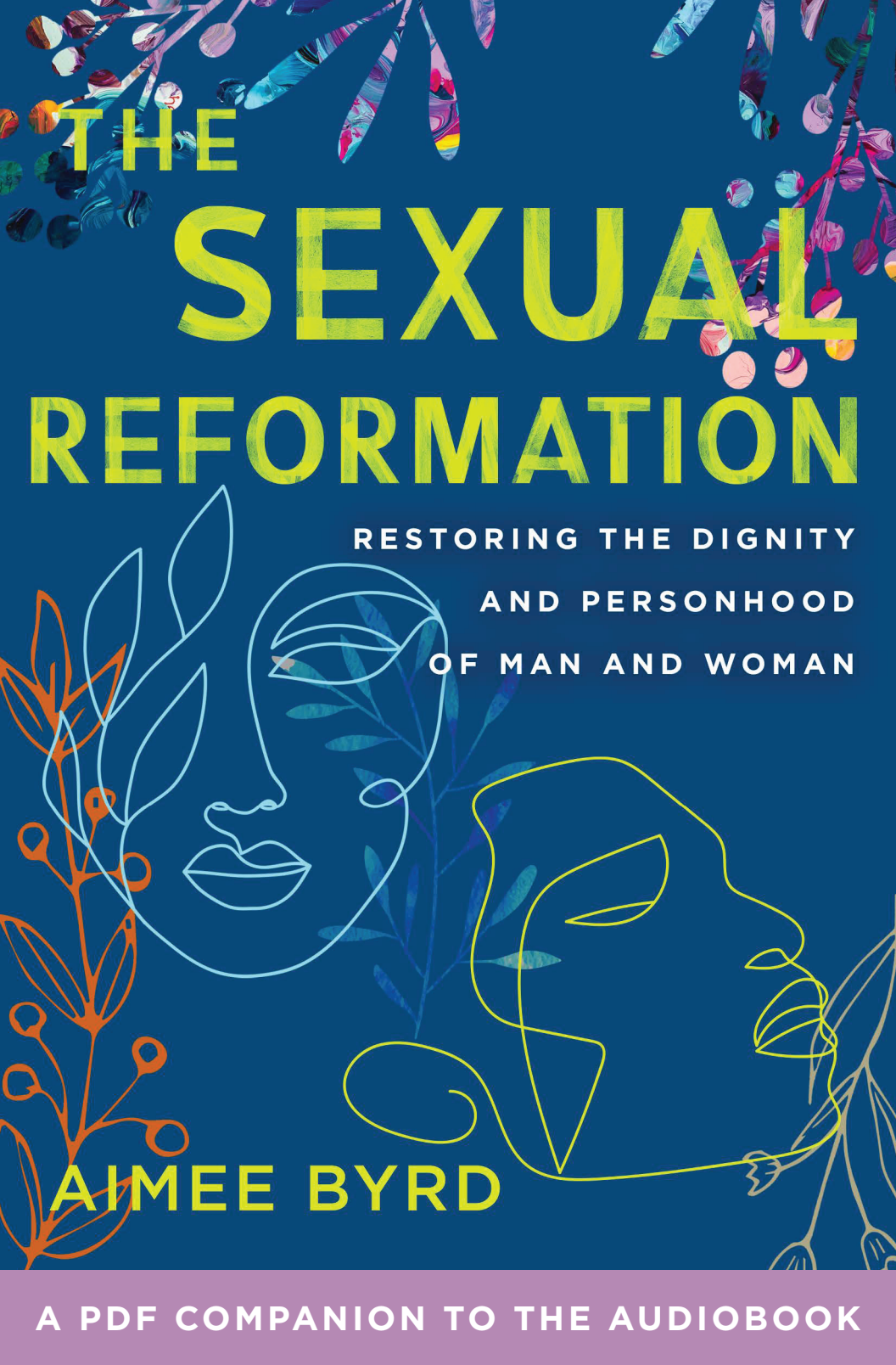




THE SEXUAL REFORMATION

RESTORING THE DIGNITY
AND PERSONHOOD
OF MAN AND WOMAN

AIMEE BYRD

A PDF COMPANION TO THE AUDIOBOOK

ZONDERVAN REFLECTIVE

The Sexual Reformation

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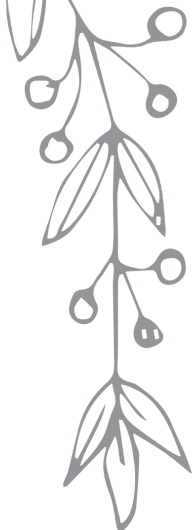
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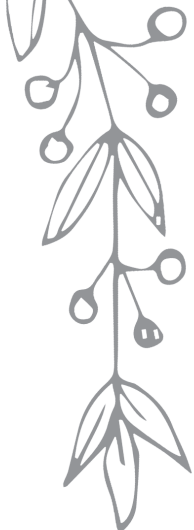


Chapter One

DO WE REALLY NEED A REFORMATION?

QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

1. Why did you pick up this book to read? What are you hoping to get out of it?
2. What messages have you received from the church regarding the meaningfulness of your sex as a man or woman and your contribution to the body of Christ?
3. How do you think having an eschatological focus and imagination affects the way you view the church and live your everyday life in the midst of its cultural challenges?

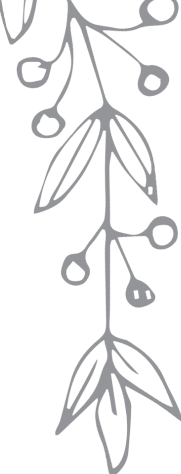


Chapter Two

WE ARE SINGING THE WRONG SONG

QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

1. What has been your own personal history of how you were introduced to and taught how to read the Song of Songs? Or have you just avoided it?
2. How do you think a typological and allegorical reading of the Song informs our views about God?
3. How do you think the Song will inform our understanding of the meaningfulness of our sexes as man and woman?

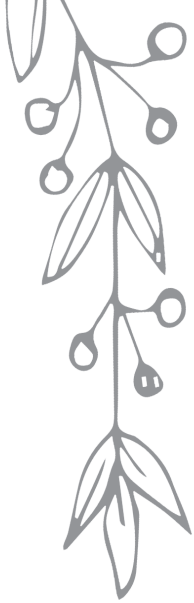


Chapter Three

OUR BODIES SPEAK

QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

1. How did the intertextual references and echoes I pointed out between the Song of Songs and other Scripture passages activate the text they were alluding to, enhancing the meaning of both texts?
2. How does this typology of woman as Zion/bride and the analogies of woman as fortress, water of life, and Lebanon elevate the dignity of women from the way the church has historically described them?
3. How would an understanding of the typology of man and woman as it relates to the divine order of love be applied to our relationships in the church? How does that affect the way you think about leadership and the value of laymen and laywomen as disciples and disciplers?



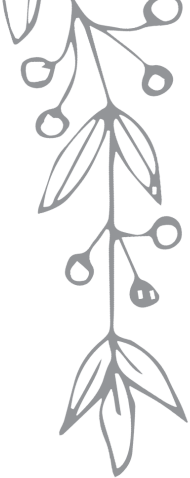
Chapter Four

THE WOMAN'S DESIRE AND THE DESIROUS WOMAN

QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

1. How does the way we think about desire affect our reading of Scripture and the way we relate to God?
2. How does it affect the dignity and personhood that we assign to men and women and the way that we love?
3. A prayer in *The Valley of Vision* ends with this request: "Fill the garden of my soul with the wind of love, that the scents of the Christian life may be wafted to others; then come and gather fruits to thy glory. So I shall fulfill the great end of my being—to glorify thee and be a blessing to men."¹ How could this prayer be an application to Song of Songs 4:16 and a response to God's desire?

1. Arthur Bennett, ed., "Things Needful," *The Valley of Vision: A Collection of Puritan Prayers & Devotions* (Carlisle, PA: Banner of Truth Trust, 1975), 325.



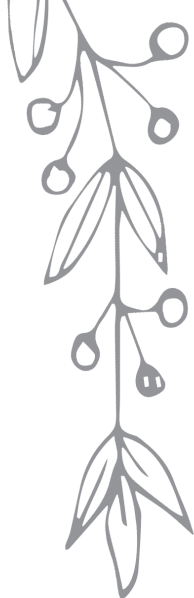
Chapter Five

SEXUALITY AS GIFT

QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

1. How does the view taught by the Council on Biblical Manhood and Womanhood that we are to be masculine men and feminine females, acting a certain way to uphold a uniquely feminine or masculine demeanor, contradict the teaching of our sexuality as gift? What does it teach about our metaphysical union of body and soul?
2. Keeping in mind our eternal aim and the typico-symbolic¹ meaning of our sexes, how would upholding Prudence Allen's four demonstratable principles between men and women—equal dignity, significant difference, synergetic relation, and intergenerational fruition—change the way we view, relate to, and invest in one another as disciples in the church?
3. What does this understanding of one another as gift demand of us in our posture and response before God and one another? How does it better uphold the dignity and personhood not only between the sexes but as unique, individual persons?

1. The typology of man and woman and symbolism and theology that our bodies represent.



Chapter Six

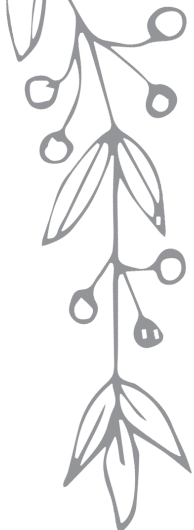
SOMETIMES THE LAST MAN STANDING IS A WOMAN

Rosalind Clarke's Connection of Hosea 14 with the Theme of Restoration in the Bourgeoning Land

אהב	love	Hosea 14:4	Song 1:3, 4, 7; 3:1, 2, 3, 4
טל	dew	Hosea 14:5	Song 5:2
פרה	to blossom	Hosea 14:5, 7	Song 6:11; 7:13
שושן	lily	Hosea 14:5	Song 2:1, 2, 16; 4:5; 5:13; 6:2, 3; 7:3
נכה	to take (root)	Hosea 14:5	Song 5:7
לבנון	Lebanon	Hosea 14:5, 6, 7	Song 3:9; 4:8, 11, 15; 5:15; 7:5
ריח	scent	Hosea 14:6	Song 1:3, 12; 2:13; 4:10, 11; 7:9, 14
ישב	to dwell	Hosea 14:7	Song 2:3; 5:12; 8:13
צל	shadow	Hosea 14:7	Song 2:3, 14; 4:6
גפן	vine	Hosea 14:7	Song 2:13; 6:11; 7:9, 13
זכר	remembrance	Hosea 14:7	Song 1:4
יין	wine	Hosea 14:7	Song 1:2, 4; 2:4; 4:10; 5:1; 7:10; 8:2

QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

1. How have you grown spiritually through your own personal night scenes? How has your church grown through trials? How does the greatest commandment, and its Deuteronomic reference, help recalibrate us when we are in night scenes?
2. How do the night scenes in the Song help the church understand our belonging in Christ? How, then, does that belonging inspire us, like the bride, as a fortified holy city, to freely give and receive with those who come to kiss the Son? What can the night scenes teach us about the importance of bringing darkness to light—naming abuse—as well as where our focus is as the bride?
3. Desire has a cost, whether it is rightly or wrongly oriented. How does that factor into your “counting the cost” then in personal life, church life, and family life? Are we willing to make ourselves vulnerable for properly oriented desire? Or do we make sure that vulnerability is carried by someone else? Who pays the cost in different situations? Is it worth it?



Chapter Seven

MALE AND FEMALE VOICE

QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

1. In what ways is the woman's voice dominant in the Song of Songs?
2. What are some possible signs to discern whether your voice is joining with the Spirit and the realm of glory, or with Satan and an alien glory of an unholy realm?
3. I ask many questions in the "Sing with Me" portion of this chapter. Go back and reflect on some of these. It would be good for church officers and congregants to discuss some of these together.