

THE ROLE OF WOMEN IN THE CHURCH

Handout for Lesson 4 of *Thought Provoking Questions*

| BASIC SCRIPTURES | QUESTIONS RESOLVED BY CONSISTENT APPLICATION OF PRINCIPLES |
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| <p>First Corinthians 11:5 First Corinthians 14:34-35 First Timothy 2:11-15</p> | <p>1) Can a woman occupy a position of authority over a man in the secular world?</p> <p>2) I would like to know if women are not to be given authority in the church why did Paul speak of Lydia as the leader of a church and why did Jesus hold women in high regard?</p> <p>3) I was reading questions and answers as well as the theological stance that you support with your website, and I have a couple of questions regarding women's roles. Is it not true that in the Greek language the nature and relationship of men and women are based on the context of different words? That is, whether a man or a woman assumes the title of spouse is dependent on the context of the sentence. With this in mind, I can see how it may be difficult to translate certain New Testament texts clearly and honestly. My question concerns 1 Corinthians 14:34 as well as any other scripture relating to women.</p> <p>The New International Version of 1 Corinthians 14:34 is as follows:</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">“women should remain silent in the churches. They are not allowed to speak, but must be in submission”</p> <p>The Message interprets the verse this way:</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">“Wives must not disrupt worship, talking when they should be listening.”</p> <p>The implications of the alternate translations can be quite different. In The New International Version, it is evident that all women should stay away from leadership roles within the church, yet the second translation indicates that wives, in the context of their relationship to their families, should keep silent. This appears to imply a more domestic meaning. Perhaps wives should not argue personal or family matters in front of the church, but should keep silent out of respect for the church and their family. With this in mind, could it be possible that there is room for women to actively participate in leadership roles in the church? Also, could this indicate a possible fallacy with the way we look at scripture, the way it is translated, and the authority given to it?</p> <p>4) I'm a little confused and maybe just misunderstood. You said that when it came to singing that used musical instruments outside the church building, it was against scripture, that assembling is worship which is all the time. But when you talk about women being silent you differentiate assembly for Sunday morning worship and Bible class. Maybe the Greek words are different and if they are please let me know. If the assembly is worshipping, then women should be silent even in Bible study.</p> <p>5) I have read several different answers and also have looked into this subject myself and still have some questions regarding [the role of] women in church.</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">a) If a woman is to keep silent in the church does it also mean not to testify as we do in our church?</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">b) What if you are married to a man that is “slow” of learning? Then what?</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">c) Our preacher believes that it is okay for a woman to preach and my husband and I both believe that it is wrong? If so, how do you try to explain it to them?</p> <p>6) I know women should not preach on the pulpit. But what about women teaching teenagers? Most of our teens are baptized and their ages range from 15 to 20 years. They include both young men and women. Can you give me biblical back up? Thanks.</p> |
| APPLICABLE PRINCIPLES | |
| <p>a) Women prayed and prophesied in the early church in some context. 1 Cor. 11:5.</p> <p>b) Women were to keep silent in the churches. 1 Cor. 14:34.</p> <p>c) Women are not permitted to speak [in the churches]. 1 Cor. 14:34.</p> <p>d) Women are commanded to be under obedience, as also saith the law. 1 Cor. 14:34.</p> <p>e) If they will learn anything let them ask their husbands at home. 1 Cor. 14:34.</p> <p>f) It is a shame for women to speak in the church. 1 Cor. 14:34.</p> <p>g) Women are to learn in silence and subjection. 1 Tim. 2:11.</p> <p>h) Women are not to usurp authority over the man. 1 Tim. 2:11.</p> <p>i) Women are to be in silence. 1 Tim. 2:11.</p> | |
| <p>These injunctions are based on Eve's conduct in the Garden of Eden. 1 Tim. 2:14.</p> | |