

# Power Point Presentation Transcript – Revd Stephen Sizer

## Admission of Women to the Episcopate The Case Against

### Lambeth Conference 1998, Resolution III.2 (c)

“...calls upon the provinces of the Communion to affirm that those who dissent from, as well as those who assent to the ordination of women to the priesthood and episcopate are both loyal Anglicans”.

### Lambeth Conference 1998

"...although some of the means by which communion is expressed may be strained or broken, there is a need for courtesy, tolerance, mutual respect, and prayer for one another, and we confirm that our desire to know or be with one another remains binding on us as Christians."

Traditionalists were assured their views on women bishops would be respected. It's a promise that should be kept.

### An Orthodox Perspective

1. The Scriptures
2. Church History
3. Communion of the Saints
4. Recent Experience

#### 1. The Scriptures

“The Bible insists on the absolute equality of men and women, but gives them different functions in the church, so that men can show leadership through self-sacrifice and thus reveal the character of God, and women can demonstrate Christian discipleship to the wider church, thus helping us all follow Christ better.”

“For the husband is the head of the wife as Christ is the head of the church, his body, of which he is the Saviour.” (Ephesians 5:23)

“the Holy Spirit has made you overseers (*bishops*) to care for (*shepherd*) the church of God.” (Acts 20:28)

overseer = *episkopos* (Gk)

“Now the overseer is to be above reproach, faithful to his wife, temperate, self-controlled, respectable, hospitable, able to teach.”

(1 Timothy 3:2; Titus 1:6)

overseer = *episkopos* (Gk)  
= bishop (RSV)  
= elder  
= shepherd  
= pastor

## **2. Church History**

- Jesus appointed 12 male Apostles.
- The Apostles appointed male Church leaders.
- The Early Church Fathers affirmed male leadership: Tertullian, Irenaeus, Origen, Chrysostom, Augustine.
- There have been about 50 previous generations (about 40 years) of male Church leaders.
- Are we suggesting we are right and the previous 49 generations of Christians were all mistaken?

## **3. Communion of the Saints**

The General Synod of the Church of England represents just one tenth of one percent of Christians in the world today. Yet, following the Episcopal Church of the USA and Canada, it claims a new understanding of the will of God and of Holy Scripture. This places the Church of England Synod in opposition to the views of the vast majority of the worldwide Anglican Communion as well as the rest of mainstream Christendom.

“Ecumenical dialogue... has as its goal the restoration of full communion. This has been the presupposition of our dialogue until now. That presupposition would realistically no longer exist following the introduction of women to Episcopal office.”  
Cardinal Walter Kasper

“I can say with certainty that the introduction of the female episcopate excludes even the theoretical possibility for the Orthodox to recognise the Apostolic continuity of the Anglican hierarchy.” Metropolitan Hilarion

## **4. Recent Experience**

Recognising the weakness of any ‘Code of Practice’, at the July 2010 General Synod, the Archbishops of Canterbury and York jointly proposed an Amendment to transfer some authority to the bishops ministering to traditionalist parishes, rather than relying on the diocesan bishop to delegate it. Although the total vote was 216 to 191 in favour, it was defeated by 5 votes in the House of Clergy. So much for Episcopal authority...

“Experience of what has happened in Canada and the US shows that over time, people become less and less tolerant of traditionalist positions. That is why a clear statutory provision needs to be made.” Rod Thomas

## **An Orthodox Perspective**

Jesus Christ established His church on a pattern that is eternal.  
The Bible plainly places the responsibility for leadership of God's people on men.

The Holy Spirit's guidance has maintained and continues to maintain the church according to the will of God.

## **The Church of England Evangelical Council**

“In regard to the Women Bishops legislation currently being considered, the Council believes that robust safeguards are required if the conscientious objections of many evangelicals and others to the consecration of women as bishops are to be taken seriously, and that these safeguards should be embodied in the legislation itself rather than in the proposed Code of Practice.”

### **Proposed Following Motion for Diocesan Synod**

A motion has been proposed by the Church of England Evangelical Council (CEEC) in order that those who cannot in good conscience accept the consecration of women to the episcopate might be kept within the Church of England.

This Synod

1. Desires that all faithful Anglicans remain and thrive together in the Church of England; and therefore
2. Calls upon the House of Bishops to bring forward amendments to the draft Bishops and Priests (Consecration and Ordination of Women) Measure to ensure that those unable on theological grounds to accept the ministry of women bishops are able to receive episcopal oversight from a bishop with authority (ie ordinary jurisdiction) conferred by the Measure rather than by delegation from a Diocesan Bishop.

### **Jesus Prays for Unity**

“My prayer is not for them (i.e. the disciples) alone. I pray also for those who will believe in me through their message, that all of them may be one, Father, just as you are in me and I am in you. May they also be in us so that the world may believe that you have sent me.

I have given them the glory that you gave me, that they may be one as we are one: I in them and you in me. May they be brought to complete unity to let the world know that you sent me and have loved them even as you have loved me.” (John 17:20-23)