

1 Timothy

I. Introduction

- A. **1 Timothy 2:8-15** . . . Therefore I want the men in every place to pray, lifting up holy hands, without wrath and dissension. [9] Likewise, I want women to adorn themselves with proper clothing, modestly and discreetly, not with braided hair and gold or pearls or costly garments, [10] but rather by means of good works, as is proper for women making a claim to godliness. [11] A woman must quietly receive instruction with entire submissiveness. [12] But I do not allow a woman to teach or exercise authority over a man, but to remain quiet. [13] For it was Adam who was first created, and then Eve. [14] And it was not Adam who was deceived, but the woman being deceived, fell into transgression. [15] But women will be preserved through the bearing of children if they continue in faith and love and sanctity with self-restraint.
- B. It is my recommendation that we look at these verses as promoting and protecting the spiritual health of the church, the individuals in the church, and the integrity of what is taught in the church.
1. Last Sunday we talked about the God-ordained equality that exists between men and women, and the hierarchy of authority that exists in various forms in the world, the church, and the home.
 2. We also talked about the fact that equality and authority can exist side-by-side, and that equality doesn't remove the need for authority, and authority doesn't do away with equality. Therefore, though all believers are equal, some are in authority while others are under authority.
- C. Today, we are going to continue looking at some of the biblical teachings surrounding the role of women in the church to further prepare us for looking at **1 Timothy 2:9-15**. Therefore, today we will look at **1 Corinthians 11:3-12 & 14:26-35**.
- D. Pray

II. The spiritual health of the church and the role of women according to **1 Corinthians 11:3-12**.

- A. [3] But I want you to understand that Christ is the head of every man, and the man is the head of a woman, and God is the head of Christ.

1. In **vs 3-7**, Paul is using a logical argument to show that women are allowed to speak in church under certain conditions. Here in **vs 3**, he affirms the hierarchy of authority that is to be practiced in church life – because church life is the emphasis in **vs 3-12**, though this hierarchy should also be practiced in the home.
 2. Christ is under the leadership of God. Men are under the leadership of Christ – who is answerable to God. And women are under the leadership of men – who are answerable to Christ who is answerable to God. In other words, all are answerable to God.
 3. We see an example of this in corporations where there are many levels of authority – from low level managers to the CEO. Though all are answerable to the CEO, most are directly answerable to the manager over them.
 4. In the church, since all are answerable to God (*as they are in the home also*), all are to do the will of God.
 - a. Regarding the hierarchy of authority in church life, God’s will is that those in authority would do His will, and those under authority would do the will of those in authority over them. When each does the will of God, the church becomes spiritually healthy, the people love one another, and God is glorified.
 - b. Therefore, how we treat those under our leadership and respond to those over us either positively or negatively effects the spiritual health of the church, the way we love one another, and the glory we bring to God.
- B. [4] **Every man** who has something on his head while praying or prophesying disgraces his head.
1. After affirming the hierarchy of authority, in **vs 4-7**, Paul confirms our obligation to bring honor or glory to the one in authority over us.
 2. The man is to bring honor and glory to God in the church meetings, and to do so, he is to keep his head uncovered while praying or prophesying. For the man to wear a head covering of some sort is to bring disgrace upon those in authority over him – from church leadership, to Jesus Christ, and ultimately God.
- C. [5] But **every woman** who has her head uncovered while praying or prophesying disgraces her head, for she is one and the same as the woman whose head is shaved. [6] For if a woman does not cover her head, let her also have her hair cut off; but if it is disgraceful for a woman to have her hair cut off or her head shaved, let her cover her head [when praying or prophesying in church meetings].

1. In other words, if it is disgraceful or shameful for a woman to go out in public with a shaved head, then it is disgraceful or shameful for her to pray or prophesy in a church meeting without a covering of some sort on her head. Why? Because the lack of a covering show disrespect for and brings disgrace on those in authority over her – from Christian men in general, to her husband, and ultimately God.
 2. Please note – this is not about being equal or unequal. This is about showing respect for and bringing glory to those in authority over us.
- D. **[7a]** For a man ought not to have his head covered, since he is the image and glory of God;
1. God created Adam from the dust of the earth and made him in His own image. Therefore, Adam is directly responsible to God, and as such brings glory to God by his godly behavior – which includes praying and prophesying in church with an uncovered head.
 2. Of course, if a man prays and prophecies in church meetings with an uncovered head yet fails to love his wife as he ought, he is not honoring or bringing glory to God. Rather, he is dishonoring God by pretending to be godly in church while pridefully and selfishly taking advantage of his position of authority in the home.
- E. **[7b]** but the woman is the glory of man.
1. Because the woman is the glory of man, she is to cover her head when praying or prophesying in a church meeting to show respect for and bring glory to those in authority over her – just as the man is to do with an uncovered head.
 2. Therefore, just as the godly man and husband is to reflect God while in the church meeting – so that by behaving properly he brings glory to God, so the godly woman and wife is to reflect men in general, and if married her husband specifically, while in the church meeting – so that by behaving properly she brings glory to God, the men in general, and if married, her husband.
 3. Of course, if a woman prays and prophecies in church meetings with her head covered yet fails to love her husband as she ought, she is a hypocrite because she is pretending to respect her head at church while disrespecting him at home.
 4. Once again, this is not about being equal or unequal. This is about respecting and bringing glory to these in authority over you.
- F. **[8]** For man does not originate from woman, but woman from man;
1. In **vs 8-10**, Paul begins a second line of reasoning to support his point. This time he uses **(1)** the order in which the man and the

- woman were created; (2) the means by which they were created; and (3) the purpose for which they were created.
2. We know from **Genesis 2:7 & 15-17** that God created man first, and God created him from the dust of the earth. And we know from **Genesis 2:18-23** that God created woman second, and created her from the rib of the man. It is in this way that the first woman originated from the first man.
- G. [9] for indeed man was not created for the woman's sake, but woman for the man's sake.
1. **Genesis 2:18** affirms this: "The LORD God said, 'It is not good for the man to be alone; I will make him a helper suitable for him.'"
 2. In other words, the woman was made from man and for the man.
- H. [10] Therefore (*because man was made first and the woman was made for man*) the woman ought to have a symbol of authority on her head (*when praying or prophesying in church in order to show respect to the one who was created first and for whom she was created*), because of the angels.
1. The last part of **vs 10** (*i.e., because of the angels*) is one of the more difficult statements in the Bible to make sense of in its context. Therefore, we will go no further than to suggest the angels may represent a group in the hierarchy of authority below God but higher than man.
 2. The principle we can understand in **vs 10** is that anyone who prays or prophecies in a church meeting is to do so in a manner that respects and brings glory to those in authority over them. And in **vs 10**, this principle is being directly applied to women.
- I. [11] **However**, in the Lord, neither is woman independent of man, nor is man independent of woman. [12] For as the woman originates from the man, so also the man has his birth through the woman; and all things originate from God.
1. Paul concludes this part of his exhortation about showing respect and bringing glory to those over us by reminding us of the God-ordained equality that exists between men and women – whether it is the men and women in the church or a husband and wife at home.
 2. In my opinion, Paul includes these **verses** this way so that men and women will have the right attitude toward each other and treat each other – including one's spouse – in the way that glorifies God. Why? Because we all are equal in that we all originate from God.
 3. Therefore, for men to mistreat women, or for women to mistreat men is not only a failure to love our neighbor as ourselves, it shows

disrespect for God our creator, it brings dishonor on God our Father, and it is a form of rebellion against God's authority over us.

4. May we wisely and intentionally make God's treatment of us the example and God's word the measurement of how we treat each other – in the church and in the home.

J. Our purpose in examining **1 Corinthians 11:3-12** is to show that God allows women to speak in church under certain conditions. And this is important because it is a truth we will be taking into account when examining **1 Timothy 2:9-15**.

III. The spiritual health of the church and the role of women according to **1 Corinthians 14:26-35**.

A. **1 Corinthians 14:26-35** seems to contradict **1 Corinthians 11** in that **1 Corinthians 11** supports women praying and prophesying in church meetings while **1 Corinthians 14** clearly says women are to keep silent. To deal with this seeming contradiction, we will work through **1 Corinthians 14:26-35**, but with far less explanation because we have already laid the groundwork for a proper perspective on the equality of men and women, the hierarchy of authority, and our duty to show respect to those in authority over us.

B. [26] What is the outcome then, brethren? When you assemble, each one has a psalm, has a teaching, has a revelation, has a tongue, has an interpretation. **Let all things be done for edification** (*building up*).

C. [27] If anyone speaks in a tongue, it should be by two or at the most three, and each in turn, and one must interpret; [28] but if there is no interpreter, he must keep silent in the church; and let him speak to himself and to God.

D. [29] Let two or three prophets speak (*1 Cor 11 indicates both men and women can prophesy in the church meeting*), and **let the others pass judgment** (*as to whether what was spoken was from God and in agreement with the scriptures and teaching of the apostles*).

1. The probable situation is that in advance of a church meeting, several members with the gift of prophecy would be asked to speak. Remember, prophecy is more than foretelling. It is also forth-telling, or what we call teaching, exhorting, admonishing, and warning.

2. During the meeting, **others** – which is either limited to those with the gift of prophecy or includes those with the depth of knowledge and spiritual maturity necessary to judge what was taught – **others** were to determine if what was taught fit within the accepted teachings of the apostles and the scriptures.

3. This was to be done to protect the integrity of the message and the spiritual health of the church. This practice was necessary because of the rise of false teachers and bad teaching in the church.
- E. [30] But if a revelation is made to another who is seated, the first one must keep silent. [31] For you can all prophesy one by one, so that all may learn and all may be exhorted; [32] and the spirits of prophets are subject to prophets [33] for God is not a God of confusion but of peace, as in all the churches of the saints (*could go here or at the beginning of vs 34*).
1. In other words, if a prophet who wasn't designated to speak received a revelation from God during the meeting, he was to take the place of one of the designated speakers.
 2. But again, the others were to judge if what was presented fit within the accepted teachings of the apostles and the scriptures.
- F. [34] *As in all the churches of the saints* The women are to keep silent in the churches; for they are not permitted to speak, but are to subject themselves, just as the Law also says.
1. Though it seems Paul is contradicting what he said in **chapter 11**, I don't think he is, and this is why.
 2. In **chapter 11**, Paul's emphasis is on maintaining a godly respect for the hierarchy of authority. Within that setting, women were allowed to pray and prophesy, but were to do so with their head covered.
 3. Therefore, if that teaching applies here – and it ought, then it is reasonable to assume that the requirement for women to remain silent in this verse has to do with openly passing judgment during the meeting on the man who is teaching.
 4. If in addition we apply **1 Timothy 2:12** to **vs 34**, which is about not allowing a woman to teach or exercise authority over a man, then we can conclude that at least in some church meetings, only men with the gift of prophecy would be a designated speaker, and only men could openly judge what was taught.
 5. This does not mean women are not allowed to speak in those meetings. Once again, according to **1 Cor. 11**, they can openly pray and prophecy. And prophesying includes sharing thoughts and insights on the word of God, the application of the word of God, and on living the Christian life. It might also mean a woman could share a revelation that comes to her during the meeting.
 6. What women are not to do is usurp or treat with disrespect or bring dishonor on the hierarchy of authority that exists in the church

- meeting – which includes the men in general, and if married, a woman’s husband. Rather, women are to show respect and give honor to those in authority over them by remaining silent when it comes to openly judging what a male designated speaker taught.
- G. [35] [Therefore,] if [the women] desire to learn anything (*regarding what the designated teacher taught or the judgments concerning what was taught*), let them ask their own husbands at home (*and so maintain a proper respect for the hierarchy of authority*); for it is improper (*or disgraceful*) for a woman to speak in church (*that is, openly pass judgment on or question what the designated teacher taught*).

IV. Conclusion

- A. What has been presented today is my understanding of what these two scriptures teach concerning the role of women in church meetings. Whether you agree, in part or in whole, my encouragement to you is to read, ponder, and ask God for wisdom and insight into what God’s word says about men and women in the life of the church.
- B. Though the role of women is a controversial topic in our day, it is unwise to ignore it – as if ignoring it prevents conflict over it. It is unwise to explain it away – as if the Bible doesn’t say what it says. And it is unwise to alter the scriptures to fit what you prefer them to say.
- C. Therefore, just as we trust God for eternal salvation, let us trust Him to require of us what is best for us, to bring a proper understanding and practical application to what He requires, to empower us to live accordingly, and to protect us as we do.