


Gateway Seminary Professor Comes Out Against Law Amendment Claiming Women in the Pastorate is NOT Sinful

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The president of Gateway Seminary, a Southern Baptist Convention seminary, has come out against implementing measures that would see the convention stay true to God's word. In an [article at the Baptist Press](#), Jeff Iorg's objections to the Mike Law amendment regarding women in pastoral ministry revolve around concerns over church autonomy, administrative burdens, potential legal issues, and the broader impact on church cooperation and unity.

However, these objections fail to recognize the importance of obedience to God's Word. Iorg's concerns about church autonomy are grossly misplaced as the call to obedience is not an infringement on autonomy but a return to biblical fidelity—a "reformation" of sorts. First, the church is not a democracy where the majority rules—it's a theocracy where Christ is the head, and His Word is the final authority. Any compromise on this issue is a compromise on the authority of Scripture itself.

The argument that enforcing biblical standards would burden the SBC administratively or legally is shortsighted. God's commands are not contingent upon our convenience or the ideologies of false churches in rebellion against Him with women pastors. Throughout Scripture, we see that obedience often came at great personal and communal cost—yet it was always non-negotiable.

Financial implications are another concern raised by Iorg. "GuideStone participants in excluded churches may lose their disability insurance (provided through partnerships with state conventions)," Iorg writes, "and may lose other retirement benefits and protections tied to SBC affiliation. These benefits are defined legally, and exemptions cannot be granted arbitrarily."

The history of Israel and the early church demonstrates that God provides for those who remain faithful. The Israelites were sustained in the wilderness, and the early church thrived under persecution. In the New Testament, God's provision is evident—Jesus fed the 5,000 with five loaves and two fish, and the early church shared everything so no one was in need.

Paul tells us that "God will supply every need of yours according to his riches in glory in Christ Jesus" ([Philippians 4:19](#)). Christ promised that the gates of Hades would not overcome His church ([Matthew 16:18](#)), and reassured His followers not to worry about their needs, as God would provide for them just as He does for the birds of the air and the lilies of the field ([Matthew 6:25-34](#)). Obedience and trust in God's provision should be our focus, not fear of financial repercussions. God does not need a man-made institution to fulfill His promises.

Iorg then goes on to argue that women in the pastorate is not sinful:

First, the past decisions narrowing the definition of a cooperating church – homosexuality (1992/1993), sexual abuse (2019/2021) and racism (2019/2021) – were intended to show our unity rather than define new positions. Virtually every Southern Baptist church supports those positions, evidenced by the small number of times churches have been removed for these reasons. Since these narrowing definers were adopted, only 13 churches have been removed from the Convention for any of these reasons (eight over homosexuality; four over sexual abuse; one over racism). In addition, four churches were removed for failing to cooperate in resolving these issues. That's 17 churches in the past 32 years.

The current amendment is different. It enforces an interpretation of our doctrinal statement which may result in the exclusion of hundreds of churches. This conflict at the national Convention will likely spread to state conventions, associations and various other Baptist entities – like colleges, foundations, etc. All of them have their own constitutions, membership policies, doctrinal statements, accreditation standards and legal requirements to meet. These denominational entities are not owned, controlled by or

accountable to the SBC and therefore must grapple with these issues independently and individually. Significant conflict may occur in some of these settings as the debates ensue. That has not occurred with the other issues added to the Constitution.

*Second, the previous issues (homosexuality, sexual abuse and racism) have a defined moral component. They are sinful acts clearly condemned in the Bible. **Women serving in pastoral roles are not in this category.** Gender leadership roles are a debate about interpreting the Bible, not about submitting to its authority.*

That's just simply not true—not at all. The Bible is unequivocally clear on the role of women in the pastorate. It's forbidden. Paul, in 1 Corinthians 14, places women preachers in the category of disorderly worship and forbids it "in all the churches of the saints," not just in the Corinthian church, as some argue. It isn't a debate over interpreting the Bible, the Bible is clear. Think about it: how many churches with women pastors can you think of that hasn't compromised on something else even bigger, like homosexuality?

Iorg's point about the impact on church cooperation and unity within the SBC overlooks a critical truth: unity in compromise is not true unity. True unity is found in obedience and conformity to the truth of God's Word. The prophets consistently called Israel to repentance and to obey God's commands, warning against the false peace that comes from ignoring God's statutes. Jesus Himself warned that following Him would bring division—not because He desired conflict, but because truth is inherently divisive when it confronts falsehood.

Compromising on faithfulness to God's statutes is not only a dangerous position for man to take, but historically has always ended in destruction and judgment. The Old Testament is replete with examples of Israel's downfall due to disobedience. The New Testament echoes this warning, urging the church to remain steadfast in the apostles' teaching. The letters to the seven churches in Revelation warn us of the severe consequences of straying from God's commands.

God does not need the SBC. Do Southern Baptists want to risk the judgment of God by fighting to save a man-made institution in rebellion against Him using man-made ideas, or do they want to please God by obeying Him? Men like Jeff Iorg are not true leaders, they're compromisers, and their points reflect such. They're politicians. Their goal isn't pleasing God, but man. The choice is clear—obedience to God's Word should be the uncompromising standard, regardless of the cost.