

WOMEN'S PLACE IN THE CHURCH

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Those who are going on in the deeper things of God have no problem with women ministering the Word (even to men!) If you look closely at the treatment of women, you will find that the most despicable place is held by those whose beliefs do not recognize Jesus as Saviour. Then, among Christian denominations, those who do not believe in the infilling of the Spirit also tend to keep woman in a demeaned place, believing that this is what Paul taught in the scriptures.

I wouldn't deal with this matter except that some sisters, who have been called to deeper things, are being accused of going against the Bible by reading my booklets or listening to my tapes. I need to provide them with the truth of Paul's words!

Some years ago I read, "GOD'S WORD TO WOMEN" by Katherine C. Bushnell, written in Shanghai, China, in 1930. She was a scholar of both Hebrew and Greek, well able to read the original languages of scripture. She wanted keenly to serve the Lord but was refused because she was a woman. Yet, the elders were in full agreement that she could serve the Lord on the mission field (where she would be ministering to *men*, and doing the full work of the ministry). Bushnell was aware that this was a double standard, so she told God that if He would prove to her that St. Paul was *not* against women preaching, she would obey. The Lord commissioned her to reveal portions of divine truth that had been lost to the church. The Old Testament scriptures were all that Jesus and the early believers had for authority for their teaching and preaching. In Romans 16:25,26 Paul refers to "the Scriptures of the prophets" as the basic authority for the truth commanded by God to be preached to all nations. I Peter 1:10-12 teaches the same thing.

Notice a few things that are *attributed to Paul* teaching others: I Cor. 14: 34,35,"Let your women keep silence in the churches: for it is not permitted unto them to speak; but they are commanded to be under obedience, *as also saith the law*. And if they will learn anything, let them ask their husbands at home: for it is a shame for women to speak in the church." Also, I Tim. 2:11,12 is interpreted as Paul forbidding women to teach men.

Paul's ministry ***contradicts this false interpretation*** of both his teaching and conduct. His evangelistic ministry produced the miracle-working power in the assembly at Galatia. But, after he left, Judahizing teachers came in and "perverted" them back into Old Testament ordinances and *man's traditions*. (These traditions, preserved in the Talmud, or oral law, were so vile that this gracious sister would not even profane herself by quoting them! They surely bore no resemblance to the purity of Christ and His teachings!) Paul rebuked them for their "bewitched" condition in departing from the truth. For his authority, he quoted Gen. 21:10, the inspired words of Sarah to her husband, Abraham, instructing him in *what he must do to set their house in order*. God honored her instructions and ordered Abraham to *obey her*.

Also, Paul calls Phoebe *deacon* of the church at Cenchrea and orders the church at Rome to "*assist her* (men and all) in whatsoever business she hath need of you" Rom. 16:2. Paul was an authority in the Scriptures—a learned man. He well knew, when he was correcting the Galatians, that he was quoting the words of Sarah to her husband, Abraham, *as his authority to prove to them he was teaching them sound doctrine*.

Further, Paul *knew* that there ***is not one instance*** recorded in the Old Testament where inspired women were divinely ordered to refrain from speaking as I Cor. 14:34 would infer and ***as if*** it were a command of Paul authorized by "as also saith the law," which it ***was not***. It was a ***requote by him*** of what he had received in the letter from the spiritually reliable "House of Cloe" regarding what the Judahizing teachers were feeding the assembly at Corinth. After he quotes this statement, he ***immediately rebukes it***, as he

remonstrates, “What? Came the word of God *out from you?* Or came it *unto you* only? If any man think himself to be a prophet, or spiritual, let him acknowledge that ***the things that I write unto you are the commandments of the Lord (I Cor. 14:37,38)***. He was not agreeing with what the Judahizers were teaching—he was denouncing it! (In the original manuscripts, no punctuation was used, so it is quite in order to put question marks in the above quotation, for the context requires it).

Satan could not cause that Judahizing teaching to succeed in Paul’s day, but now he giggles as he has blinded ministers to try and silence God’s ministry through the female sex of the body of Christ by changing God’s truth into a lie (Rom. 1:25) and in ***representing Paul as teaching this false doctrine of the Judahizers!***

The Roman Church has always claimed the sole right to interpret the Bible, and thousands of Protestant men and women were martyred because they presumed to read the Bible and interpret it for themselves. But the attitude of the Protestant Church has not been clear, *as to women*. Our Bible commentaries teach that women may not teach the Word, nor preach it. They claim these things on Paul’s authority.

This *traditional interpretation* of Paul’s words came down to us through the Roman Church and the Dark Ages, and has subjected the Apostle to the derision of the godless and to the apologies of his supporters because of his *supposed* deceptively subtle reasoning or argument. It has weakened a believer’s faith in the inspiration of the Bible and has sullied the most Christlike character that has ever served the church!

Our godliest evangelical churches, after George Fox’s time, and John Wesley’s, discovered that anything like obedience to the *traditional interpretation of Paul regarding women in the church was detrimental* to the spiritual interests of their work, and began to act in disobedience of those *traditional teachings*. There are 13 verses in the New Testament which point out that in some instances the religious leaders “transgressed the commandment of God by their *traditions*.” They held their traditions in higher esteem than the Scriptures. Paul warned, in Col. 2:8, “Beware lest any man spoil you through philosophy and vain deceit, ***after the tradition of men***, after the rudiments of the world, and not after Christ.”

All the events of the morning of the Resurrection were seen by *women disciples only*. The two Marys were the last at the tomb that night and witnessed the stone being rolled against its door. They observed the tomb being sealed and a watch set before it. None of the men saw this done. They knew of it only through the testimony of the women. In the morning, they witnessed the great earthquake that rolled back the stone. An angel invited them to enter the tomb and behold the grave-cloths undisturbed, which showed that the Lord had risen through and out of them as he later passed through doors. Mary Magdalene ran to tell Peter and John. They testify to them as His witnesses and their words find a place in holy writ.

Women were a part of that company of 120 who waited for the outpouring of the Spirit (Acts 1:15). If there is any doubt that these women were qualified witnesses it must be dispelled upon seeing that the Holy Spirit fell upon them also. And, should they keep silent when the Spirit was poured out that so they should be “witnesses of Me?” Peter prophesies of this in Acts 2:18, “Your daughters shall prophesy...”

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