



Without Precedent: Scripture, Tradition, and the Ordination of Women

Geoffrey Kirk

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Though the ordination of women has been hotly debated in a number of churches (and in particular in the world-wide Anglican Communion) there has been a strange silence on the subject from academic theologians. "They have left the debate" says the author of this book, "for the most part, to the also-rans" Without Precedent seeks to examine the arguments that, in the absence of serious academic contributions, have been advanced. In particular it looks at claims of ancient precedent for modern practice. What did Jesus think about women? Was Paul a misogynist or a feminist, a reactionary or a revolutionary? Does the role of Mary of Magdela, in scripture and tradition, offer any guidance (as many have claimed)? Were there female priests, and even bishops, in early Christianity? Extravagant claims have been made and repeated in all of these areas, and have crucially influenced decisions taken. This book provides, in the words of former Archbishop of Canterbury, Rowan Williams: "a lucid and helpful survey, which quite rightly punctures some awful historical nonsense"

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