist group believed men and women are equal and described their marriages in a more egalitarian sense. The way these men came to these conclusions about gender fell largely on their church’s structures, their interpretation of the Bible, and their view of society.

LITERATURE REVIEW

American Evangelicalism

Evangelical Christians make up a significant portion of American society. About 70% of Americans identify as Christians, and 24.5% of Christians are categorized as evangelicals,
making it the largest subgroup (PEW 2016). An evangelical Christian can generally be identified by two different criteria. The first way a person can be classified as an evangelical is if they belong to a denomination that is associated with the theology of the 20th century evangelical shift (Hansbury 2011). This includes Baptists, Methodists, Lutherans, and fourteen other denominations (PEW 2016). An evangelical Christian can also be identified by certain beliefs they have. For instance, a popular belief among evangelines is that salvation is gained by being born again. This is in reference to their old (sinful) self dying upon entering into a relationship with Jesus (Hackett and Lindsay 2008). Another identifying characteristic for an evangelical Christian is their strong devotion to their religious text, the Bible. Past research shows that evangelines hold the story and divinity of Jesus as the center of their faith and believe that Jesus will return to earth eventually. Holding these beliefs and attitudes towards the Bible and Jesus inspires them to evangelize to non-believers about their faith (Bebbington 1989). The combination of these characteristics gives a general guide of what separates evangelines categorically.

Evangelines are a culture within the greater American culture, and they have been shown to have a significant impact on American society and politics (Watt 1991). For instance, the National Association of Evangelines represents millions of evangelines and is a “leading organization of the religious right with a political voice” (Hochschild 2016). “Evangelines and right-wing movements were on the rise over the course of the late 1970s and the 1980s as a backlash against the rights secured for women in Roe and against other social changes ushered in by the rise of movements such as feminism and gay liberation” (Smith 2009:75). As one example, evangelines have led the charge against the legalization of same-sex marriage (Sarat and Scheingold 2007). Indeed, some Christians have become troubled by changing societal
views and at times even perceive themselves as a minority group (Hochschild 2016). Many evangelical Christians have supported the passage of religious freedom laws, which would give them the right to refuse service to others who don’t share their same values and beliefs. In fact, previous research shows that states with higher numbers of evangelical Christians are less likely to embrace nondiscrimination policies regarding sex and gender in the workplace (Dixon, Kane, and DiGrazia 2017:122). While the evangelical Christians supporting these bills see refusing services to those holding different beliefs from them as a freedom, others essentially view it as legal discrimination. Several states, including Mississippi, have passed “religious freedom” laws in response to Christians expressing concern that they are being persecuted when made to provide a service to someone with whom they disagree. In Mississippi, this law even enables employers to proscribe certain behaviors for gender, including style of clothing (BBC 2017; Mississippi Legislature 2016). For example, these laws would protect a Christian bakery owner who refused to bake wedding cakes for homosexual couples (Domoske 2017). Furthermore, President Trump appointed evangelical pastor Ralph Drollinger to lead weekly Bible studies in the White House, and for the House and Senate as well (Strauss 2017). Since coming into the spotlight, Drollinger has found himself sitting in controversy over his beliefs about men and women. On Drollinger’s ministry web page, he authored an article commanding women to submit to their husbands’ authority, equating husbands to Christ and wives to the “Church” (Drollinger 2017). These ideas are controversial, as they could inhibit women from taking leadership positions, both in religious settings and in the larger society as well. As a result of their size and impact on American society, it is important to understand the beliefs and motives of evangelical Christians, and specifically their beliefs regarding gender.
Gender and Evangelicalism

Previous research shows that evangelical men and women ascribe to traditional gender ideology, with men as the “heads of their homes” and women as submissive wives (Burke and Hudec 2015). However, some research has shown that these traditional beliefs are mostly symbolic, while their family interactions are more egalitarian in practice (Gallagher 2003). Presumably these groups’ beliefs about gender result from their interpretation of the Bible. The Bible is the sacred text for evangelicals, and is central to their faith. Previous research found that evangelical Christians believe the Bible to be completely true, and that God plays a role in scriptural interpretation (Nuttall 1992). This idea that the Bible is a solitary source of enlightenment contributes to evangelicals’ motto of being “in the world, but not of it,” which is a common phrase among evangelicals that means they interact with the society around them, but do not conform to its same practices (Hansbury 2011). This phrase originates from the Bible verse John 17:16, where Jesus says his disciples are “not of this world,” which many readers interpret to mean that their religious beliefs separate them from the rest of society. In the past, the gendered roles in the evangelical church were reflected by gender inequality in society at large. However, social progression driven by the women’s rights movement has created a gap between the church and the outside. Evangelical Christians often justify their patriarchal ideals of marriage with Biblical texts that discuss husbands and wives (Padgett 2008). As one example, Ephesians 5:22-25 states that husbands are the heads of their wives and that wives should submit to their husbands in everything. This allows them to base their practices of male leadership and female submission on their religion, and to justify these specific differences with regard to society on their belief that they are indeed called to be separate from society: “in the world but not of it.”
Most research on gender within evangelicalism focuses on femininity and women’s experiences (Burke and Hudec 2015). Past research has shown evangelical women to be complex individuals who negotiate gender within their religion in various ways. Many evangelical women classify themselves as traditional, but still seek empowerment within their religious restrictions (Bartkowski and Read 2003). Other evangelical women have found ways to bring feminism into their religious communities, and rebel against gender discriminatory teachings and beliefs (Katzenstein 1998). There is little research on men’s perceptions of gender within evangelical circles, specifically regarding masculinity and its effect on female leadership. Therefore, this study focuses on how religion influences the ways evangelical men perceive and perform masculinity. The term masculinity may be a bit misleading, as there isn’t just one accepted definition of what it means to be a man, and multiple masculinities exist within and across cultures (Connell 1992). The most prevalent form of masculinity, however, includes certain characteristics, attitudes, and mannerisms which are associated with “being a man” (Giaccardi et al. 2017). These characteristics are not biological and include things like refraining from “feminine” acts and mannerisms, exhibiting dominance over women, and acting in a self-reliant way (Bosson and Vandello 2011; Levant et al. 2013; Parent and Moradi 2009). Because masculinity is not biological, it is an ongoing performance that must be maintained even after the identity has been formed (Vandello et al. 2008). Therefore, the definitions individuals have of “masculinity” are influenced by the information sources from which they drew their understanding.

Though evangelicals are spread across many different Christian denominations, most previous research has generally classified them together as one group. Describing evangelicals as a whole is useful in particular contexts (such as statistics giving voter demographics for the
entire nation), but it is also important to study the variation of beliefs within the evangelical group. For example, two evangelical Christians may both claim the approach of “literal” interpretation regarding the Bible, yet still have different understandings of the same texts (Pihlaja 2013). Currently, there is limited research in understanding the differences between various evangelical denominations - specifically regarding definitions of masculinity and how it affects female leadership. Therefore, this study focuses on differences between Baptist and Methodist men.

**METHODOLOGY**

This study examined the religious beliefs and perceptions of masculinity of evangelical Christian men who are Methodist and Baptist. This was accomplished through participant observation at two churches and focus groups conducted with male attendees of those churches. Through the focus groups, I was able to understand how the men defined masculinity, constructed their expectations for women, and acted out masculinity in their personal lives. As a participant observer, I visited the churches that the focus group subjects attended. I observed how these churches expressed views on masculinity and female leadership, and how the Bible was used and viewed by the churches as a whole.

The first church was a predominantly White United Methodist church, and the second was a predominantly Black Southern Baptist church. The two churches were similar in size, and both churches were located in a single city in the southern U.S. Although the churches were only two and a half miles apart, the socioeconomic and education levels of the focus group participants were distinctly different. The majority of the Southern Baptist men did not continue their education after high school while all of the Methodist men had college degrees, and only
one of the Southern Baptist men reported a household income that overlapped with the higher household incomes of the Methodist men.

**Focus Groups**

I originally contacted eight churches that were selected to reach a diverse sample of churches in one city with respect to size and location. I visited each location and asked to speak to a pastor or leader so that I could explain my study and ask for help setting up focus groups with all-male Bible study groups in their church. I wanted to meet with Bible study groups that were already established. This was done to help ensure their comfortability with each other, and because they discuss in depth religious issues regularly it would presumably make them more likely to give in-depth answers. This was a good method for this study because the men would be able to bounce their ideas and beliefs off of one another, giving me a glimpse into the group’s beliefs as a whole. While many churches expressed eagerness to help initially, only two churches followed through with me to completion.

The first focus group I conducted was with five men from the predominantly Black Southern Baptist church. The second one was with seven men from a predominantly White United Methodist church. The men from the Southern Baptist church were all African American, active church members, and between the ages of 52 and 71. The men from the United Methodist church were all white, active church goers, and between the ages of 21 and 49, with the majority being in their mid-30s to early 40s. Each focus group took place in the church and lasted approximately 45 minutes. The focus groups were recorded and were transcribed afterwards.

Participants were asked open-ended questions covering definitions of masculinity and femininity as well as interpretations of certain scriptures regarding gender (Appendix A). I also covered topics of marital decision making, women in leadership, and domestic chores. Before
participating in the focus group, each participant filled out a survey consisting of thirteen closed-ended questions, focused on collecting demographic information of the focus group participants. The use of surveys allowed participants to answer questions privately, and the structured answer choices ensured uniformity in the participants’ responses, enabling direct comparisons and analysis of the data afterwards.

It is possible that the participants demonstrated a degree of social desirability bias in their answers, meaning their answers were influenced by how they expected them to be received by me as the interviewer. This could have occurred within both of these focus groups given that I was a young white woman while they were all older than me, all male, and in the case of the Southern Baptist group, all of a different race. I was asking questions specifically about their views on masculinity and a woman’s role in society while being more educated than half of them. Further, I anticipated that my religious and social views would differ from theirs. While I do consider myself to be a Christian, I do not believe the Bible to be infallible and devoid of human influence, nor do I attend church regularly. I also identify as a feminist, and believe that men and women are equally capable in all tasks and should be given equal opportunities.

However, I anticipated that bias would be minimized because evangelicals are known for their role in evangelizing and converting others to their faith. To facilitate this, I strictly described myself as a college student and did not reveal any information that would have shown religious or political views. For example, I intentionally covered up the small cross tattoo on my wrist for each focus group. For the Southern Baptist group, I interviewed a group of older African American men. While I didn’t feel any tension regarding my race, it’s hard to say if the participants did. However, the men felt comfortable sharing sexist comments with me and did not hide these views. Because of my own beliefs and my background knowledge of the Southern
Baptist Convention and Christianity in general, I suspected that their beliefs would differ from mine. Because of this, I prepared myself to hear and show acceptance towards beliefs that differed from my own. For instance, when a sexist comment was made or a story was told that poked fun at women during the focus group with the Southern Baptist men, I smiled or laughed when I felt appropriate, even if I was internally angered by what they said. I did everything I could to make sure the men were comfortable to tell me their truth, even if it was offensive to me personally. The dynamic was a bit different during the Methodist focus group. From browsing their website, I saw that their church had a female pastor on staff, so I assumed that not all of their beliefs would differ from my own, but I still prepared myself in the same way. I would nod along with what they were saying and laugh when they would laugh. There were also few, if any, sexist comments made, which made me more internally comfortable as the interviewer.

**Participant Observation**

After conducting the focus groups, I wanted to observe how the participants’ churches carried out their services with regard to the major themes I saw emerging in my focus groups. I wanted to compare and contrast the attitudes and beliefs presented in the church services with those of the individuals I interviewed. I attended Sunday church services over the course of four weeks. This allowed me to observe the order of the services, identify the leaders in the churches, identify norms for sermon delivery, observe how gender played a role in each service, and note how the Bible was used and viewed by each church. Staff, as well as any male attendees who participated in the focus groups, knew I was a researcher. However, I entered the churches and attended services as an ordinary church visitor. I did this to ensure that the church members behaved towards me in the same manner that they do all visitors, and were not tailoring their
behavior to my purpose as a researcher. I took jottings during the service and later typed up
detailed field notes.

I observed the United Methodists’ traditional service first. There was an option for a
contemporary service, but I expected that most of my participants attended the traditional
service, so I attended the traditional service twice. This church had a fairly large sanctuary,
appearing that it could seat 400 or more people including the choir section. For both services
there seemed to be just under 200 people in the audience and choir combined. There were two
service options for the Southern Baptist church as well, but there was not an explicit difference
between the two, so I attended the later service twice. The church’s building and sanctuary were
slightly larger the other church - appearing to seat about 550 people including the choir section.
For the first service I observed there were about 150 people in the audience, and for the second
there were around 100 people.

Analysis

I analyzed the data following methods outlined by Miles and Huberman (Miles and
Huberman 2014). I first reviewed and coded the transcriptions of the focus groups. For this
first-level of coding, I read over the transcriptions and marked as many codes as I could about
participants’ religious beliefs and practices. Next, I took my initial list of codes and narrowed
them down, creating a more focused list of codes that allowed me to address relationships
between initial codes. I collated and coded all my data (transcriptions from the focus groups as
well as fieldnotes from observing at the churches) for themes related to: self in relation to society
(e.g. do they feel they are not of this world); Biblical interpretation; and gender (e.g. masculinity,
female leadership). As part of this, I drew diagrams modeling relationships among participants’
views of the Bible and their beliefs regarding gender to help me move beyond description to explanation.

RESULTS

The Southern Baptist and United Methodist groups that I interviewed were similar in many ways. They both belonged to the Christian religion, and to the evangelical subgroup of Christianity. They both used and believed in the same holy text: the Bible. They both lived and attended church in the southern United States. Nonetheless, the ways in which they formed and acted out their beliefs with respect to gender were distinctly different.

Southern Baptist

The Southern Baptist focus group and church services put an emphasis on the importance and value of the Bible in their everyday lives. The men expressed that they considered the Bible to be a guide or map for living a successful life, and that they considered it to be the “final truth.” This was observable at their Sunday church services as well. The pastor and other members repeatedly used a phrase that stressed their belief in the Bible as the basis for everything. However, even though the Southern Baptist focus group participants believed the Bible to be consistently true, they did not interpret it in a consistent manner. When presented with various verses regarding gender from the Bible, they thought that some, specifically those relating to home dynamics, should be directly applied in their own lives, while others, those regarding leadership positions outside of the home, were not seen as relevant in modern society. Interestingly, the men consistently described society and its influences in a negative light, and viewed themselves as separated from society by the fact that their beliefs and behaviors were directly rooted in God through the Bible’s instructions. To them, “society” meant everyone
outside of their group - whether that be their denomination or their religion as a whole.

Furthermore, they saw people within society, those who do not “listen to God,” as clones.

[If I didn’t have the Bible] I would be just like a clone, like everybody in society -

wherever which way the wind blows, I'll go that way. But when you, you uh rooted with

God and striving to be that person you won't easily be swayed away, you'll stick to the
course of being the person that God wants you to be.

However, it is a possibility that influences from society have creeped into their beliefs, given their beliefs that women can be leaders outside of the home, which is progressive in relation to the Southern Baptist denomination’s official beliefs.

When the focus group was asked to give their interpretation of a verse from the Bible that husbands are the “heads” of their wives, and that wives should be submissive to their husbands, they affirmed that they directly apply these instructions in their marriages (Appendix A). This demonstrated that the men define masculinity similarly to the “traditional” view of men being the leaders in their homes as defined by Gallagher in 2003. This idea of “traditional” masculinity is based on gender stereotypes, but the focus group participants claimed these traits to be biological. In particular, they expressed the belief that being a provider, protector, and leader is something that all males innately have within themselves, whether they realize it or not.

Elements of the Sunday church service also kept with the theme of “traditional” masculinity. For instance, when married couples’ names were displayed on the big screen, they were always written with a “Mr. and Mrs.” followed by only the husband’s first and last name. Leadership roles in the service also kept with the theme of men as leaders, with all leadership actions being carried out by men. Only once did a woman address the congregation, and it was to welcome new guests.
When discussing the application of the verse instructing wifely submission, participants explained that there is a hierarchy where husbands get instructions regarding the family directly from God, and the wives subsequently receive those instructions from the husband. However, the example one participant gave of this being acted out in his life focused on gendered knowledge and was absent of any “instructions from God.”

*I’ll give you an example, my wife said she wanted to move the toilet and we got a concrete base. And I sat there and explained to her the cost and this and that. And she’s like, ‘Nah, we don’t need to do that, do we?’* See, she just submits to the understanding I have of the cost that it’s gonna cost to move the toilet. That is what submitting is all about is when the husband … is preventing the family from failure, from devastation, from damage, from any kind of troubles…

On the other hand, when presented with a different Bible quote instructing women not to teach men, the group was quick to give a historical and social background of the verses. They talked about contextual factors like the author of the book the verse came from, the social background of women as second class citizens during that time, and the purpose behind the author stating that women should not teach men. One participant said that “you have to look at the context…,” saying that there are other women in the Bible who were teachers, so this verse was only referring to women in secondary roles in that culture.

*…If I did not believe that women should teach then it wouldn’t be in the Bible.*

The participants also emphasized the value and importance of women in the church both historically and presently, and said they believed that women could be lead pastors as well as hold offices of leadership in government such as being president of the United States.
I think that a lot of women can play the role as president, whatever. And I think a lot of times it’s our ego as a man we don’t want the woman to play the role.

Perhaps the participants did not feel as though this verse had to be directly applied to every aspect of their lives because they could think of other verses in the Bible where female leaders and teachers were mentioned. Despite these progressive beliefs, there were no females in leadership positions in their church service or listed on the church website. It is possible that this lack of female leadership was due to more traditional beliefs among certain leaders in the church, given that the Southern Baptist denomination’s official stance is that the role of pastor is strictly reserved for men.

From my analysis, the focus group participants believed that their careful obedience to the Bible was part of what separated them from society and made them better individuals - even if they did not necessarily act on those beliefs or if those beliefs did not necessarily differ from all of society. This lined up with Hansbury’s research of evangelicals using the idea of Biblical gender roles to be “in the world, but not of it” (Hansbury 2011). However, the inconsistencies in their methods of interpreting the Bible indicated that social influence may indeed have been a powerful factor in the formation of their beliefs, even if it was unrecognized or unwelcome.

United Methodist

Differing from the Southern Baptist group, the men from the United Methodist church seemed to use the Bible as a starting point for discussion rather than a “final” point. Participants cited the Bible as a source of inspiration and comfort, and seemed to think that their idea of what Jesus would approve of was more important than what the Bible says.
I mean quite simply it comes down to, would Jesus be happy with this decision? I think on 99% of things you do every day you just simply ask, “If Jesus were here, would I do the same thing?” and as long as you can say yes, your life is a whole lot easier.

While the Baptist men had more of a literal interpretation of the Bible, the Methodist men did not. Even when specifically asked about their interpretation of certain verses, they generally ignored the verses and spoke more about what works for their personal relationships and families. Participants rejected the idea of female submission saying things like, “That don’t fly at my house,” and “If anything, certainly around my home, I submit to her a lot more than she submits to me…” They all described their marriages as egalitarian, suggesting that strict adherence to the verses was not as important as what functioned best in their own homes.

...It’s about who can do what the best most efficiently and I think that’s how we kind of figure it all out.

When asked about the verses stating that women should not teach men, their initial response was that it is outdated in today’s society. Though the men asked me about the context of the verse, they did not try to justify their beliefs about female leadership through any other verses or Biblical examples. Their main defense was their personal beliefs that God can use and speak through anyone.

These beliefs were demonstrated in the church services, as the church’s associate pastor was female and addressed the congregation through teaching, prayer, and other leadership acts. The church pamphlet also noted that women lead Bible studies for both men and women, and when married couples’ names were written they wrote out both people’s first names, contrasting with the Southern Baptist church.
Also differing from the Southern Baptist group, the United Methodist group did not demonstrate a “traditional” view of masculinity. Instead, they viewed masculinity and femininity in similar ways overall. They did not have one definition or a set of characteristics of what a “real” man is because they agreed that it changes from person to person and from culture to culture. They defined a “real” man and a “real” woman essentially in the same way.

*It’s not a this or that, I think that a real woman needs to be the same thing as a real man is and that’s someone who puts God and family first and does what they can to help out in any way possible. I don’t think it’s really all that different.*

There were hints that some participants believed some characteristics to be gendered, but when such a participant would suggest things like the idea that females are naturally more nurturing than males, other participants would give a contradictory example of themselves being the more nurturing ones in their families.

The men in the United Methodist group were conscious of society’s role in their beliefs and practices within the home and church. Cultural influence and modern social progress were mentioned often when talking about gender roles or Bible verses. A few men even mentioned how their personal religious upbringings encouraged the exclusion of women from authoritative positions within the church, but that such beliefs about women are outdated in today’s society. It is important to note that while these men agree that women can and should be leaders within the home and the church, not all members of their church feel the same way. One participant told a story illustrating the weight that the verses about women in leadership carry for some in the church. He said that he had been at the same church for 33 years and had seen only two females in leadership during that time.
**DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS**

While most previous literature portrays evangelicals as one homogenous group, my participants’ responses indicate that while reading from the same text and being a part of the same foundational religion, their attitudes towards the Bible, views of society, and definitions of masculinity make them two very different groups. The Southern Baptist men viewed the Bible as a sacred text of complete truth, using it as the foundation for their beliefs regarding gender. Their Biblical beliefs led them to view society, or those who do not base their lives on the Bible, as lacking an understanding and morality. Because their beliefs involve this separation from those outside of their group, they only justified their ideas with evidence from within the Bible, and did not list any influences outside of their religious teachings. However, the inconsistency with which they applied verses regarding gendered roles in real life indicate that societal influences were potentially subconsciously at play. While they held strongly to the ideas from the Bible that wives should submit to their husbands, the men were also in total agreement that women could be lead pastors and hold any political office. They listed a few women who were leaders from the Bible to justify these ideas of women’s capacity for leadership, but it seems
more likely that their beliefs stem from the ever-increasing presence of female leaders throughout society. After all, the Southern Baptist Convention’s official stance is that women cannot be pastors, so it is possible to use the Bible verses to exclude women from leadership. However, instead of starting from a standpoint of restriction, these men chose to begin with their preconceived notion that women were capable leaders and go to the Bible second for reconciliation between that idea and their belief in the Bible’s infallibility.

Importantly, the inconsistency in the Baptist men’s beliefs stemmed from their views on the Bible as the final truth and society as a negative outside influence. While it might seem harmless outside of preventing progression within the church, this mindset of separation from society discourages discussions about social issues between this Baptist church and the secular society. Because they do not feel they have anything to learn from those outside their group, they may be more likely to feel oppressed when alternative ideas and lifestyles intersect with their lives. This has played out politically in religious freedom laws. Indeed, this mindset not only opposes growth within the church, but diversity in society as a whole.

On the other hand, participants from the United Methodist group viewed the Bible as more of a source of inspiration and comfort and did not imply its ultimate truth. Regarding gender, this open-minded method of interpreting the Bible has allowed them to progress in concert with society regarding women’s rights. Furthermore, they saw their church and interpretation of the Bible as being affected by modern concerns. Because of this, the United Methodist group may be less likely to support laws or bills that reduce diversity within society, such as the religious freedom laws. Seeing themselves as part of society may make them more likely to engage in two-way discussions with those outside of their religion, allowing for growth
within the church and the existence of diversity between themselves and other groups in society at large.

I suggest that future research asks more questions about how church teachings and religious denomination affect Biblical interpretation, and how that in turn affects views on society and gender. While one limitation of this study is its limited sample, my study suggests that Southern Baptists may be less likely to tolerate religious diversity, while United Methodists may be more tolerant of others. However, more research needs to be conducted to investigate these findings further. Further research should also be conducted to look at how or if support for various political movements, such as feminism and religious freedom laws, differ among evangelical groups. Future research could also look more closely at the everyday interactions between evangelical men and individuals who hold different beliefs.
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APPENDIX A: VERSES ABOUT GENDER

“Wives, submit yourselves to your own husbands as you do to the Lord. For the husband is the head of the wife as Christ is the head of the church, his body, of which he is the Savior. Now as the church submits to Christ, so also wives should submit to their husbands in everything. Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her to make her holy, cleansing her by the washing with water through the word, and to present her to himself as a radiant church, without stain or wrinkle or any other blemish, but holy and blameless. In this same way, husbands ought to love their wives as their own bodies. He who loves his wife loves himself.” Ephesians 5:22-28

“A woman should learn in quietness and full submission. 12 I do not permit a woman to teach or to assume authority over a man; she must be quiet. 13 For Adam was formed first, then Eve. 14 And Adam was not the one deceived; it was the woman who was deceived and became a sinner. 15 But women will be saved through childbirth—if they continue in faith, love and holiness with propriety.” 1 Timothy 2:11-15