

TITLE: MEN AND WOMEN'S ROLES IN THE CHURCH

Message #10

Biblical Manhood and Womanhood

CHALLENGING QUESTIONS ABOUT ROLES IN THE CHURCH – Scripturally

- Could women serve the Lord's Supper?
- Could a woman be a choir director?
- Can women vote in a business meeting?
- Can a woman ask a question in a business meeting?
- Could a woman sing a solo in the worship service?
- Could a woman be a pastor?
- Could a woman be a deacon?
- Could a woman pray publicly in a worship service?
- Could a woman give her testimony in a worship service?
- Could a woman read the Scriptures in the worship service?
- Could a woman write a commentary or a book on theology?

CHALLENGING QUESTIONS ABOUT ROLES IN THE CHURCH - Scripturally

- Can a woman be the director of Christian education in the church?
- Can a woman teach a theology class in a Bible college or a seminary?
- Can a woman be a president of a Bible college or a seminary?
- Can a woman be the treasurer for the church?
- Can a woman be on church staff to counsel men and women?
- Can a woman lead a Bible study at home with men and women?
- Can a woman lead a Bible study with male and female teenagers?
- Can a woman give a mission's report in a service?
- Can a woman participate in a drama/play conducted in a service?
- Can a woman witness to a man?

THE TOPIC OF WOMEN TEACHING OR PREACHING THE BIBLE TO MEN

- **1 Timothy 2:11-15, Let the woman learn in silence with all subjection. (2:12) But I suffer not a woman to teach, nor to usurp authority over the man, but to be in silence. (2:13) For Adam was first formed, then Eve. (2:14) And Adam was not deceived, but the woman being deceived was in the transgression. (2:15) Notwithstanding she shall be saved in childbearing, if they continue in faith and charity and holiness with sobriety.**

INTERPRETING I TIMOTHY 2:11-15

- The setting of the passage is the assembled church (2:8-10). This is a public gathering for worship.
- This is a setting where men were to pray with “holy hands” (without anger or quarreling).
- The context is the church in 3:1-7 with the requirements of pastors; and in 3:8-13 with the requirement for deacons. Note that there are only two offices listed (pastors/bishops/elders and deacons).
- In 3:14, Paul makes it emphatically clear that these things were written so believers would know how to behave in church.
- It is clear that the context is that a woman is not permitted to teach or have authority over the man in the assembled church.
- Paul is forbidding only Bible teaching. This is the type of teaching he is in view (Acts 15:35; 18:11).

TWO THINGS PAUL PROHIBITED WOMEN DOING IN THE CHURCH

- #1 Paul did not permit women to preach or teach men in the assembled church meetings.
- #2 Paul did not permit women to have a governing authoritative role in the church.
- ORDER OF CREATION
- ORDER OF THE FALL – SIN

WAS THIS A TEMPORARY COMMAND OR ONLY A 1ST CENTURY APPLICATION?

- Paul grounds his instruction in the creation of Adam and Eve before the Fall. Paul's first reason for male leadership and Bible teaching is the order of Creation.
- Paul does not base his teaching on some local, cultural situation Timothy was facing in Ephesus. It was not because the women were uneducated or that they were being disruptive or teaching heresies.
- Paul goes back to the time of Creation and before sin (Genesis 2:7, 15-17, 22). It was clear that God was giving to Adam a leadership role.
- Paul's command applies to men and women in all churches during any period of the church age.

THE INVERSION OF THE LEADERSHIP ROLES

- Satan singled out Eve and tempted her.
- Where was Adam during this temptation?
- Eve spoke for the two of them.
- Adam was passive.
- There was an inversion of the leadership roles. God wants the man to lead. When the male does not actively lead in relationships the results are disastrous.

EVE'S SIN INCLUDED DECEPTION, ADAM'S SIN WAS WILLFUL

- Paul was not punishing women for Eve's sin. Paul is simply saying that Eve was convinced to believe something false while Adam went ahead and sinned intentionally.
- Paul is noting a difference in the nature of how they both sinned. The nature by which they sinned reveals the male's and the female's inclinations.
- The issue was not an intelligence issue, for they had equal intellectual abilities.
- There were differences and inclinations in the way they thought that was consistent and congruent with God's purposes in entrusting leadership in the church to men.

MALE AND FEMALE INCLINATIONS

- God has shaped the minds and proclivities and perhaps even the bodies of humans to reflect His plans, His orders, His designs for the home and church.
- Women tend to focus more on relationships than abstract rational analysis.
- Enmeshment in relationships could compromise a woman's willingness to uproot heresy in the church.
- Women are less likely to draw a line on doctrinal non-negotiables, and thus deception and false teaching will more easily enter the church. This has nothing to say about women being intellectually deficient or inferior to men. There are certainly exceptions to this rule.

MALE AND FEMALE INCLINATIONS CONTINUED . . .

- There are women who are “tougher” and less nurturing than other women.
- As a general rule women have more close friends than men. Women are more relational and caring than men.
- God gave men, as a general rule, a disposition that is better suited to teaching and governing in the church. This disposition is inclined to be more rational and logical in the analysis of doctrine. Included in this disposition is the desire to protect the doctrinal purity of the church.
- Both inclinations and dispositions are needed.

AREAS WHERE ONE GENDER IS MORE EFFECTIVE THAN THE OTHER GENDER

- Women are better at bearing and nursing children than men (for men cannot do these things).
- Men, because of their size and strength, are better boxers, wrestlers, football players than women. The woman cannot compete against the man in these type of physical contests.
- Women, in general, tend to do better in the verbal skills on the academic tests.
- Men, in general, tend to score higher on the mathematical tests.
- Women tend to be more relational and to gravitate toward community and cooperation.
- Men tend to be more aggressive and to gravitate toward positions of leadership and dominance.

“LET YOUR WOMEN KEEP SILENCE IN THE CHURCHES”

- **1 Corinthians 14:33-35, For God is not the author of confusion, but of peace, as in all churches of the saints. (14:34) 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. (14:35) And if they will learn any thing, let them ask their husbands at home: for it is a shame for women to speak in the church.**

THE INTERPRETATION OF I CORINTHIANS 14:33-35

- Paul cannot mean that women are to be completely silent at all times in the church, for he had just instructed them in 11:5 that when they prayed or prophesied in church that they should wear a head covering.
- This section begins in 14:29 with the need of an interpreter to evaluate and to explain what the prophet had said. The governing men were to evaluate the prophetic message and pronounce the final word on its authenticity, accuracy, interpretation and application.
- The women were not to get involved in this judgment. They were not to speak up and challenge the interpretation or accuracy of the statement.

THE PASTOR/ELDER/BISHOP WAS TO BE THE HUSBAND OF ONE WIFE

- **1 Timothy 3:2, A bishop then must be blameless, the husband of one wife, vigilant, sober, of good behaviour, given to hospitality, apt to teach;**
- **Titus 1:6, If any be blameless, the husband of one wife, having faithful children not accused of riot or unruly.**
- This forbade a polygamist becoming a spiritual ruler/leader in the church.
- It is also evident the pastor could only be a man as seen in the phrase “husband of one wife.”
- The list of qualifications are found in two different books, given to two different men in two different churches, regions and cultures.

THE CHURCH IS TO BE TREATED LIKE FAMILY

- **1 Timothy 3:4-5, One that ruleth well his own house, having his children in subjection with all gravity; (3:5) (For if a man know not how to rule his own house, how shall he take care of the church of God?)**
- **1 Timothy 5:1-2, Rebuke not an elder, but intreat him as a father; and the younger men as brethren; (5:2) The elder women as mothers; the younger as sisters, with all purity.**

THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE FAMILY AND THE CHURCH

- Paul speaks of managing one's own family well to be qualified to manage the household of God.
- The New Testament sees a close relationship between the male leadership in the home and the male leadership in the church.
- The church is viewed as a “family” and patterns of church life are imitated in the family, while patterns of family life are imitated in the church.
- These verses indicate that male leadership in the home and church are closely related.

JESUS SELECTED TWELVE MEN TO BE THE APOSTLES (MATTHEW 10:2-4)

- If Jesus wanted to establish an egalitarian church, He could have easily selected six men and six women.
- Some argue he would have culturally offended many if he had selected women. The fact is that Jesus never hesitated to do culturally unpopular things when they were morally right.
- The apostles hold the highest position in the church age (Revelation 21:4).

WHAT TEACHING OPPORTUNITIES ARE WOMEN PERMITTED TO PURSUE

- 1. Women are permitted to teach men subjects other than the Bible (i.e. mathematics, geography, a foreign language, etc.).
- 2. Women are permitted to witness to men in a one-on-one fashion (John 4:28-30). The woman at the well told her village about Jesus. The women at the tomb became the first eyewitnesses of the resurrection and Jesus told them to tell the men and others of the good news.

OTHER TEACHING OPPORTUNITIES FOR WOMEN

- 3. Women are permitted to explain scripture to men in a private setting, outside the context of the assembled congregation (Acts 18:26 – Aquila and Priscilla taught Apollos).
- 4. The spiritually mature women are to teach the younger women (Titus 2:3-5).
- 5. Women can have a very effective teaching ministry with children.