

THE CONTRIBUTION OF CODEX BEZAE CANTABRIGIENSIS TO AN
UNDERSTANDING OF WOMEN IN THE BOOK OF ACTS

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1. *Introduction*

This study is not another attempt to identify the ‘original’ text of Acts, but an examination of the passages in Acts that address women and also contain variant readings in Code Bezae Cantabrigiensis (Codex D). The goal is to identify the theological concerns, tendencies and/or motivations¹ of the variant readings in Codex D regarding women. As a side product, this study will also discuss the theological concerns of the Alexandrian text (Codex B) regarding women.

In no way will this investigation provide an exhaustive discussion of all of the passages dealing with women in Acts,² only those that have

1. Epp writes, ‘many variants reveal a religious viewpoint (and perhaps a religious “experience”) which accounts for their origin or...which occasioned their retention in or deletion from a given text’ (Eldon Jay Epp, *The Theological Tendency of Codex Bezae Cantabrigiensis in Acts* [Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1966], p. 17; see also pp. 10-21). Strange identifies Epp’s work with ‘tendency criticism’ in response to ‘Haenchen’s description of the Western reviser as “Acts’ earliest commentator” and thus as a means of obtaining insight into the period of the early second century’ (W.A. Strange, *The Problem of the Text of Acts* [Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992], p. 23). Strange goes on to describe common features in many Western texts, including the addition of material and alteration of style which reflect a scribal attitude toward the text, until late in the second century when the literature began to obtain respect as emerging scripture (pp. 36-37).

2. For a more exhaustive treatment of all of the passages in Acts dealing with women, see Ivoni Richter Reimer, *Women in the Acts of the Apostles: A Feminist Liberation Perspective* (trans. Linda M. Maloney; Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1995); see also Ben Witherington, *Women in the Earliest Churches* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988), pp. 143-57.

theologically significant variants in Codex D.³ In particular, the following passages will be examined: Acts 1.14 (the apostles with the women for prayer); Acts 16.14, 15, 40 (Lydia and her household); Acts 17.4, 12 (prominent women); Acts 17.34 (the omission of Damaris); and Acts 18.2-3, 7, 26 (Priscilla and Aquila).

The Western text, though extant in numerous sources, shows a uniformity of quality and character even though the particular witnesses to this text are not uniform.⁴ Codex D is a leading representative of the Western text and includes the four canonical Gospels and the book of Acts, dated somewhere from the fourth to the seventh century AD.⁵ Even though Codex D is bilingual containing a Latin (*d*) and Greek (D) text,⁶

3. Ben Witherington ventured briefly into such a selective study in his article, 'The Anti-Feminist Tendencies of the "Western" Text in Acts', *JBL* 103 (1984), pp. 82-84.

4. Epp, *Theological Tendency*, pp. 5-8; Strange rightly notes, 'Eighteenth century criticism, valuable though it was in laying the foundations of ordering of witnesses, left critics with the unhappy choice of "Western" as an adjective to describe the group of witnesses of which Codex D is the principal. This text is scarcely "Western" in a geographical sense, as has been widely recognised for some time' (*The Problem of the Text of Acts*, p. 3, cf. pp. 35-37); see also Peter Head, 'Acts and the Problem of its Texts', in Bruce W. Winter and Andrew D. Clarke (eds.), *The Book of Acts in its First Century Setting. I. The Book of Acts in its Ancient Literary Setting* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1993), pp. 415-44 (416). Nevertheless, 'Western' will be used to describe this textual tradition for the sake of common scholarly reference.

5. Epp, *Theological Tendency*, pp. 7, 10, holds to a fifth century date; Strange, *The Problem of the Text of Acts*, p. 3; Bruce M. Metzger, *The Text of the New Testament: Its Transmission, Corruption, and Restoration* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1968), p. 49, dates the text 'from the fifth or possibly sixth century'. Ernst Haenchen holds to an early sixth century date (*The Acts of the Apostles: A Commentary*. [trans. Bernard Noble and Gerald Shin; Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1971], p. 53). Nevertheless, as Jenny Read-Heimerdinger affirms, 'Although none of these actual MSS dates from before the fourth century, it should be borne in mind that the text they transmit is of an earlier date. This much is known from readings of both the Alexandrian MSS and Codex Bezae that are found among the oldest papyri, versions and Church Fathers' (Jenny Read-Heimerdinger, *The Bezan Text of Acts: A Contribution of Discourse Analysis to Textual Criticism* [JSNTSup, 236; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 2002], p. 5).

6. Epp, *Theological Tendency*, pp. 8-10; Metzger, *Text of the New Testament*, p. 49, notes that the Greek text is on the left and the Latin text is on the right with each page in a single 'column of text, which is not written straight ahead but...

the focus of this paper will be on the textual variants in the Greek text (D).

This study is inductive,⁷ examining words and phrases in view of the context of a passage, identifying variant readings in Codex D,⁸ considering their cause, and their effect on a reading of the passage, and then working, where possible, toward an overall identification of the theological tendency of the variants regarding women in Acts.⁹ This study will not attempt to approach the text from the presuppositions of a patriarchal or feminist perspective, but from a textual focus that permits the text to inform one's perspectives and presuppositions.¹⁰

Epp seems to be correct that a study limited to Acts is more helpful than a study of Luke–Acts because ‘characteristic features of the “Western” text and Codex Bezae are the most prominent and abundant in Acts’, and because a study of Acts avoids the possible effect of a ‘harmonistic influence’ of the Gospels.¹¹ Epp also astutely notes that it is not where texts are in agreement, but where they disagree, that the theological differences become evident.¹² The standard text against which

divided into κῶλα, that is, lines of varying length with the object of making the pauses in sense come at the end of lines’.

7. Epp, *Theological Tendency*, pp. 24–34, identifies a similar methodology, but he extends it to identifying the significance of variant Western readings beyond Codex D itself.

8. Read-Heimerdinger, *The Bezan Text*, pp. 5–19, argues for the benefit of focusing upon an actual manuscript, like Codex D, rather than upon ‘a hypothetical text reconstructed from a range of witnesses’ in the Western text, because a focused study leads to more certain results.

9. Read-Heimerdinger, *The Bezan Text*, pp. 19–25, argues forcefully for a theological purpose in Codex D even if her counterbalancing explanation of the Alexandrian text as a ‘historical account’ is questionable.

10. Witherington describes this interpretive tension well when, writing on the same subject, he says, ‘Of course, no one comes to the text without presuppositions, but this author has tried to let the text inform and reform his presuppositions so that it is the text that has the last say about the material’ (*Women in the Earliest Churches*, p. 2).

11. Epp, *Theological Tendency*, p. 26; see also Strange, *Text of Acts*, p. 1; Metzger writes, ‘No known manuscript has so many and such remarkable variations from what is usually taken to be the normal New Testament text. Codex Bezae’s special characteristic is the free addition (and occasional omission) of words, sentences, and even incidents’ (*Text of the New Testament*, p. 50).

12. Epp, *Theological Tendency*, p. 40, says, ‘Differences and only the differences reveal the distinctive driving force and direction of movement of a thinker

variants will be identified is the Alexandrian text as identified in the Nestle–Aland²⁷ (N–A²⁷) or United Bible Societies⁴ (UBSGNT⁴) editions.¹³ However, if there is any variance in the N–A²⁷, I will follow Codex B Vaticanus as laid out by J.H. Ropes.¹⁴ This study will not consider the variants which can be explained as unintentional, accidental and/or mechanical due to faulty eyesight, hearing, errors of the mind, or

closely related to a larger tradition. The objection, then, that an emphasis on textual variants overlooks the overwhelming majority of textual agreement among all New Testament texts and textual traditions is not well founded. This extensive agreement is obvious enough, but what is not so obvious is that twist or torsional strain which a specific text or textual tradition is bringing to bear upon the common textual material being transmitted. And it is precisely the textual variants which can bring to light this distinctive thrust' (see also p. 35).

13. It is understood that the Nestle–Aland critical text is not the 'original' text. Even the introduction to the N–A²⁷ identifies the text as 'a working text' that is 'not to be considered as definitive, but as a stimulus to further efforts toward defining and verifying the text of the New Testament' (Kurt Aland, Matthew Black, Carlo M. Martini, Bruce M. Metzger, and Allen Wilkgren, *Novum Testamentum Graece* (Stuttgart: Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft, 27th edn, 2001), p. 3. See also Epp, *Theological Tendency*, p. 36. Nevertheless, the Nestle–Aland text is an attempt to reconstruct an 'original' text from extant sources (primarily, but not exclusively, from the Alexandrian text composed of codices \aleph , A, B, C, Ψ , Papyri 45, 50, 56, 57, 58, 74, and the minuscules 33, 81, 104, 326, 1175, 1241, and 1739); see F.F. Bruce, *The Acts of the Apostles: Greek Text with Introduction and Commentary* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 3rd edn, 1990), pp. 70-71; Bruce M. Metzger, *A Textual Commentary on the Greek New Testament: A Companion Volume to the United Bible Societies' Greek New Testament (Third Edition)* (Stuttgart: United Bible Societies, corr. edn, 1975), pp. 259, 271-72; Head, 'Acts and the Problem of its Texts', pp. 418-19. As such, the Nestle–Aland text is the foundation for much present New Testament study; see Haenchen, *Acts of the Apostles*, p. 50; Luke Timothy Johnson, *The Acts of the Apostles* (Sacra Pagina, 5; Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 1992), pp. 2-3; Bruce, *Acts of the Apostles: Greek Text*, p. 77; Ben Witherington, III, *The Acts of the Apostles: A Socio-Rhetorical Commentary* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1998), p. 68; William J. Larkin, *Acts* (The IVP New Testament Commentary Series; Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1995), p. 23; I. Howard Marshall, *The Acts of the Apostles: An Introduction and Commentary* (TNTC; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1980), p. 46. Consequently, the Nestle–Aland text is a viable choice as a 'base text' against which textual variants in Codex D may be identified. See Head, 'Acts and the Problem of its Texts', pp. 443-44; Metzger, *Textual Commentary*, pp. 259-72; Read-Heimerdinger, *The Bezan Text*, p. 7 n. 7.

14. J.H. Ropes, *The Text of Acts*, in F.J. Foakes Jackson and Kirsopp Lake (eds.), *The Beginnings of Christianity. Part I: The Acts of the Apostles*, III (London: Macmillan, 1926).

errors of judgment.¹⁵ Instead, this study will consider those variants which appear to be intentional, including changes in spelling and grammar, and especially alterations made for doctrinal considerations, since these changes are in the realm of theological development.¹⁶ The use of the term ‘intentional’ is not meant to be pejorative, but descriptive, as thinking scribes made good-faith emendations in an attempt to rectify apparent error in the text.¹⁷

2. *An Examination of Selected Passages in the Book of Acts*

a. *Acts 1.14 (The Apostles and Women in Prayer)*

1. *The Context of Acts 1.14.* The verse in question occurs within a larger logical unit, Acts 1.1–2.47, which includes the following sub-units: the prologue, (1.1-2),¹⁸ the programmatic prelude (1.3-14),¹⁹ and the book’s

15. Metzger, *Text of the New Testament*, pp. 186-95.

16. Metzger, *Text of the New Testament*, pp. 195-206; Epp, *Theological Tendency*, p. 35.

17. Metzger, *Text of the New Testament*, p. 195; Metzger, *Textual Commentary*, pp. 264-65.

18. Some biblical literary critics combine Acts 1.1-2 and 1.3-14 into a single unit of 1.1-14 because of similar themes, audience (the Twelve) and the smooth transition of the prologue into vv. 3 and following. D.W. Palmer, ‘The Literary Background of Acts 1.1-4’, *NTS* 33 (1987), pp. 427-38 (427 n. 1) (who nevertheless recognizes the prologue as a distinct literary form); Robert C. Tannehill, *The Narrative Unity of Luke–Acts: A Literary Interpretation. II. The Acts of the Apostles* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1990), p. 9. Nevertheless, the complex nature of the single Greek sentence is reminiscent of Lk. 1.1-4; therefore, it may be better to distinguish between the units of 1.1-2 and 1.3-14. See F. Blass, A. Debrunner, and Robert W. Funk, *A Greek Grammar of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1961), § 464; Joseph A. Fitzmyer, *The Gospel According to Luke (I-IX): Introduction, Translation, and Notes* (AB, 28; Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1981), p. 288; Philip E. Satterthwaite, ‘Acts against the Background of Classical Rhetoric’, in Winter and Clarke (eds.), *The Book of Acts in its First Century Setting. I. The Book of Acts in its Ancient Literary Setting*, pp. 337-79 (353); Hans Conzelmann, *Acts of the Apostles* (trans. James Limburg, A. Thomas Kraabel, and Donald H. Juel; Hermeneia; Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1987), pp. 3-4; Loveday Alexander, *The Preface of Luke’s Gospel: Literary Convention and Social Context in Luke 1.1-4 and Acts 1.1* (SNTSMS, 78; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993), pp. 102-46; Charles H. Talbert, *Reading Acts: A Literary and Theological Commentary on the Acts of the Apostles* (New York: Crossroad, 1997), p. 19.

first major panel where the promise of the Father is prepared for, received, and presented (1.15–2.47).²⁰

The prologue provides continuity with *Lukas*'s²¹ previous work and furnishes an update on the Gospel so that the plot can develop further.²² The prelude is unfolded through a general statement (1.3-5), which is enlarged to include more specific development (1.6-14). It is programmatic in that it foreshadows essential themes that *Lukas* will develop in Acts: the eschatological import of the coming of the Spirit,²³ baptism,²⁴

19. William S. Kurz, *Reading Luke–Acts: Dynamics of Biblical Narrative* (Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 1993), p. 80, understands Acts 2–3 to function in the book like the first two chapters in the Gospel of Luke and the prologue in the Gospel of John. However, by delaying the programmatic chapters until ch. 2, Kurz seems to break the typical pattern of both of his examples. While it is true that themes exist in Acts 2–3 which are further developed in the book, they first arise in the prologue and programmatic prelude.

20. Satterthwaite, 'Acts against the Background of Classical Rhetoric', pp. 353-54.

21. The identity of the historical author(s)/redactor(s) of the book of Acts is beyond the scope of this study and not necessary knowledge for evaluation of textual variants. In this article, the author of the book of Acts will be referred to as *Lukas*, to distinguish the author from the name of the Gospel. This does not intend to address the question of the author's identity.

22. The formal tone of the prologue does not necessarily determine either the style or the reader's/listener's expectations for the remainder of the narrative. F. Gerald Downing, 'Theophilus's First Reading of Luke–Acts', in C.M. Tuckett (ed.), *Luke's Literary Achievement: Collected Essays* (JSNTSup, 116; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1995), pp. 91-109 (96-98); see also Alexander, *The Preface of Luke's Gospel*, pp. 200-201, 206. Rather it provides a smooth transition from Luke's Gospel to the narrative of Acts, invokes the preface to the Gospel of Luke as controlling for both works, provides continuity between Jesus (in the Gospel) and his apostles (in Acts), continues the narrator's relationship to the reader (Theophilus), and continues the story begun in the Gospel of Luke; see Steven M. Sheeley, *Narrative Asides in Luke–Acts* (JSNTSup, 72; Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1992), pp. 134-35.

23. Acts 1.5-8; this is identified as the promise of the Father about which Jesus told the disciples. See also 2.16-21; 3.19-21; 8.17; 9.17-18; 10.44-47; 19.6. The coming of the Spirit had an Old Testament connection to and expectation of the coming of the kingdom attached to it (cf. Isa. 32.15-20; 44.3-5; Ezek. 39.28-29; Joel 2.28; Zech. 12.8-10).

24. Acts 1.5; 8.12-13, 36; 16.15, 33; 19.3-7.

being witnesses to the Jews and all peoples²⁵ of the death and resurrection of Jesus,²⁶ the return of Jesus as judge,²⁷ and an earlier division among the disciples²⁸ which was replaced by unity.²⁹

In Acts 1.12-14, the narrative begins to move from its programmatic prologue into its first major panel, with the return of the apostles to Jerusalem. That the apostles are in view is emphasized through the naming of the Eleven (Acts 1.13). However, in the next verse, the group is expanded to include women, the mother of Jesus, and his brothers (Acts 1.14). Unlike the conflict and division described in the Gospel of Luke (Lk. 22.20-24, 33-34; 24.36-49), here the disciples of Jesus are unified as they pray³⁰ with one mind (ὁμοθυμαδόν).

2. *Textual Variant in Acts 1.14.* Against this background, Codex D offers a theologically significant textual variant regarding women in Acts 1.14:

N–A ²⁷ (Vaticanus)			Codex D		
οὔτοι	πάντες	ἦσαν	οὔτοι	πάντες	ἦσαν
προσκαρτεροῦντες	ὁμοθυμαδὸν	τῇ	προσκαρτεροῦντες	ὁμοθυμαδὸν	τῇ
προσευχῇ	σὺν	γυναίξιν καὶ	προσευχῇ	σὺν	ταῖς γυναίξιν καὶ
τῇ	μητρὶ	τοῦ ³¹ Ἰησοῦ	τῇ	μητρὶ	τοῦ
καὶ	σὺν ³²	τοῖς	τέκνοις	καὶ	τοῖς ἀδελφοῖς
ἀδελφοῖς	αὐτοῦ.		αὐτοῦ. ³³		

The inclusion of ‘women’ along with the apostles and the brothers of Jesus in prayer for the awaited Spirit appears to have been minimized by the addition in Codex D of ‘and children’.³⁴ The Alexandrian text leaves

25. ‘The ends of the earth’ (Acts 1.8) is not so much a geographical reference as another way of saying ‘to all peoples’ (cf. Isa. 8.9; 48.20; 49.6; 62.11).

26. Acts 2–4; 7; 10; 13; 17; 22–26; 28.

27. The angels emphasize that Jesus will return as judge (1.11; cf. Luke 12.35–48; 19.11–27). See also Acts 17.

28. Lk. 22.20–24, 33–34; 24.36–49.

29. Acts 1.14–26; 2.44–46; 8; 10; 19.

30. For continuity with the Gospel see Lk. 11.9–13; 18.1–8.

31. Codex Vaticanus does not include the article τοῦ in the text.

32. N–A²⁷ does not include the preposition σὺν but follows the reading in **ℵ**, A, C* and D.

33. Here and below, significant variants in Codex D are highlighted in bold.

34. Although the critical apparatus in N–A²⁷ only notes the addition of καὶ τέκνοις, Metzger, *Textual Commentary*, p. 284; Josep Rius-Camps and Jenny Read-Heimerdinger, *The Message of Acts in Codex Bezae: A Comparison with the Alexandrian Tradition. I. Acts 1.1–5.42: Jerusalem* (JSNTSup, 257; London: T. &

the identity of these women open to include those who accompanied Jesus in his itinerant ministry from Galilee to Jerusalem (cf. Lk. 8.1-3) including those who were the first witnesses to the resurrection, and perhaps the wives of the apostles.³⁵ The phrase, *σὺν γυναῖξίν*, without the article, may possibly be a reference to ‘wives’.³⁶ However, once the article and ‘children’ are added to the text, the identity of the women is *limited* to the wives of the apostles.³⁷ Not only does this change in Codex D imply that some of the disciples were married and had children, but that the women in the upper room may not have included those who were with Jesus as he traveled. Additionally, the message is that the women in the upper room were not there as independent people alongside the men in prayer and as witnesses,³⁸ but as wives of the apostles tending to their children. This is a more subordinate positioning of women.³⁹

In view of the contextual unity with the Gospel of Luke mentioned above in Acts 1.1-14, it appears that the ambiguity of the Alexandrian reading allows for, and, as most commentators agree, argues for the more

T. Clark International, 2004), p. 56, and Ropes, *Text of Acts*, p. 6, note that Codex D also includes the article before women, i.e. *σὺν ταῖς γυναῖξίν καὶ τέκνοις*. Even without the article, the phrase *σὺν γυναῖξίν καὶ τέκνοις* could mean ‘with their wives and children’ as in Acts 21.5; see the NET Bible.

35. Rius-Camps and Read-Heimerdinger, *Message of Acts*, pp. 56, 104.

36. Martin M. Culy and Mikeal C. Parsons, *Acts: A Handbook on the Greek Text* (Waco, TX: Baylor University Press, 2003), p. 13, say, ‘It is unclear whether this term refers to “wives”, or to “women” in general. Given the fact that the subject, “all these”, refers to a list of men, a reference to “wives” is superficially the most natural way to take *σὺν γυναῖξίν*’; Kirsopp Lake and Henry J. Cadbury, additionally note: ‘It is slightly supported also by the *καί* before *Μαριάμ*, which suggests that she was not one of the *γυναῖκες*, and thus the *γυναῖκες* means “wives”’ (*English Translation and Commentary*, in F.J. Foakes Jackson and Kirsopp Lake [eds.], *The Beginnings of Christianity: Part I: The Acts of the Apostles*, IV [London: Macmillan, 1933], p. 11).

37. Rius-Camps and Read-Heimerdinger, *Message of Acts*, p. 56; Metzger translates the D variant as ‘with their wives and children’ (*Textual Commentary*, p. 284).

38. Conzelmann writes, ‘When D adds *καὶ τέκνοις*, “and children”, it shows that it no longer understands that Luke portrays those who are present as witnesses’ (*Acts of the Apostles*, p. 9).

39. As Bruce states, ‘playing down the independent status of the women’ (*Acts of the Apostles: Greek Text*, p. 106). See also Witherington, *Acts of the Apostles*, p. 113 n. 39; Witherington, ‘Anti-Feminist Tendencies’, p. 82; Culy and Parsons, *Acts*, p. 13; Haenchen, *Acts of the Apostles*, p. 154 n. 3. See also Reimer, *Women in the Acts*, p. 232.

generic sense of ‘women’ rather than ‘wives of the apostles’, including those mentioned as disciples in the Gospel of Luke (Lk. 8.1-3; 23.55; 24.1, 9, 22).⁴⁰ It also appears that this account in Acts 1.14 is one where *Lukas* has placed women in parallel with men to emphasize their mutual involvement in the gospel (cf. Ananias and Sapphira in Acts 5; Priscilla and Aquila in Acts 18; Felix and Drusilla in Acts 24; Agrippa and Bernice in Acts 25; the summary statement in Acts 5.14; Paul’s persecutions in Acts 9.2; and Dionysius and Damaris in Acts 17.34).⁴¹

Consequently, Codex D appears to limit the meaning of the text in Acts 1.14 so as to place women in a more subordinate role in the early Church. This limiting may well imply that the scribe recognized the liberating implications of the Alexandrian text’s description of women as participants equal with men in the upper room as they waited for the promise of the Spirit.

b. *Acts 16.14-15, 40 (Lydia and her Household)*

1. *The Context of Acts 16.14-15.* This is *Lukas*’s sixth panel in the book of Acts, built between two summary statements in 16.5 and 19.20. On one hand, this is a unit of continuation in that Paul’s missionary journeys are continued. The fifth and sixth panels seem to have a seamless union where the mission is prepared for (Acts 16.1-5), and then commences (from Acts 16.6). On the other hand, this is a unit of distinctions in that Paul was demonstrated ‘before men’ to be a true apostle with the true gospel message for all peoples in the fifth panel (Acts 12.25–16.5), but in this panel Paul is demonstrated ‘before God’ to be a true apostle with the true gospel message for all peoples. *Lukas* emphasizes the divine direction and control of the Pauline mission in these units. The irony and sovereignty of God is seen in Paul being forbidden to preach the word in Asia (Acts 16.6), but by the end of the panel all of Asia has heard the word of God (19.10).

40. Witherington, *Acts of the Apostles*, pp. 113-14; Bruce, *Acts of the Apostles: Greek Text*, p. 106; Haenchen, *Acts of the Apostles*, p. 154. As Culy writes, ‘Given the fact that Acts is the second of two volumes, however, and the fact that Luke spends a significant amount of time in the first chapter refreshing the memory of Theophilus, it would also be natural to “assume that Luke means the same women he has mentioned at the end of his first volume—female disciples (cf. Luke 23.55; 24.1, 9, 22)”’ (*Acts*, p. 13); Reimer, *Women in the Acts*, pp. 232-33.

41. Witherington, *Women in the Earliest Churches*, pp. 143-45.

Because the remaining textual variants discussed in this study occur in this sixth panel, its macro-structure follows as a guide to context:

The Sovereign Mission at Philippi (16.6-40)
Prologue: The sovereign call to Macedonia (16.6-10)
a. The sovereign conversion of a woman (16.11-15)
b. The sovereign conversion of a man (16.16-34)
Epilogue: The sovereign vindication of God's servants (16.35-40)
The Movement of the True Gospel Mission from Thessalonica to Corinth (17.1-18.17)
Ministry toward the Jews (17.1-15)
—Negative: The mission to the Thessalonians (17.1-9)
—Positive: The mission to the Bereans (17.10-15)
Ministry toward the Gentiles (17.16-18.17)
—Negative: The mission to the Athenians (17.16-34)
—Positive: The mission to the Corinthians (18.1-17)
The Climax of the Gospel Mission in Asia at Ephesus (18.18-19.20)
Ephesus is bypassed again to leave Priscilla and Aquila there (18.18-23)
Priscilla and Aquila instruct Apollos (18.24-28)
Paul apostolically bestows the Spirit on about twelve men (19.1-7)
Paul speaks the word of God so that all of Asia hears it (19.8-10)
Paul demonstrates the uniqueness of God's power: healings, exorcism, repentance (19.11-19)

Witherington correctly identifies *Lukas's* parallel structure in the conversion of one woman, Lydia (16.12-15, 40), and one man, the jailer (16.23-39), as a means of expressing parity in God's plan of salvation.⁴²

2. *Textual Variant in Acts 16.14*. Epp argues through a phrase added at the end of Acts 18.8 (πιστεύοντες τῷ θεῷ) that Codex D is portraying a favoritism towards Gentile proselytes over Jewish proselytes, the latter of whom would have been described with κύριος following πιστεύειν.⁴³ However, this argument seems to break down when it comes to the variant regarding Lydia in Acts 16.14:

N-A ²⁷ (Vaticanus)	Codex D*
καί τις γυνή ὀνόματι Λυδία, καί τις γυνή ὀνόματι Λυδία, πορφυρόπωλις πόλεως Θυατείρων πορφυρόπωλις τῆς πόλεως σεβομένη τὸν θεόν, ἤκουεν, ἧς ὁ Θυατείρων σεβομένη τὸν	

42. Witherington, *Women in the Earliest Churches*, pp. 147-48.

43. Epp, *Theological Tendency*, pp. 87-91; see also Witherington, 'Anti-Feminist Tendencies', p. 83.

κύριος διήνοιξεν τὴν καρδίαν κύριον,⁴⁵ ἤκουσεν, ἥς ὁ κύριος προσέχειν τοῖς λαλουμένοις ὑπὸ διήνοιξεν τὴν καρδίαν προσέχειν [τοῦ]⁴⁴ Παύλου. τοῖς λαλουμένοις ὑπὸ Παύλου.

Codex D's change of θεόν to κύριον in Acts 16.14 seems to be a move in exactly the opposite direction from Epp's thesis because, if he is right, Codex D is presenting Lydia as a Jewish proselyte through the use of σεβομένη τὸν κύριον rather than a Gentile one, even though in Acts 16.15 Codex D substitutes θεῶ for κυρίῳ intimating that she is a Gentile proselyte.⁴⁶

One might understand why this switch occurs in Codex D since Lydia's conversion is occurring both in a Gentile area and in a contextual setting of Paul searching for a synagogue. It appears in Acts 16.13 that Paul went outside of the city to attend a Jewish synagogue, but found none: 'on the Sabbath day we went outside the gate to a riverside, where we were supposing that there would be a place of prayer; and we sat down and began speaking to the women who had assembled'.⁴⁷ Bruce notes that this may imply that there were very few resident Jews in the city because it only took ten Jewish men to organize a synagogue.⁴⁸ Nevertheless, based upon Paul's search for a synagogue, Bruce seems to conclude that Lydia was a Jewish proselyte.⁴⁹ It seems that Codex D flips back and forth describing Lydia through the lens of the immediate context as a Jewish proselyte in 16.14 (σεβομένη τὸν κύριον) and through a broader lens as a Gentile, viewing Philippi as a place where Gentiles would live in 16.15 (εἰ κεκρίκατέ με πιστὴν τῷ θεῷ εἶναι). Witherington suggests that the term σεβομένη connotes Lydia as a

44. Codex B does not include the article τοῦ before Παύλου. In this sense, it comports with Codex D.

45. The term κύριον is found in D* and not in D, where θεόν is employed; see Ropes, *Text of Acts*, p. 155.

46. Epp does recognize that v. 14 is a difficulty to his view, but attempts to work his way around it when he says, 'If this difficulty is insurperable, then xvi.15 must be taken as the exception which proves the rule, or else must be considered a special, later reading of D' (*Theological Tendency*, p. 90). This argument reads as special pleading.

47. Acts 16.13 in the NASB.

48. F.F. Bruce, *The Book of Acts* (NICNT; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, rev. edn, 1988), pp. 310-11 n. 37.

49. Bruce, *Book of Acts*, p. 359.

‘Gentile who worships the biblical God’, but offers no particular support based upon the terms for God as argued by Epp.⁵⁰

Consequently, it appears that this particular textual variant does not offer any nuanced insight into Codex D’s perspective on women. With either reading in 16.14 or 16.15, Lydia is viewed as a proselyte; more cannot be said.

3. *Textual Variant in Acts 16.15.* In Acts 16.15, Codex D adds to the narrative by placing the term ‘all’, $\pi\acute{\alpha}\varsigma$, before ‘house’ with the article, $\acute{\omicron}$ οἶκος.

N–A ²⁷ (Vaticanus)	Codex D
ὡς δὲ ἐβαπτίσθη καὶ ὁ οἶκος αὐτῆς	ὡς δὲ ἐβαπτίσθη καὶ πᾶς ὁ οἶκος αὐτῆς

This seems to be a characteristic expansion by Codex D,⁵¹ but the reason for the expansion is not clear. If Codex D was intending to minimize Lydia, one would not expect an expansion to identify her whole household as being baptized. The household probably included servants and children, although Witherington notes that baptism of a household may not have always included a commitment of faith by every member, since the head of a household often determined the religion of that household.⁵² If that is the case, the addition by Codex D may have been an attempt to emphasize the *conversion of all* rather than the social alignment of all with the head of the house. If so, this may be a case where the expansion of Codex D compliments Lydia rather than detracts from her. It is also true that the expansion ‘all’ may not be an attempt by Codex D to say anything about Lydia, but to comment upon the effect of Paul’s words on everyone in the household. Therefore, the theological significance of Codex D is indeterminate in this passage.

4. *Textual Variants in Acts 16.40.* The textual variants in Acts 16.40 may provide some slight insight into a concern for Codex D.

N–A ²⁷ (Vaticanus)	Codex D
ἐξελθόντες δὲ ἀπὸ τῆς φυλακῆς εἰσῆλθον πρὸς τὴν Λυδίαν καὶ ἦλθον	ἐξελθόντες δὲ ἐκ τῆς φυλακῆς πρὸς τὴν Λυδίαν καὶ

50. Witherington, *Acts of the Apostles*, p. 493.

51. Metzger, *Textual Commentary*, p. 447.

52. Witherington, *Acts of the Apostles*, p. 493 n. 102.

ἰδόντες	παρεκάλεσαν	τοὺς	ἰδόντες	τοὺς	ἀδελφούς
ἀδελφούς	καὶ ἐξῆλθαν.		διηγήσαντο	ὅσα	ἐποίησεν
			κύριος	αὐτοῖς,	παρεκαλέσαντες
			αὐτούς,	καὶ	ἐξῆλθαν.

Codex D first of all changes the verb in the first part of v. 40 from εἰσέρχομαι, conveying the sense of entering into the house,⁵³ to ἔρχομαι with the more generic sense of coming from one place to another.⁵⁴ This change may have been an attempt to protect the reputation of Paul and those with him by bringing him only up to Lydia's house, and not into her house. However, if this was a concern of Codex D, one wonders why there is not a variant reading at Acts 16.15 where Lydia urges the team to stay in her house (εἰσελθόντες εἰς τὸν οἶκόν μου μένετε), also using εἰσέρχομαι. Perhaps Codex D does not make the change in Acts 16.15 because the text emphasizes that Lydia prevailed upon them (παραβιάσατο ἡμᾶς), but in Acts 16.40, the team is coming to Lydia's house on their way out of prison and as they are departing the region, so the writer of Codex D emphasizes that they did not go into her home.

The second significant textual variant in this unit is the sentence, 'and they related the things that the Lord had done to them' (διηγήσαντο ὅσα ἐποίησεν κύριος αὐτοῖς). This expansion of Codex B's 'they encouraged the brethren' (παρεκάλεσαν τοὺς ἀδελφούς) is an attempt not only to identify the content of the team's encouragement, but to give the Lord the credit for their release from prison. Perhaps from reading 16.37-38 one might have the impression that Paul was the mastermind behind their deliverance; therefore Codex D inserts an amplification that identifies the mover behind their deliverance as the Lord, which provides encouragement to the brethren.

5. *Conclusion.* Unlike Codex D's expansion in Acts 1.14, the textual variants in Acts 16.14, 15, and 40 do not reveal a great deal about Codex

53. William Arndt, Frederick W. Danker, Walter Bauer, *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 3rd edn, 2000) (further referred to as BDAG), s.v. εἰσέρχομαι p. 294; Johannes P. Louw and Eugene Albert Nida, *Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament: Based on Semantic Domains* (New York: United Bible Societies, 2nd edn, 1996), I, p. 194.

54. BDAG, s.v. ἔρχομαι, p. 393; Louw and Nida, *Semantic Domains*, I, pp. 182, 192.

D's theological concern for women. In Acts 16.14, the writer seems to switch back and forth between κύριος and θεός so as to make the identity of Lydia as a Jewish or Gentile proselyte indeterminable. The expansion in Acts 16.15 to πᾶς ὁ οἶκος αὐτῆς may be an endorsement of Lydia, or of God's work of conversion through Paul; it is hard to know for sure. The change of the verb in Acts 16.40 from εἰσέρχομαι to ἔρχομαι may reflect an attempt to keep the team from entering Lydia's home, but if so, one wonders why the same verb was not changed in Acts 16.15. Finally, the addition to Acts 16.40 of διηγῆσαντο ὅσα ἐποίησεν κύριος αὐτοῖς does seem to reflect a theological concern to give credit to the Lord for the team's deliverance, but this concern does not reflect directly on women. While the writer of Codex D appears to make expansions out of theological concerns, those discussed in this section offer little light on Codex D's view of women.

c. Acts 17.4, 12 (Prominent Women)

1. *The Context of Acts 17.4, 12.* Broadly speaking, the context of this unit was laid out in the outline above. In Acts 17.1-15, Paul followed his usual pattern of first reaching out to the Jews; then in Acts 17.16–18.7 he ministered to the Gentiles. Each broad unit includes a duality and balance. As Paul reached out to the Jews, the message was rejected by the Thessalonians (17.1-9), but accepted by the Bereans (17.10-15). Acts 17.1-9 describes the Jewish mission to the Thessalonians. Paul and Silas passed through Amphipolis and Apollonia, and came to Thessalonica where there was a Jewish synagogue, and where Paul argued for Jesus as Messiah from the Scriptures for three weeks. Acts 17.4 describes some of the positive fruit of Paul's mission as some were persuaded, including God-fearing Greeks and quite a few prominent women.

2. *Textual Variant in Acts 17.4.* The textual variant in Acts 17.4, centered upon the term γυνή, provides significant insight into the theological disposition of the writer of Codex D toward women.

N-A ²⁷ (Vaticanus)	Codex D
καί τινες ἐξ αὐτῶν ἐπείσθησαν καὶ προσεκληρώθησαν τῷ Παύλῳ καὶ	καί τινες ἐξ αὐτῶν ἐπείσθησαν καὶ προσεκληρώθησαν τῷ Παύλῳ καὶ

[τῶ]⁵⁵ Σιλᾶ, τῶν τε σεβομένων τῶ Σιλαίᾳ τῇ διδαχῇ πολλοὶ Ἑλλήνων πλῆθος πολὺ,⁵⁶ γυναικῶν τῶν σεβομένων καὶ Ἑλλήνων τε τῶν πρώτων οὐκ⁵⁷ ὀλίγαι.⁵⁸ πλῆθος πολὺ, καὶ γυναῖκες τῶν πρώτων οὐκ ὀλίγαι.

The significant difference for this study between the two readings is that the Alexandrian text, γυναικῶν τε τῶν πρώτων, has the sense of ‘prominent/leading women’, whereas the text in Codex D, καὶ γυναῖκες τῶν πρώτων means ‘wives of prominent/leading men’. Although the Alexandrian text (γυναικῶν τε τῶν πρώτων) could be translated as ‘wives of the leading men’ (since the genitive plural forms of πρῶτος for masculine and feminine look the same), Codex D καὶ γυναῖκες τῶν πρώτων, makes such a reading explicit by changing the case of γυνή from genitive, which agrees with πρώτων, to nominative, so that the genitive πρώτων specifically refers to men.⁵⁹ By making this change, Codex D has eliminated the possibility that the adjective πρώτων could refer to the women.⁶⁰ Although Ropes identifies Codex D as the ‘better reading’ because the Alexandrian text could easily have been altered for grammatical uniformity,⁶¹ Metzger prefers the reading in the Alexandrian text because of its manuscript support and because it is more likely that copyists would have replaced the connective τε with the more common καί.⁶²

Although the Alexandrian text is ambiguous, if γυναικῶν refers to ‘women’ rather than ‘wives’, the meaning would be significant. The term for ‘prominent’, πρῶτος, was used in the New Testament to describe people who were first, foremost, and most prominent in a social setting.⁶³ It was used to describe Peter as the ‘first’ among the apostles (Mt. 10.2), the ‘first’ one who will be ‘last’ in the future kingdom (Mt. 19.30), the ‘leading’ men among the people who were trying to destroy

55. Unlike Codex B, the N–A²⁷ includes the article τῶ before the proper noun Σιλᾶ.

56. The N–A²⁷ reads πολὺ.

57. Codex B reads οὐχ.

58. Codex B reads ὀλίγαι.

59. See Culy and Parsons, *Acts*, p. 326.

60. Metzger, *Textual Commentary*, p. 453; Lake and Cadbury, *English Translation and Commentary*, p. 204; Witherington, ‘Anti-Feminist Tendencies’, p. 82.

61. Ropes, *Text of Acts*, p. 162.

62. Metzger, *Textual Commentary*, p. 453.

63. BDAG, s.v. πρῶτος, p. 893.

Jesus (Lk. 19.47), the ‘leading’ men of Galilee for whom Herod gave a banquet on his birthday (Mk 6.21), and the ‘leading’ men among the Jews who brought charges against Paul (Acts 25.2; see also Acts 28.17). Therefore, for πρῶτος to be applied to women is to identify them as those who are politically on a par with men in society—part of a social elite. Such a view also seems to comport with what was known about Macedonian women at this time.⁶⁴

While it is possible that the scribe of Codex D was simply clarifying an ambiguous reading in Codex B, it is also possible that the change plays down the prominence of women. The motive behind this textual change may become clearer when a similar phrase appears in Acts 17.12 below.

3. *Textual Variant in Acts 17.12.* After the uproar by the Jews in Acts 17.5-9, the believers from Thessalonica sent Paul and Silas away by night to Berea, where they again went to a Jewish synagogue (Acts 17.10-11). As *Lukas* describes the identity of those who believed in Acts 17.12, a textual problem arises that is similar to the one found in Acts 17.4 above.

N–A ²⁷ (Vaticanus)	Codex D
πολλοὶ μὲν οὖν ἐξ αὐτῶν ἐπίστευσαν καὶ τῶν Ἑλληνίδων γυναικῶν τῶν εὐσχημόνων καὶ ἀνδρῶν οὐκ ὀλίγοι.	τινὲς μὲν οὖν αὐτῶν ἐπίστευσαν, τινὲς δὲ ἠπίστησαν, καὶ τῶν Ἑλλήνων καὶ τῶν εὐσχημόνων ἄνδρες καὶ γυναῖκες ἱκανοὶ ἐπίστευσαν.

The difference between these readings is significant, and sheds light on what Codex D appeared to be doing in Acts 17.4. Whereas the Alexandrian text might be translated: ‘Therefore many of them believed, along with a number of prominent Greek women and men’,⁶⁵ the variant in Codex D can be translated: ‘Some of them therefore believed, but some did not believe, and many of the Greeks, both men and women of the better class believed.’⁶⁶

64. Bruce, *Book of Acts*, p. 323; Witherington, *Women in the Earliest Churches*, pp. 11-13.

65. NASB.

66. Bruce, *Book of Acts*, p. 326 n. 20. Ramsay translates Codex D more literally, but the sense is the same: ‘And of the Greeks and of those of honourable estate, men and women in considerable numbers believed’ (William M. Ramsay, *The Church in*

Everything is parsed ‘more judiciously’ in Codex D’s alternative reading; Metzger identifies this as a smoothing out of the text so as to provide better Greek.⁶⁷ Instead of focusing upon *many* believing, Codex D states that *some* believed and adds that *some did not believe*.⁶⁸ But even more importantly for this study, Codex D switches the order from ‘women and men’ (γυναικῶν τῶν εὐσχημόνων καὶ ἀνδρῶν) to ‘men and women’ (τῶν εὐσχημόνων ἄνδρες καὶ γυναῖκες ἱκανοί) thereby reversing the priority given to women in the Alexandrian text.⁶⁹ This change in Acts 17.12 leads many commentators to interpret Codex D’s alternative reading in Acts 17.4 to be more than a clarification of an ambiguous text; it is rather an intentional move to play down the importance of women.⁷⁰

In both the Alexandrian text and Codex D, a strong adjective, εὐσχήμων, is used to describe these prominent women, meaning those who were ‘especially worthy of public admiration, prominent, of high standing/repute, noble’⁷¹ (see Acts 13.50). This is similar to Acts 17.4 where the adjective ‘prominent’ is employed (πρῶτος). Witherington suggests that εὐσχήμων probably refers to both men and women, but that placement of ‘women’ before the adjective (γυναικῶν τῶν εὐσχημόνων καὶ ἀνδρῶν) suggests that more women than men believed the message.⁷² In any case, the order in the Alexandrian text

the Roman Empire before A.D. 170 [London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1897; repr. Grand Rapids: Baker, 1979], pp. 160-61).

67. Metzger, *Textual Commentary*, p. 454.

68. Concerning this expansion, Ramsay writes, ‘Considering the mutual jealousy between Greeks of different districts which has characterized their history alike in ancient times and at the present day, we may here perhaps see that a native of Asia seizes the opportunity of emphasizing the fact that some disbelieved, whereas the received text merely says that “many of them believed”’ (*The Church*, p. 160).

69. Bruce, *Book of Acts*, p. 326 n. 20; Metzger, *Textual Commentary*, p. 454.

70. Bruce, *Acts of the Apostles: Greek Text*, pp. 369, 374; Culy and Parsons, *Acts*, pp. 326, 330; Ropes describes the activity here and in Acts 18 as an “‘anti-feminist” tendency’. *Text of Acts*, p. ccxxxiv. Haenchen writes, ‘The emphasis on noble women is here effaced’ (*Acts of the Apostles*, p. 508 n. 5); Witherington, *Acts of the Apostles*, p. 509 n. 171; Conzelmann, *Acts of the Apostles*, p. 135; Ramsay writes, ‘The omission [of Damaris in 17:34] may be compared with the change in the second part of xvii.12. The reason for both changes is the same: they are due to dislike to the prominence assigned to women in the accepted text’ (Ramsay, *The Church*, p. 161).

71. BDAG, s.v. εὐσχήμων, p. 414.

72. Witherington, *Acts of the Apostles*, p. 509 n. 171.

does support priority of women over men. Just as a listing of the apostles emphasizes an order of importance (Mk 3.16-19), so listing women ahead of men suggests an order of importance. This theme of order and priority is one of which Codex D is aware, as will become more evident in the discussion of Priscilla and Aquila below in Acts 18.26.

4. *Conclusion.* The scribe(s) of Codex D demonstrates a much stronger theological bias against women in Acts 17.4 and Acts 17.12 than in Acts 16.14, 15, and 40. This bias seems to be more in line with the intention behind the variant in Acts 1.14. In Acts 17.4, Codex D turns what is, at most, an ambivalent text, into one where women are only the wives of leading men in the community. Even if that is the proper way of understanding the Alexandrian text, Bruce is right to emphasize that the initiative to believe was not their husbands' but theirs.⁷³ But the Alexandrian text allows for the women themselves to be the ones identified as prominent in society. Likewise, in Acts 17.12, the women are emphasized by being listing before the men, and before the adjective which describes them as socially prominent.⁷⁴ Codex D reduces their importance by placing them after the men with the adjective explicitly modifying both of them. On the other hand, by *Lukas's* emphasis upon women, he contextually includes them in the group of those who 'received the word with great eagerness, examining the Scriptures daily to see whether these things were so',⁷⁵ thereby allowing them to study Scripture and emphasizing their freedom and prominence in this new gospel.⁷⁶

These passages demonstrate a theological tendency of Codex D to flatten and deemphasize women as prominent players in *Lukas's* story. They are present, but only in supporting roles as wives and/or alongside of, and subordinate to, men. These changes by Codex D only make the statements in favor of women by Codex B more forceful. *Lukas* sees women as prominent in society, and now in the new community being formed. They are not second-class citizens, but leaders among those following this new way of faith.

73. Bruce, *Book of Acts*, p. 323.

74. Witherington writes, 'Interestingly, in each passage it is the women, not the men, who are qualified by words indicating their importance or eminence' (*Women in the Earliest Churches*, p. 144).

75. NASB.

76. See Witherington, *Women in the Earliest Churches*, p. 144.

d. *Acts 17.34 (The Omission of Damaris)*

1. *The Context of Acts 17.34.* While Paul was in Athens waiting for Silas and Timothy, he became disturbed over the idolatry in the city. He began proclaiming the word of God in the synagogue and the market place, until at last he spoke before the Gentile philosophers at the Areopagus, where he urged a resistant people to repent from their idolatry and turn to the true God who is Creator and will one day judge the world through his vindicated Servant (Acts 17.16-31). The response to Paul's message was mixed, in that some mocked him, others wanted to hear more about his teaching some other day, and some believed (Acts 17.32-34). *Lukas* particularly identifies those who believed, included Dionysius the Areopagite, and a woman named Damaris (Acts 17.34).

2. *Textual Variant in Acts 17.34.* It is with the identification of women among those who believed in Paul's message that the textual problem in Codex D arises.

N-A ²⁷ (Vaticanus)	Codex D
τινὲς δὲ ἄνδρες κολληθέντες αὐτῷ ἐπίστευσαν, ἐν οἷς καὶ Διονύσιος [ὁ] ⁷⁷ Ἀρεοπαγίτης καὶ γυνὴ ὀνόματι Δάμαρις καὶ ἕτεροι σὺν αὐτοῖς.	τινὲς δὲ ἄνδρες ἐκολλήθησαν αὐτῷ, ἐπίστευσαν, ἐν οἷς καὶ Διονυσίος τις Ἀρεοπαγίτης εὐσχήμων καὶ ἕτεροι σὺν αὐτοῖς.

Although this textual variant may reveal Codex D's theological tendency against women, its transmission makes conclusions tentative. One might translate Codex B as: 'But some men joined him and believed, among whom also were Dionysius the Areopagite and a woman named Damaris and others with them.'⁷⁸ Metzger translates the significant changes in Codex D as 'among whom also was a *certain* Dionysius, an Areopagite of *high standing*, and others with them'.⁷⁹ In particular, Codex D omits 'and a woman named Damaris' (καὶ γυνὴ ὀνόματι Δάμαρις) and adds the adjective, 'prominent' or 'high standing' (εὐσχήμων).

Ramsay considers this omission to be deliberate, intentional, and another expression of the anti-feminist tendencies of Codex D,⁸⁰ while

77. N-A²⁷ includes the article, whereas it is excluded from Codex B.

78. NASB.

79. Metzger, *Textual Commentary*, p. 459.

80. Ramsay, *The Church*, p. 161; see also Witherington, 'Anti-Feminist Tendencies', p. 82; Witherington, *Acts of the Apostles*, p. 532 n. 262.

Ropes understands it as a mistaken attempt to do away with a gloss in Codex E of γυνή τιμία from *mulier honesta* in e.⁸¹ Ropes also understands the adjective added in Codex D, εὐσχήμων, to be a survivor of the gloss,⁸² while Metzger thinks a ‘gallant scribe’ added it after Δάμαρις, because the term is only used of women elsewhere in Acts (13.50; 17.12). He thinks the adjective was left in by a later scribe when he deleted the name Damaris.⁸³ Ramsay too argues that εὐσχήμων was added to the name of Damaris because of its use in Acts 13.50 and 17.12, but when the name Damaris was excised, the adjective remained in the wrong place as it now reads in Codex D.⁸⁴ Witherington argues that the textual evidence does not support so many textual emendations in D.⁸⁵ In the end, Cadbury abandons any claim to accurately reconstruct the history of εὐσχήμων in Codex D.⁸⁶

If the deletion of καὶ γυνὴ ὀνόματι Δάμαρις in Codex D was a process of mistakes by a number of scribes, then it is not possible to impugn any theological bias to Codex D from this variant. But if the removal was intentional, there is a clear act to reduce the place of women in the text.⁸⁷ Any conclusions depend upon a reconstruction of the textual evidence. The heart of the problem in explaining Codex D as an intentional excision of the woman’s name Damaris is the use of the adjective εὐσχήμων to modify Dionysius, since elsewhere in Acts the adjective is only used of women (13.40; 17.20). However, it is used of Joseph of Arimathaea, in Mk 15.43. The problem of the placement of

81. Ropes, *Text of Acts*, p. 170; see also Metzger, *Textual Commentary*, p. 459.

82. Ropes, *Text of Acts*, p. 170.

83. Metzger, *Textual Commentary*, pp. 459-60; Bruce seems to follow this reconstruction when he writes, ‘The original form of the Western text perhaps described her as εὐσχήμων (“of honorable estate”), like the God-fearing Greek women of Beroea (v. 12)’ (*Book of Acts*, p. 344 n. 98); see also Haenchen, *Acts of the Apostles*, p. 526 n. 5.

84. Ramsay, *The Church*, p. 161.

85. Witherington argues against Cadbury and Ramsay when he says, ‘Only D omits the phrase καὶ γυνὴ ὀνόματι Δάμαρις, and only D inserts εὐσχήμων. If εὐσχήμων was original or even early and ascribed to Damaris, then there likely would be some other evidence that it was not simply D’s addition’ (‘Anti-Feminist Tendencies’, p. 82 n. 5).

86. Cadbury, in Lake and Cadbury, *English Translation and Commentary*, p. 220, says, ‘It must be admitted that no more clumsy way could be found of saying that the converts included one woman, but I do not know the answer to any of these questions.’

87. Ramsay, *The Church*, p. 161.

εὐσχήμων in Codex D is that Dionysius has already been described with the prestigious title of Ἄρεοπαγίτης—as a member of the counsel or high court of the Areopagus.⁸⁸ Therefore one wonders why Codex D also calls him εὐσχήμων; this seems redundant.⁸⁹ Cadbury rings true when he says that the use of εὐσχήμων seems like a clumsy way to say that Damaris was present and has been deleted;⁹⁰ but the duplicative description of Dionysius is also problematic.

Therefore, the most one may be able to say on this problem is that it is indeterminate whether Codex D is showing a theological bias, since it is not clear whether the omission of Damaris was intentional. Witherington and Ramsay's strong assertions of D's anti-feminist bias in this passage⁹¹ seem premature, since there is not enough evidence to satisfactorily explain the existence of the adjective εὐσχήμων in Codex D. Theories abound, but conclusions are only as strong as their underlying arguments.

On the positive side, the Alexandrian text does identify Damaris by name as one of the people⁹² who joined and believed Paul. If Codex D's omission was intentional, it only highlights how *Lukas* in Codex B is emphasizing women as part of the new community that God is building through Paul. Alongside of men like Dionysius are women like Damaris, who are receiving the word about Christ and joining the Church—even in a Gentile land like Athens, where most scoff at God's wisdom.⁹³

e. Acts 18.2-3, 7, 26 (Priscilla and Aquila)

1. *The Context of Acts 18.2-3.* In Acts 17.1-15, Paul followed his usual pattern of first reaching out to the Jews; then in Acts 17.16–18.7 he ministered to the Gentiles. We have just discussed the textual variants in the negative passage where Paul reached out to the Gentiles in Athens

88. BDAG, s.v. Ἄρεοπαγίτης, p. 129.

89. Metzger, *Textual Commentary*, p. 459.

90. Cadbury, in Lake and Cadbury, *English Translation and Commentary*, p. 220.

91. Ramsay, *The Church*, p. 161; Witherington, 'Anti-Feminist Tendencies', p. 82; Witherington, *Acts of the Apostles*, p. 532 n. 262.

92. The actual term is ἀνὴρ which is usually translated as 'man' or 'husband'; but in light of the context which includes Damaris, it has more of the sense of ἄνθρωπος. BDAG offers the suggestion that, 'the term was probably chosen in anticipation of the contrasting γυναῖς (is Damaris the wife of one of the men?)', s.v. ἀνὴρ, p. 79.

93. See Witherington's discussion of parallelism between one man and one female in this passage (*Women in the Earliest Churches*, pp. 143-44).

(17.16-34), now we move to those variants in the positive passage where Paul preached to the Corinthians (18.1-17). The first set of textual variants arises in Acts 18.1-5. The setting is after the event in Athens, when Paul went to Corinth, where he met a Jewish couple to live and work with, and proclaimed Jesus to the Jews and the Greeks.

2. *Textual Variants in Acts 18.2-3.* Although there are numerous textual variants involving Codex D in Acts 18, for the purpose of this study, I am only going to focus on those that relate to women. Acts 18.2-3 describes Paul's introduction to Aquila and Priscilla and reads as follows:

N-A ²⁷ (Vaticanus)	Codex D
<p>2 καὶ εὐρών τινα Ἰουδαῖον ὀνόματι Ἀκύλαν, Ποντικὸν τῷ γένει προσφάτως ἐληλυθότα ἀπὸ τῆς Ἰταλίας καὶ Πρίσκιλλαν γυναῖκα αὐτοῦ, διὰ τὸ διατεταχέναι <Κλαύδιον> χωρίζεσθαι πάντας τοὺς Ἰουδαίους ἀπὸ τῆς Ῥώμης, προσῆλθεν αὐτοῖς</p>	<p>2 καὶ εὐρών τινα Ἰουδαῖον ὀνόματι Ἀκύλαν, Ποντικὸν τῷ γένει προσφάτως ἐληλυθ<ότ>α ἀπὸ τῆς Ἰταλίας καὶ Πρίσκιλλαν γυναῖκα αὐτοῦ, διὰ το τεταχέναι Κλαύδιον χωρίζεσθαι πάντας Ἰουδαίους ἀπὸ τῆς Ῥώμης, οἱ καὶ κατωκησαν εἰς τὴν Ἀχαΐαν, προσῆλθεν αὐτῷ ὁ Παῦλος.</p>
<p>3 καὶ διὰ τὸ ὁμότεχνον εἶναι ἔμενον παρ' αὐτοῖς καὶ ἠργάζοντο.⁹⁴ ἦσαν γὰρ σκηνοποιοὶ τῇ τέχνῃ.</p>	<p>3 καὶ διὰ τὸ ὁμότεχνον ἔμενον πρὸς αὐτούς, καὶ ἠργάζετο.</p>

While there are numerous textual differences between the two codices, the significant variants in these verses are the following. In v. 2, Codex B reads, 'he [Paul] approached them [Aquila and Priscilla]' (προσῆλθεν αὐτοῖς), but Codex D reads, 'Paul approached him [Aquila]' (προσῆλθεν αὐτῷ ὁ Παῦλος). Although subtle, this change seems to focus upon Paul approaching the man and not the woman. This variant reflects the bias in Codex D to move women, in this case Priscilla, out of the center of the activity. Then in v. 3, Codex B reads, 'they were working' (ἠργάζοντο), using the third person plural imperfect of ἐργάζομαι, while Codex D says that only Paul worked (ἠργάζετο),

94. The N-A²⁷ actually follows Codex D here reading the third person singular, ἠργάζετο, unlike Codex B which reads the third person plural, ἠργάζοντο.

using the third person singular of ἐργάζομαι.⁹⁵ Codex D also deletes the phrase from Codex B ‘for they were tent-makers by trade’ (γὰρ σκηνοποιοὶ τῇ τέχνῃ).

These small changes all have the effect of removing Priscilla out of the reader’s view. In this initial introduction, Priscilla is only identified as Aquila’s wife (Πρίσκιλλαν γυναῖκα αὐτοῦ). Then in Codex D, Paul is not approaching ‘them’ as a couple, but only the man, Aquila. In addition, they (meaning Paul, Aquila and Priscilla) are not working their craft together, only Paul is working. And that is because they (Paul, Aquila, and Priscilla) do not even share a craft together as tentmakers. Instead of making Paul a partner with the husband-and-wife team of Aquila and Priscilla, Paul is described as working with a man, Aquila, who happens to also have a wife named Priscilla.

3. *Textual Variant in Acts 18.7.* After the introduction in Acts 18.1-3, the reader is told that Paul argued in the synagogue every Sabbath persuading Jews and Greeks (Acts 18.4). When Timothy and Silas joined Paul in Corinth, Paul spent all of his time proclaiming Jesus as the Christ to the Jews (Acts 18.5). However, when the Jews rejected Paul’s teaching, he left the synagogue and went among those who believed his message. The particular identity of what it was that Paul left is the subject of the next textual variant in Acts 18.7.

N–A ²⁷ (Vaticanus)	Codex D
καὶ μεταβὰς ἐκεῖθεν, ἦλθεν ⁹⁶ εἰς οἰκίαν τινὸς ὀνόματι Τιτίου Ἰούστου σεβομένου τὸν θεόν, οὗ ἡ οἰκία ἦν συνομοροῦσα τῇ συναγωγῇ.	μεταβὰς [δὲ ἀπὸ Ἀκύ]λα [εἰσ]ἦλθεν εἰς τὸν [οἰ]κό]ν τινος ὀνόματι Ἰούστου σεβομένου τὸν θεόν, οὗ ἡ οἰκία ἦν συνομοροῦσα τῇ συναγωγῇ.

Although there are a number of textual variants between the two codices in Acts 18.7, the one of significance for this study is the expansion in Codex D that states that Paul moved from Aquila to the house of Justus (μεταβὰς [δὲ ἀπὸ Ἀκύ]λα [εἰσ]ἦλθεν εἰς τὸν [οἰ]κό]ν τινος ὀνόματι Ἰούστου). Beyond the fact that it is unlikely that the Jewish

95. Again, note that N–A²⁷ actually follows Codex D here reading the third person singular of the imperfect, ἠργάζετο, unlike Codex B which reads the third person plural, ἠργάζοντο.

96. Although the N–A²⁷ reads εἰσῆλθεν from εἰσέρχομαι following D*, Codex B employs the verb ἦλθεν from ἔρχομαι.

opposition would have caused Paul to change his place of residence⁹⁷ rather than his location of teaching,⁹⁸ the text in Codex D also implies that the house that Paul is going from is not Aquila and Priscilla's house, but only Aquila's. Once again, the woman, Priscilla, is removed from the scene.

3. *Textual Variant in Acts 18.26.* After Paul stood before Gallio, he stayed longer in Corinth and then left with Priscilla and Aquila for Syria (Acts 18.18a). At Cenchreae, Paul had his hair cut to end a personal vow (18.18b), arrived in Ephesus, and then left Aquila and Priscilla there as he departed for Caesarea (18.19-23).⁹⁹ The final textual variant of interest in this paper occurs in the report that Priscilla and Aquila met and instructed a gifted Alexandrian Jew named Apollos. They instructed him concerning all of the truth about Jesus, whereupon he was sent to Corinth to help the brethren in their public debates with the Jews about Jesus as Messiah. Of particular interest is the transposition of words that occurs in Acts 18.26:

N-A ²⁷ (Vaticanus)	Codex D
οὗτός τε ἦρξατο παρρησιάζεσθαι ἐν τῇ συναγωγῇ. ἀκούσαντες δὲ αὐτοῦ Πρίσκιλλα καὶ 'Ακύλας προσελάβοντο αὐτὸν καὶ ἀκριβέστερον, ¹⁰⁰ αὐτῶ ἐξέθεντο τὴν ὁδὸν τοῦ θεοῦ.	οὗτος ἦρξατο παρ<ρ>ησιάζεσθαι ἐν συναγωγῇ. καὶ ἀκούσαντες δὲ αὐτοῦ 'Ακύλας καὶ Πρίσκιλλα προσελάβοντο αὐτὸν καὶ ἀκριβέστερον αὐτῶ ἐξέθεντο τὴν ὁδὸν.

The primary textual variant in Acts 18.26 is the reversal of Priscilla and Aquila in Codex B (Πρίσκιλλα καὶ 'Ακύλας) to Aquila and Priscilla in Codex D ('Ακύλας καὶ Πρίσκιλλα). One might argue that the meaning is the same regardless of the order of the names, since they were both involved in teaching Apollos, but the fact that Codex D changes the order of the names gives support to the idea that order is significant. Priority is often communicated by the order in which names are given in the New

97. See Metzger, *Textual Commentary*, p. 462; Bruce, *Acts of the Apostles: The Greek Text*, p. 393; Bruce, *Book of Acts*, p. 349 n. 19.

98. Conzelmann, *Acts of the Apostles*, p. 152.

99. It is interesting that the text in 614 (sy^{p.hmg}) on Acts 18.22 only describes Aquila as being left behind in Ephesus when Paul went to Caesarea: τὸν δὲ 'Ακύλαν εἶσεν ἐν 'Εφέσῳ αὐτός δὲ ἀνενέξθεις ἦλθεν εἰς Καισάρειαν.

100. The N-A²⁷ reads ἀκριβέστερον with Codex D.

Testament. For instance, in the naming of the apostles, Peter is named first and then called ‘first’, πρῶτος, among the apostles (see Mk 3.16-19; Mt. 10.2-4.). For Priscilla to be mentioned first implies that she was the one who was primary of the two.¹⁰¹ Therefore, Codex D’s inversion of the names is an intentional re-ordering of importance, placing the man first. Once again, this appears to be an intentional choice by Codex D to reduce the prominence of Priscilla.¹⁰²

In addition, Priscilla’s more prominent role is in the realm of teaching, and in particular in teaching someone who was a prominent male evangelist. Apollos is described as an eloquent speaker (ἀνὴρ λόγιος), powerful with the Scriptures (δυνατὸς ὢν ἐν ταῖς γραφαῖς), and instructed in the way of the Lord (οὗτος ἦν κατηχημένος τὴν ὁδὸν τοῦ κυρίου). Evidently, Apollos was familiar with the baptism of John, but not of the Spirit (Acts 18.25). Conzelmann suggests that the teaching by Priscilla and Aquila comprised everything from Acts 2 onward.¹⁰³ One thing is certain, Priscilla and Aquila taught him the way of God (ἐξέθεντο τὴν ὁδὸν τοῦ θεοῦ). By painting Priscilla in a prominent role as a teacher with her husband, *Lukas* was providing another model of women in leadership who stand shoulder-to-shoulder with men.¹⁰⁴

5. *Conclusion.* Acts 18 provides abundant evidence that the writer of Codex D has a theological bias against women. In Acts 18.2-3, after introducing Priscilla as the wife of Aquila, he removes her from any discussion of the tent-making work that Paul did with Aquila. In Acts 18.7, Codex D inserts a phrase that not only misunderstands Paul’s movement from one teaching location to another, but in the process

101. Haenchen describes her as ‘particularly active’ (*Acts of the Apostles*, p. 550 n. 11).

102. Commenting on D’s interchange of names, Ropes rightly observes, ‘The desire to reduce the prominence of Priscilla seems to have been at work in a number of places in this chapter. The original writer appears never to have mentioned Aquila without Priscilla, and always (except at the first introduction, vs. 2) put Priscilla’s name first; the glossator departs from him in both respects. Only in vs. 18, where κειρόμενος was interpreted of Aquila (cf. h) does the “Western” reviser fail to put the husband first’ (*Text of Acts*, p. 178). Along this line, see Metzger, *Textual Commentary*, pp. 466-67.

103. ‘Perhaps Luke understood the matter in this fashion: Apollos knew the material of the “gospel” (as far as Luke 24), but not the events from Acts 2 and on’ (Conzelmann, *Acts of the Apostles*, p. 158).

104. Witherington, *Women in the Earliest Churches*, p. 567 n. 22.

makes the home only Aquila's by not even mentioning Priscilla. Finally, in Acts 18.26, Codex D inverts the order of names from Priscilla and Aquila so that the man has the appearance of taking the lead in teaching Apollos. Unlike some of the earlier examples, these textual variants strongly affirm the writer's intention to reduce any prominence given to women in the Alexandrian text.

3. *Conclusion*

Sometimes a light does not seem to shine very brightly until it is placed in stark relief against a dark sky. So it is that this paper has sought to highlight some of *Lukas's* portrayals of women in Acts against alterations made in Codex D. Not every textual variant clearly demonstrates a theological perspective. The intent of some changes is not always evident, due to problems with the transmission of the text, or ambivalent readings in Codex D. But where intent is clear, so is a predisposition against women. Thus Codex D provides a window into theological thought about women in the early Church.

An additional benefit of this study is that it highlights the strong view of women contained in the Alexandrian text of Acts. *Lukas* portrays women as co-participants in the ministry of the first-century Church. They are not depicted separately from men as women blazing new trails on their own; but within the sensitivities of a first-century culture, they are portrayed as co-workers with men, placed alongside their male counterparts in the spiritual work of the ministry. They are present, in their own right, in the upper room, waiting for the promise of the Spirit along with the apostles. They are prominent in society, and prominent in the new community being formed. They are not second-class citizens, but leaders among those following this new way of faith. They are teachers of teachers, who are having an impact on the Christian movement from the very top.

This study demonstrates the value of textual criticism beyond the task of identifying the most probable reading of a text. By examining textual variants, the reader gains insight into theological tensions in the earliest Church. In addition, by examining the theologically motivated variants regarding women in Codex D, positive pictures of women are highlighted in Codex B.