

Leave No Women in Religion behind in the 2030 Development Agenda

Andrew Wilson

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On Saturday, July 16 Dr. Andrew Wilson, UTS professor of Scriptural Studies, gave the keynote address at an event in the Bronx that was a follow-up to the 60th UN Consultation on the Status of Women, entitled "Leave No Women in Religion Behind in the 2030 Development Agenda."

The event was organized by UN representative Dr. Ada Okika with the support of UTS graduate Dr. Ebony Kirkland (UTS '05, D.Min.'10). Another alumna, Jeanne Carroll (UTS '87) represented the Women's Federation for World Peace, USA at the event.

Dr. Wilson talked on the topic "Women who Recognize God's Feminine Needs" and spoke about how women religious leaders have to think "outside the box" so as not to simply follow traditional male models. Even though scripture and tradition depicts God as male and Christ as male, women leaders need to understand God's feminine side, so they can lead as daughters of God, who created women in Her image.

God's ten feminine desires:

Healing for ALL Her children, regardless of their beliefs

For women's rights everywhere, so they can be free to express the ways God is working in them

For men to listen to women's views, which can humanize harsh realities like prisons

That we not be quick to judge people for their mistakes, but give them second and third chances, for growth and improvement

To encourage constructive skepticism

For all of us to be happy in our bodies and in our sexuality, as long as our pleasure is not at the expense of another person's pain



That we recognize that God values our investment in our family and children as much as in our missions in the church

That people value a woman who is a sexually fulfilled spouse and mother more than they value a virgin

To see religious people express God's love and care as much as they insist on God's commandments and moral laws

To find optimism and live in hope as we invest in the next generation

The traditional works of religion: to evangelize, to defeat Satan, to erect laws and commandments, to sacrifice family and love for God's providential Will, are necessary to save souls, but they are not adequate to build God's kingdom of love. Even after people are saved, they still need to heal their hearts and grow in love with the nurturing that women can provide. Accordingly, Wilson identified ten of God's feminine desires that are not often addressed by traditional religion, as the special province of today's religious women to understand and work towards their fulfillment. When they can bring that feminine wisdom into a partnership with men, humankind can see a better

future in many respects.

The participants quickly warmed to Dr. Wilson's presentation, and afterwards, it elicited a good deal of discussion.