

THE SCRIPTURES POSITION ON FEMALE PASTORS, TEACHERS AND DEACONS

If a person truly wants to understand, obey, and follow God's words and ways, he must seek truly to understand God's Word in context. Often people take a short portion of Scripture, a verse, or a word out of a context and use it to say or support what they want it to say.

God has much to say in His word concerning the prohibition of women preaching, teaching men, or holding positions of authority over men in the local church. In our politically correct society this doesn't sit well. But God's Word has often ill suited the society in which it was given. God is not moved by the whims of people or politics. He is immutable. His nature and His Word never change. If we are to believe and behave rightly and enjoy His blessings we must seek His truth, believe it and embrace it.

Please prayerfully consider the following passages.

Paul, in writing to Timothy his Pastoral Letters (Epistles) had much to say about this topic as he addressed God's guidelines for New Testament church leadership.

1) I Timothy 2:11-14

V. 11 "Let the woman learn in silence with all subjection.

V. 12 But I suffer not a woman to teach, nor to usurp authority **over the man**, but to be in silence.

V. 13 For Adam was first formed, then Eve.

V. 14 And Adam was not deceived, but the woman being deceived was in the transgression."

Paul explains in chapter 3 verse 15 his reason for writing this book and this gives context to our topic.

In I Timothy 2:12 He is saying, I as an Apostle (a foundational leader of the church), do not allow women to teach men or to usurp leadership authority over them in the church setting. He gives his reason for this. It has nothing to do with intelligence, culture, or personal preference, but it is because of God's predetermined role for men and women. Men are to be in leadership in the home and in the church. Paul takes us back to God's original intent and design (vs. 13-14) to support his authority for this position.

2) In chapter 3 of I Timothy Paul gets specific as far as two positions of spiritual leadership in the church in which women are not to hold (Pastor and Deacon).

In verse two he identifies one of many criteria for the office of "bishop" (Pastor, overseer). He says the Bishop "must be ... the husband of one wife." A woman cannot rightly fill this criterion. He continues in the passage in v. 8 "Likewise must the deacons..." and then in v. 11, "Even so must their wives be..." Again, this specifies men. And then in v. 12 he continues: "Let the deacons be the husbands of one wife, ruling their children and their houses (families, includes wife) well." So, three times he addresses this issue and specifies for men.

3) In I Corinthians 14, Paul wrote to the Church at Corinth to give them instruction concerning

women's ministry in their church.

He gives instruction for all subsequent churches of Jesus Christ. The context of I Corinthians 14 is Holy Spirit given gifts to Believers and specifically the gifts of prophecy and tongues (14:23-40).

In this passage Paul teaches: "Let your women keep silence in the churches, for it is not permitted unto them to speak... for it is a shame for women to speak in the church" (specifically – preach and speak in tongues).

Never in the New Testament are women in spiritual leadership over men in the church setting. **ALL** Apostles in the NT are men and **ALL** the disciples in places of leadership were men. **Every** preacher was a man. Note Paul's words in I Corinthians 14:37: "If any man think himself to be a prophet (preacher), or spiritual, let him acknowledge that the things that I write unto you are the commandments of the Lord."

The few instances of "prophetesses" in the Bible **never** use this "gift or calling" in the context of the Christian church.

There are plenty of opportunities of ministry and service for women in the local church and to the body of Christ at large. God gifts all of His children and desires that each of us use our gifts to us to fulfill His will and to bring Him pleasure. May you find pleasure and joy in doing so.

Each of us must decide if we will believe God and follow His Word. God honors those that believe and obey His Word. May you know His blessing.

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