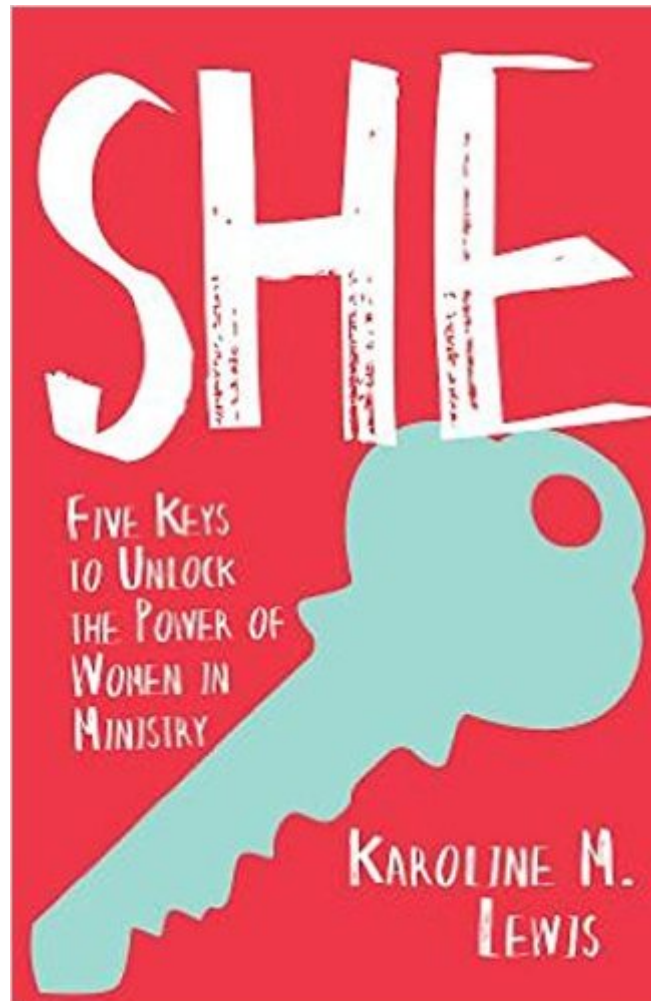


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# She: Five Keys To Unlock The Power Of Women In Ministry



## Synopsis

We are not all the same. The time has come for us to honestly name the ways we are different and similar so that we can serve together in unity, grace and trust. Women in ministry experience unique challenges in their church settings which continue to hinder their vocational, professional, and personal success. Women in ministry need a trusted and comprehensive resource not only to be able to survive but to thrive in their places of call. She provides theoretical, theological, and practical frameworks and strategies for flourishing as a woman in ministry and engages critical reflection on the practice of ministry in light of current feminist theory, biblical interpretation, and experience. Covering everything from biblical arguments for and against women in the church to what not to wear, this book offers background information and tools for negotiating the many and varied issues that woman in ministry face, including leadership, the authority and office of the clergy, and structures and power in the church. A trusted and comprehensive resource for women in ministry, equipping them to thrive in their places of call, and for the men who serve alongside them.

## Book Information

Paperback: 224 pages

Publisher: Abingdon Press (May 3, 2016)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 1501804944

ISBN-13: 978-1501804946

Product Dimensions: 6 x 0.5 x 9 inches

Shipping Weight: 6.4 ounces (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 5.0 out of 5 starsÂ Â See all reviewsÂ (7 customer reviews)

Best Sellers Rank: #138,981 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #189 inÂ Books > Christian Books & Bibles > Churches & Church Leadership > Church Leadership #336 inÂ Books > Christian Books & Bibles > Churches & Church Leadership > Pastoral Resources #1375 inÂ Books > Christian Books & Bibles > Ministry & Evangelism

## Customer Reviews

When I first contemplated the ministry in my early thirties - I knew going in my gender would be an issue. In fact, I thought women who went into it without having a solid Biblical response defending their calling were naive and when they experienced people telling them they should not be a pastor, well really - what did they expect? Truthfully, the ones who are blunt and just tell me that I shouldn't be a pastor based on this passage or that passage are the easy ones to deal with (though if you

need those arguments, the first chapter expertly outlines the issues of the authority of scripture and matters of interpretation). It's the more insidious way in which the church as a whole deals with sexism - on the one hand affirming women "get to be" pastors in many denominations, and on the other hand, still not taking their experiences seriously by utilizing the patriarchal system to suppress and stifle abusive situations many female pastors experience with male colleagues or supervisors. Dr. Karoline Lewis speaks into that reality and that truth with a blunt yet eloquent exposition of these issues. What hit home in particular were not just the big issues (yes, I've experienced the blatant verbal sexual harassment - anywhere from demeaning comments to just out and out threats to keep quiet or else) but the realization that for my entire professional life I had been playing a much more subtle game in regards to my gender. I have always been a "team player" and would say, "as long as the work or ministry happens" I'd overlook things like having my ideas co-opted by a male because I knew that was the only way they'd ever get adopted or put into use.

Full disclosure: I am not a woman in ministry, nor am I even a woman. However, this was an extremely important and insightful book for me to read. Karoline Lewis is both an ordained pastor in the ELCA, and a seminary professor--in less than 200 pages, she shows us the heart of a pastor and the sharp mind of an academic, leading us to see both the deep challenges and rich joys that women in ministry experience. While she writes as a pastor, you do not need to be a pastor to be powerfully moved by Dr. Lewis's message. She lays a strong foundation in examining how the way we think of the Bible, the way we read and interpret Scripture fundamentally affects our religious views in ways we often don't take the time to think about or question. From there, she examines five keys to unlocking, as the subtitle says, "the power of women in ministry." Martin Luther wrote that a theologian of the cross calls a thing what it is. Dr. Lewis, as one whose theology is cross-shaped, does exactly that in this book. She tells sometimes hard truths about the church, about sexism, about the overt and covert ways in which the church undermines the power of women. The words we use, the ideas and stories we privilege, the way our congregations and synods and denominations are structured--there are many factors working against women being able to fully live into their God-given call, and until that changes, we as the church are less for it. If you are a woman in ministry, you need to read this book. You will find that you are not alone and you will be strengthened and empowered in your ministry, whether that's as clergy or as a layperson. If you're a man in ministry, you need to read this book.

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