

Eve, Where Are You? Confronting Toxic Practices Against the Advancement of Women

Nicole L. Davis

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Eve, Where Are You? is an interesting theology book that seeks to instate women to positions of equality.

Nicole L. Davis's theological book *Eve, Where Are You?* concerns the roots of, and possible solutions to, gender conflicts in Christian churches.

Drawing on Davis's background—she has a PhD in conflict analysis and resolution and is an ordained minister—this book (which was originally an academic thesis) concerns the conflict “between God's purpose and church doctrine regarding women in leadership.” Its three sections each focus on one aspect of the dispute—conflict, explanation, and resolution. It argues that churches, far more so than secular institutions, employ gendered criteria to determine who receives certain opportunities, and who is qualified to occupy leadership positions. This, Davis says, leads to environments in which women are systematically discriminated against, and in which their gifts and talents are overlooked. She argues that such discrimination negatively impacts everyone, from the laity to the institutions themselves, and that it will ultimately doom churches to irrelevance.

The book's familiar hypothesis is backed up by multiple sources, including interviews of several church leaders of different genders and from different denominations; Bible verses regarding the place of women in the world, in particular as it pertains to their position as leaders; and statistics about the pervasive sexism that exists in churches and in other work places, although the former is still far more ingrained than the latter, the book says. Such sources help to make many of Davis's arguments persuasive. However, though the book's logic is robust, and its language is clear, not all of its arguments are well supported, including an assertion about women's subservience to men that claims that it was a consequence of original sin, and was redeemed by Jesus's sacrifice.

The book is more compelling where it preferences individuals' choices, especially in the context of women standing up to reclaim their places in spiritual leadership. Davis asserts that people are beholden to make choices about what they stand for, and to live in alignment with them. She is adamant in encouraging women to distance themselves from those who refuse to see them as equals, even if it means leaving one church in favor of another that recognizes and values them.

Arguing that women's leadership is necessary in all venues, but focusing on Christian church leadership, *Eve, Where Are You?* is an interesting theology book that seeks to instate women to positions of equality.

CAROLINA CIUCCI (April 22, 2021)

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