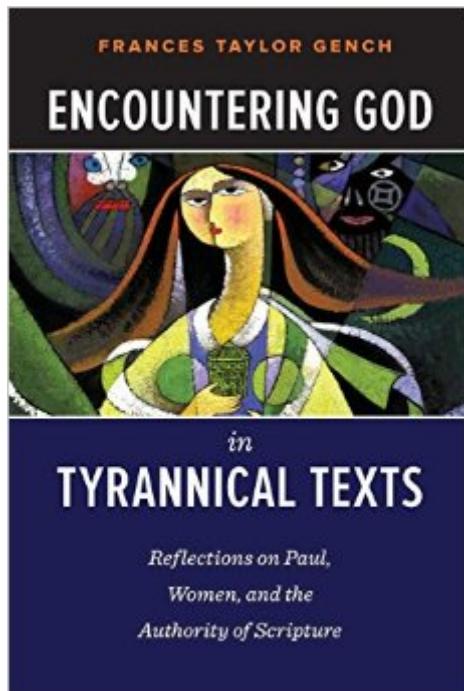


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Encountering God In Tyrannical Texts: Reflections On Paul, Women, And The Authority Of Scripture



Synopsis

The Bible includes any number of "tyrannical texts" that have proved to be profoundly oppressive in the lives of many people. Among them are Pauline texts that have circumscribed the lives and ministries of women throughout Christian history. What are people who honor Scripture to do with such texts, and what does it mean to speak of biblical authority in their presence? In *Encountering God in Tyrannical Texts*, Frances Taylor Gench provides strategies for engaging such texts with integrity- that is, without dismissing them, whitewashing them, or acquiescing to them-and as potential sources of edification for the church. Gench also facilitates reflection on the nature and authority of Scripture. *Encountering God in Tyrannical Texts* provides access to feminist scholarship that can inform preaching and teaching of problematic Pauline texts and encourages public engagement with them.

Book Information

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The Bible is Truth. The Truth shall set us free. If that is so, why are there still passages in the Bible that appear to "oppress" or create controversies? Why is it that while there are passages on love, and the equal treatment of one another, there are also passages that seem to prefer one gender over the other, especially on the subject of women? Called "tyrannical texts," there are passages that stump and confuse rather than liberate and clarify, asserts author Frances Taylor Gench. As a Herbert Worth and Annie H. Jackson Professor of Biblical Interpretation at Union Presbyterian Seminary, Gench is particularly interested in the gospels, women in the biblical world, and

interpretation of the ancient texts with an awareness of the contexts of today. The following key questions sum up her purpose for writing this book. 1) How can one honour the authority of Scripture without rejecting the teachings in the "tyrannical texts?" 2) What kind of alternative interpretations can one make? 3) How can the ancient Scriptures bring us closer toward an encounter with God? Six Pauline passages of Scripture are tackled head on. The first two chapters present the introductory stance which comprises of interpretive strategies and engaging honestly with the texts. Chapter One deals with 1 Timothy 2:8-15 as a test case because it is one of the most controversial texts regarding the role of women in the Church. So controversial that the author shares her honest struggle: "Is there any biblical text that you would reject?" Truth is, quite a number of people would, but for whatever reason choose to hide it from the public. Others would attempt alternative interpretations that risk been branded a liberal at best or a heretic at worst.

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