

Miami Presbytery  
Leadership Training Day  
February 26, 2000  
Southminster Presbyterian Church

**Every Man for Himself:  
Why More Men Aren't Attracted  
to the Presbyterian Church**

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# General Data on Men's Participation in Christian Faith

✓Men under the age of 30 comprise most of the country's unchurched population. The least churched regions of the country are New England and the West Coast. (Source: ReligionToday.com and the Gallup organization)

✓There are 94 million men in America. Twenty-six million claim to be Christians and 68 million do not. (Source: George Barna)

✓Eighty-five percent of unchurched men have attended church at some time in their lives. (Source: George Barna)

✓Church attendance among men: 1992-43% 1993-37% 1994-35% 1995-36% 1996-28% (George Barna, Index of Leading Spiritual Indicators, Dallas, Word 1996)

✓In 1952 the adult attendees on Sunday morning in the typical worship service were approximately 53% female and 47% male, almost exactly the same as the distribution of the adult population. By 1986 these ratios were closer to 60% female and 40% male with many congregations reporting a ratio as low as 65% - 35%. (Lyle Schaller, It's A Different World: The Challenge for Today's Pastor: Nashville:Abingdon, 1987)

✓In the last 18 months, the percentage of unchurched men has gone from 33% to 40%. (Barna: *One Out of Three Adults Is Now Unchurched*, February 25, 1999.

✓When a child is the first person in the family to come to faith, the rest of the family will follow 31% of the time. when a mother/woman is the first person in the family to come to faith, the rest of the family will follow 17% of the time. However, when a man/father is the first person in the family to come to faith, the rest of the family will follow 93% of the time. (Bob Horner, Ron Rallston, and David Sunday, *Promise Keepers At Work*: Colorado Springs, Focus on the Family, 1996)

✓In Catholic churches in the U.S., the female-to-male ratio ranges from 3-1 to 7-1. (Source: Woodward, Kenneth: *Gender & Religion: Who's Really Running the Show*. Commonweal, 120:6 22 November 1996)

✓Eighty-five percent of the lay ministry is done by women, 80% of the prayer group members are women, 75% of Bible study leaders are women, and 60% of youth leaders are women. (Source: Castelli & Gremillion, The Emerging Parish: The Notre Dame Study of Parish Life Since Vatican II. San Francisco: Harper & Row, 1987).

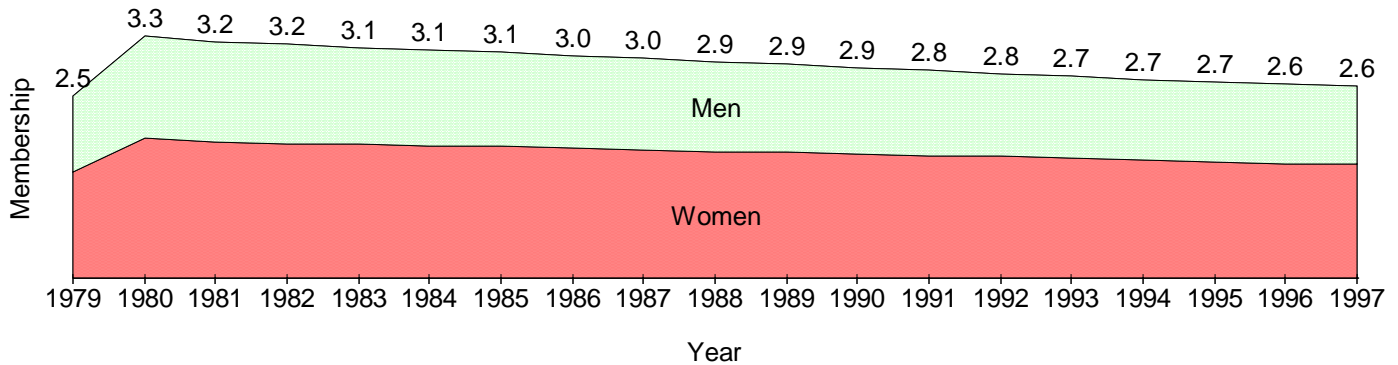
✓In African American churches, women compose between 75% and 90% of the participation. Men are even more under-represented in rural churches. (Source: Thompson, Edward: *Beneath the Status Characteristic: Gender Variations in*

# Membership Data—Presbyterian Church (USA)

The following charts represent data gathered from General Assembly Statistics beginning in the late 1970's when the denomination began counting men and women. We have been unable to find another denomination which counts men and women.

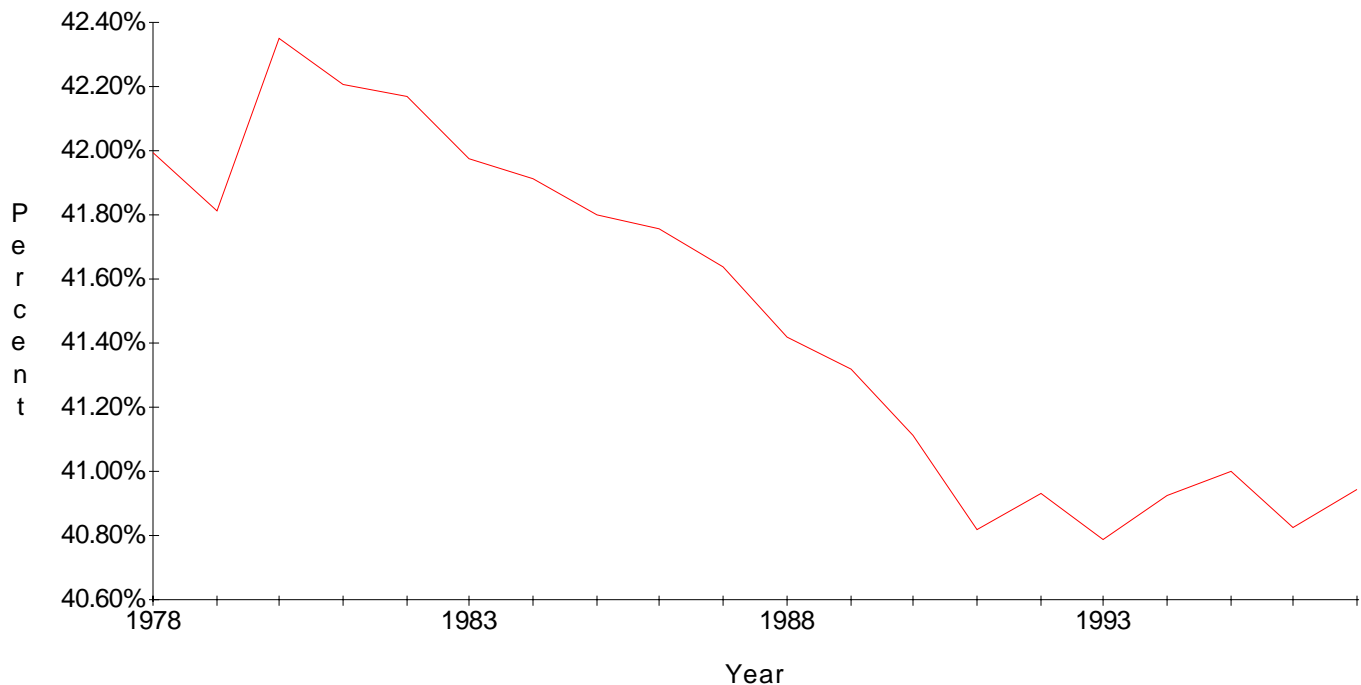
## Membership--Presbyterian Church

By Sex



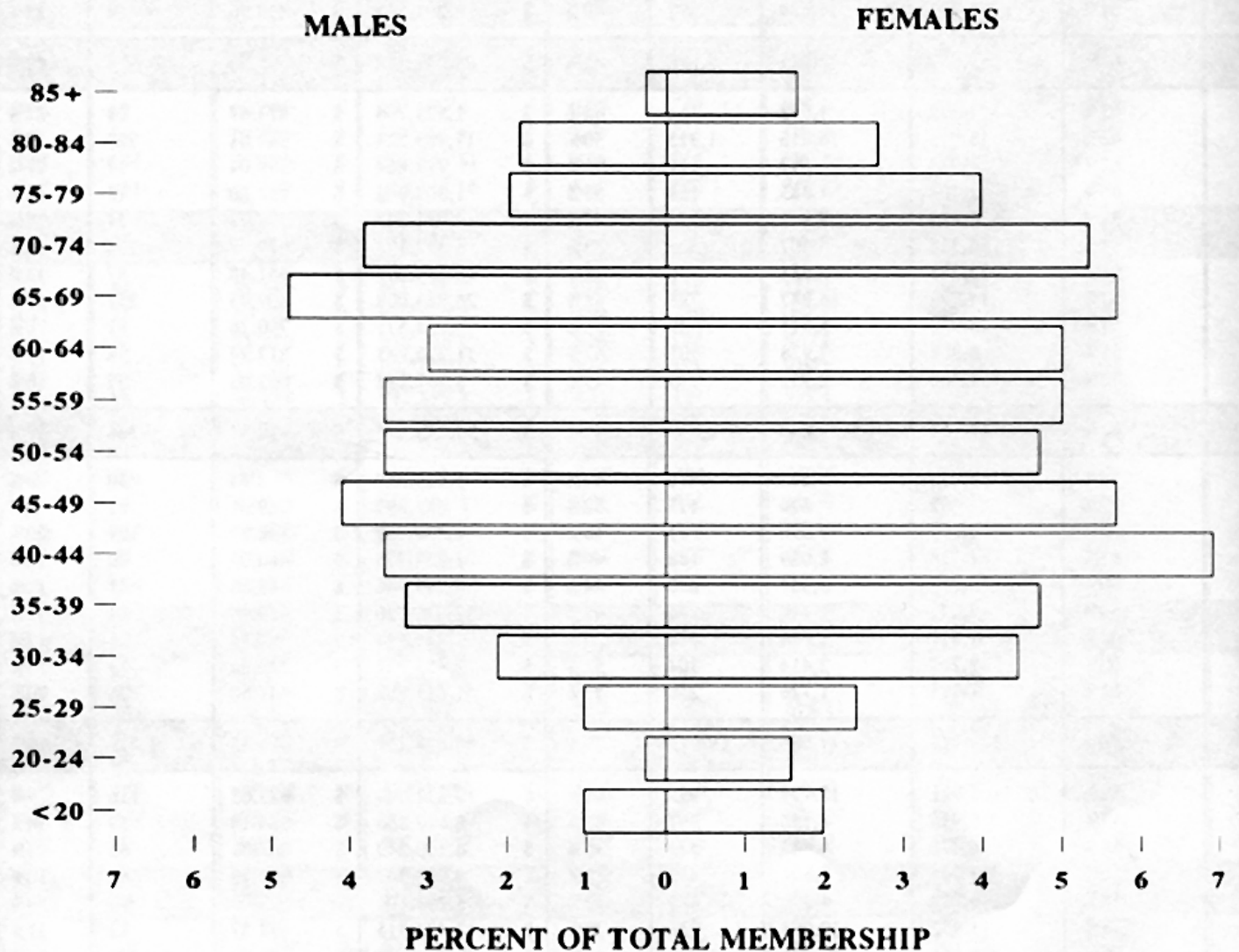
## Percentage Men in Presbyterian Church

PC(USA)



**Note:** While the percentage range in the above chart is relatively small, it is significant that for an 11 year period through the 1980's, men consistently lost percentage amounts. The upsurge in 1980 represents the point when PCUS and PCUSA statistics were merged anticipating the reunion. The PCUS, at that time, had a higher percentage of men.

# AGE-SEX COMPOSITION OF MEMBERSHIP 1993



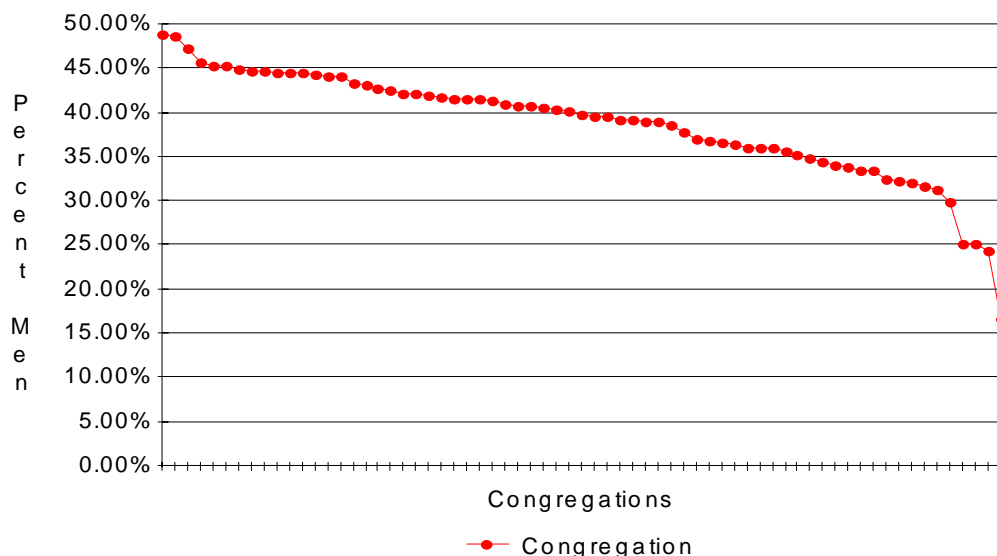
**Note:** This chart, produced by Presbyterian Church's research services was last published in 1994. It was discontinued thereafter. Current information suggests that these age-sex comparisons continue in the same pattern as represented here.

# Membership Data—Miami Presbytery

The following charts represent data gathered from General Assembly Statistics. Men represent about 41 percent of our presbytery's membership which mirrors the denomination as a whole.

## Percent Men by Congregation

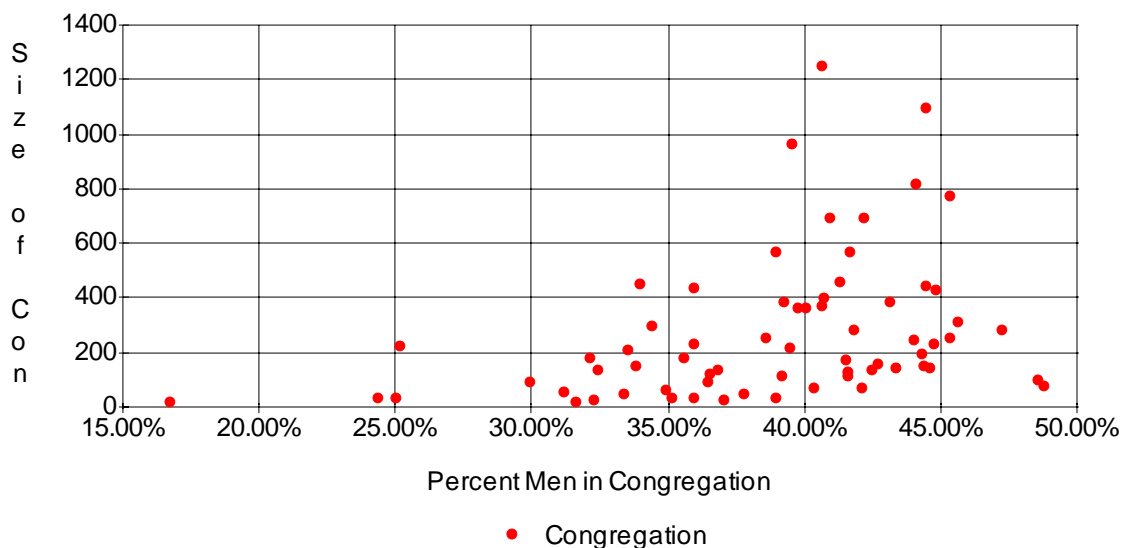
Miami Presbytery --1997



**Note:** The typical congregation in the Miami Presbytery has 38.64% men. Eleven congregations have a 2:1 woman/man ratio. No congregation currently has more men than women.

## Church Size and Male Membership

The Miami Presbytery -- 1997



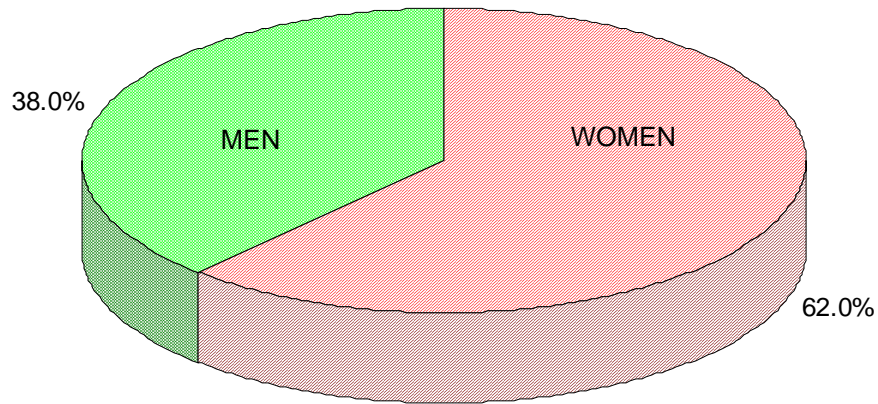
**Note:** There appears to be a weak correspondence between small churches and lower participation by men. This scatter dot graph compares percentage of male membership with church size.

# Participation Data—Presbyterian Church (USA)

The following pie charts were derived from Presbyterian Panel information taken from over 1300 Presbyterians in 1997. Each chart represents a profile of the gender composition of various gatherings in a typical Presbyterian congregation. In general, the membership percentages for men are higher than their actual presence in various activities as demonstrated below.

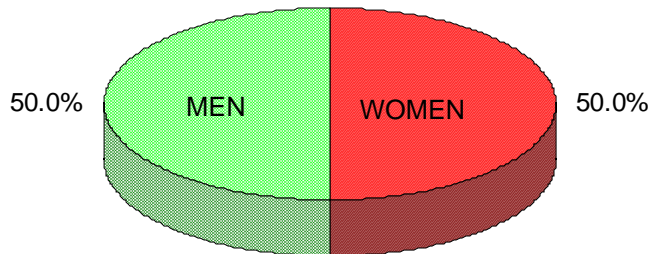
## Typical Presbyterian Worship Attendance

By Sex



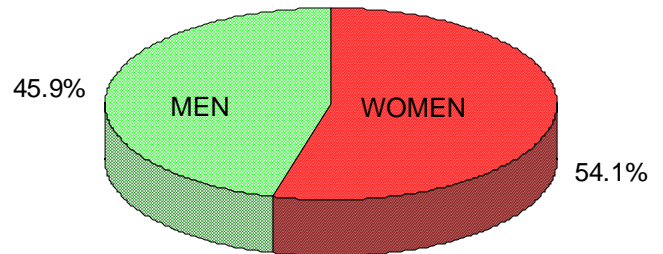
## HAVE BEEN ORDAINED AS ELDER

Typical Presbyterian Church



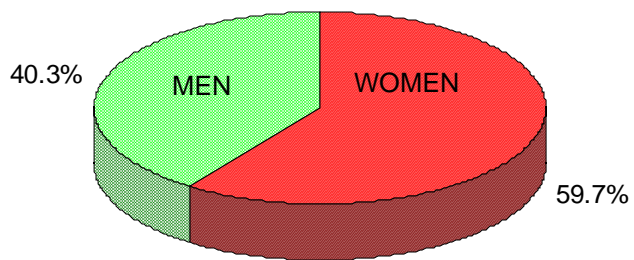
## Have Been Ordained as Deacon

Typical Presbyterian Church



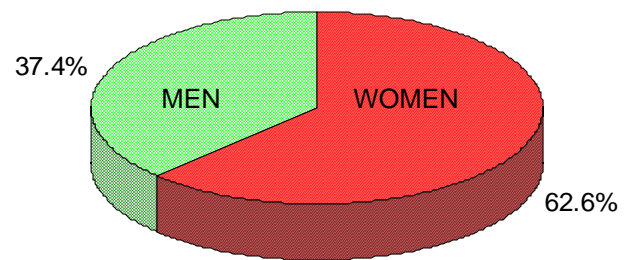
### Those Who Have Chaired Committees

Typical Congregation



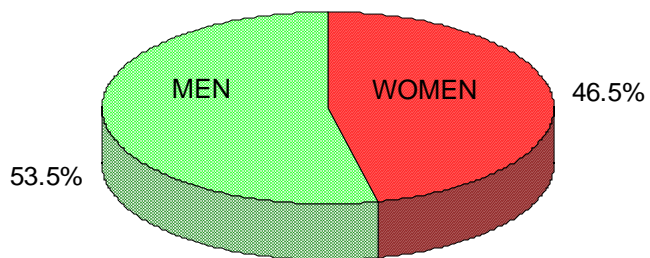
### Served on Congregational Committee

Typical Congregation



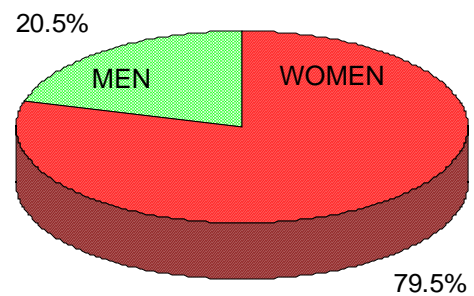
### Served Presbytery, Synod, GA

Typical Congregation



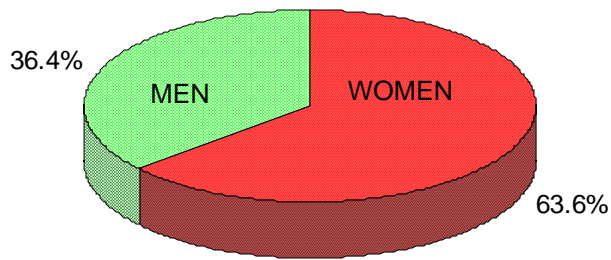
### Served as Group Officer

Typical Congregation



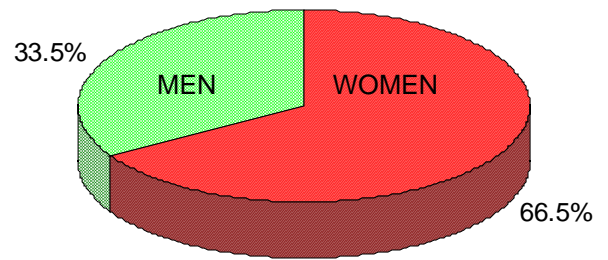
### Organist or Choir Director

Typical Congregation



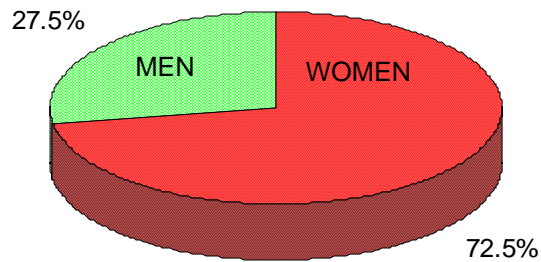
### Composition of Choir

Typical Congregation



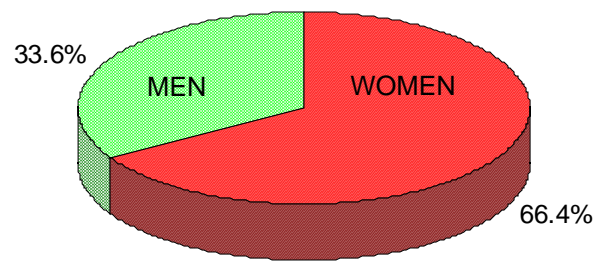
### Sunday School Teachers

Typical Congregation



### Present In the Church Building

Typical Congregation



# Why the Male Flight from Churches?

This is a survey of seven mainstream and traditional theories which have attempted to explain why male religious observance is significantly lacking in Western Christianity.

- I. The Social-Economic Theory
  - A. The Industrial Revolution moved men's work from farms and household workshops to factories separated from home
    1. Men soon dominated factory work force
  - B. This marked the beginning of the separation of life into the feminized-private sphere and the masculine-public sphere
  - C. Religion became identified with the private sphere, business and politics with the public sphere
- II. The Religion-as-Compensation-for-Women's-Lower-Social-Status Theory
  - A. Marxist in tone, this theory suggests that the group which loses out in the social arrangement is pacified by a bogus claim on transcendence.
- III. The Weakness-of-Women Theory
  - A. The (supposed) bodily weakness and emotionalism of women and the (supposed) emotionalism of religion make the church more naturally attractive to women.
  - B. Freud advanced the idea that women were more religious because they were more emotional
- IV. The Domestic-Environment-as-Compatible-with-Devotion Theory
  - A. The leisure and shelter of the home allows for exercises in devotion and a shelter from temptation
  - B. Men, by the same token, lived in the spoiled public sphere
  - C. The temperance movement was an alliance of women and ministers working to combat the vicious pleasures of men
- V. The Women-Are-Not-as-Fallen-as-Men Theory
  - A. Femininity as morally and spiritually superior to masculinity.
  - B. Women, in turn, are God's chosen instruments
  - C. A misunderstanding of Jesus' parentage contributes to the idea that Jesus' human soul came from Mary and his divine self came from God
  - D. The weakness and helplessness of women makes them more naturally obedient and receptive of grace
  - E. Men have difficulty identifying with the bride of Christ image which gained popularity in the Middle Ages
- VI. The Masculinity-is-Unchristian Theory
  - A. The masculine drive towards intellection, separation, autonomy, and independence hinders worship and devotion.
  - B. Men can be more Christian when they become more like women
- VII. The Attenuation-of-Male-Functioning Theory
  - A. Men in our society have a rigid, limited view of what it means to be masculine
  - B. The caricature is the man who is focused on his job, sports, war, and sex
  - C. Men have de-focused away from emotions, relationships, spirituality, social consciousness, and mystery