

The Relationship between Men and Women in the Assemblies of the Church

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- I. Introduction
 - a. If you are a visitor to our services you have probably noticed some differences between how our worship is conducted and how other religious groups conduct their services
 - i. Some of the differences between different religious practices are simply a matter of personal preference. It wouldn't really make a huge difference if they were done differently.
 - ii. But some of the things we do differently than other religious groups are not a matter of personal preference
 - iii. We do things this way because we are fully convinced by the Word of God that this is how He wants things done
 - 1. There may be a hundred changes that someone may suggest to our worship that we might say ok, why not?
 - 2. But if God has expressed a preference, our wishes and suggestions must be submitted to His revealed will
 - b. We are going to be discussing one of these matters in this lesson: The relationship between men and women in the assemblies of the church
 - i. This is something that many in the religious world are getting wrong today
 - ii. But the New Testament has been clear on this subject for nearly two thousand years and we will be examining its teaching this morning
- II. KEY THOUGHT: The New Testament teaches that God's order in the church is for men to exercise positions of public teaching, authority and leadership
- III. 1 Tim 2:8-15
 - a. There is a contrast between men and women
 - i. In the house of God – 1 Tim. 3:14-15
 - b. Men should be praying
 - i. With holy hands
 - ii. Without wrath and dissension
 - c. Women should be
 - i. Adorning themselves with good works
 - 1. Not with flashy, expensive clothing or ornaments
 - 2. This is proper for godly women
 - ii. Receiving instruction, not giving it
 - 1. Quietly
 - 2. With submissiveness
 - 3. Not teaching or exercising authority over a man
 - 4. Compare 1 Cor. 14:34-35
 - a. Keep silent

- b. Subject themselves
- c. Ask questions outside of the public assembly
- d. What does it mean to keep silent?
 - i. Can't sing
 - ii. Can't talk at all?
 - iii. See the immediately preceding verses – 1 Cor. 14:27-33
 - 1. Tongue speakers must KEEP SILENT if there is no interpreter
 - 2. Prophet who is standing must KEEP SILENT if something is revealed to one who is seated
 - 3. That means to yield the floor to someone else to allow them to speak
 - 4. It was possible for this to happen b/c the spirits of the prophets were subject to the prophets
 - 5. It was necessary b/c God is not a God of confusion
 - iv. In the case of women, they are to KEEP SILENT in general, not just if someone else has something to say.
 - 1. They are to yield the floor as a matter of policy
 - 2. Keeping silent does not preclude singing, correcting children, privately passing on information, or doing anything else that does not put a woman in the position of directing or redirecting the proceedings of public assembly.
 - 3. Bible classes –
 - a. are part of the assembly – the church gather together at a specified time for spiritual teaching is an assembly
 - b. Can a woman ask or answer a question or make a comment in a Bible class?
 - c. If directed to by the leader of the class
 - d. Can a woman ask or answer a question or make a comment in such a way that it directs or redirects the Bible class?

- e. Yes, and if she does, she is violating the teaching of these passages.
 - f. Such a question or comment should be saved for outside the public assembly
- d. Why?
- i. There is an order that has been in place from creation
 - 1. Adam created first
 - 2. Then Eve
 - ii. That order was reinforced at the fall – Gen. 3:16
 - 1. Adam was not deceived
 - 2. Eve was
 - iii. God emphasized her submissive role to her husband
 - 1. He will rule over you
 - 2. Also increased pain in childbearing
 - 3. But that childbearing, though painful brought salvation for all
 - 4. MacKnight’s explanation: However, though Eve was first in the transgression, and brought death on herself, her husband, and all her posterity, the female sex shall be saved (equally with the male) through child-bearing - through bringing forth the Savior, if they live in faith, and love, and chastity, with that sobriety which I have been recommending.
 - a. She – Eve and the female sex
 - b. They – Women

IV. Applications

- a. Can a woman serve as a preacher, pastor, elder, or bishop?
 - i. Not without violating these scriptures
 - 1. She cannot teach or have authority of a man (1 Tim. 2:11-12)
 - 2. She is to keep silent in the churches (1 Cor. 14:34-35)
 - ii. The qualification for elder/pastor/bishop precludes women from this office (1 Tim 3:1-2)
- b. Are women barred from using their God-given teaching abilities?
 - i. NO!
 - ii. Even in 1 Corinthians 14, where women are commanded to keep silent in the churches they are commanded to ask questions outside of the public assembly
 - 1. Many teachers and preachers have been set straight and saved from error by godly women approaching them in private and asking questions in love and submissiveness
 - 2. Apollos was one of them –
 - a. Acts 18:24-28
 - iii. There are many other opportunities to teach and instruct
 - 1. Instructing their own children

2. Others children
 - a. In our organized Bible classes, for instance
 - b. Charlie King's grandmother had Bible classes in her home for the children in her neighborhood
3. Through conversation with others
4. Through structured Bible study with others
- iv. None of this is precluded by the role given women in the public assembly
- c. Doesn't this restriction show the male-dominated repressive background of Paul and the other church leaders, which we should reject in view of the liberty we have in Christ?
 - i. It is true that some in Bible times mistook God's order for man and women as an indication that women were somehow less able, less important, or less valuable to society or to God
 1. Adam Clarke makes note of the Rabbinical teaching that said, "Let the words of the law be burned, rather than that they should be delivered to women."
 2. Some have the view that women should be kept in subjection involuntarily by men preventing them from acquiring knowledge or ability w.r.t. God's word
 3. Nothing is further from God's word
 - a. A woman soul is just as valuable as the man's – Gal. 3:28
 - b. They are fellow-heirs of life – 1 Pet 3:7
 - c. A man's prayers will be hindered if he does not treat a woman properly
 - ii. But others have the mistaken view that if someone is in submission they are necessarily inferior
 1. And so women must take equal part in the public services of the church or else they are being mistreated
 2. Who is higher in rank, importance and value, Jesus Christ or human beings? Jesus Christ
 - a. And yet – Luke 2:51
 - b. After declaring that He know who His Father was
 - c. He subjected Himself to Mary and Joseph, mere human beings
 - d. Did that degrade Jesus Christ? No. It was fitting and proper in God's order of things
 - e. Does a wife's subjection to her husband, or a woman's silence in public assemblies degrade her? No. It is fitting and proper in God's order of things
 - iii. Our world does not respect these teachings
 1. Some denominations do not respect these teachings
 2. But what does Paul say immediately after giving these instructions to women in 1 Corinthians 14?
 3. 1 Cor. 14:36-40

4. These are the commandments of the Lord not the preferences of Paul
5. We cannot substitute our personal opinions or desires for the commands of Jesus, and honestly call Him our Lord

V. Conclusion

- a. Does the church where you worship honor the teaching of Scripture regarding the relationship between men and women in the assemblies of the church?
 - i. I hope so,
 - ii. But if not, I would encourage you to ask some questions
 - iii. With your Bible in your hand
 - iv. And do whatever is necessary to ensure that you and your loved ones are worshipping in a place where the Lord is honored in every respect
 - v. And the commandments of the King of Kings and Lord of Lords are held far above the opinions and preferences of mere human beings
- b. INVITATION

1 Timothy 2:8-15 NASB 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.

1 Corinthians 14:34-35 NASB 34 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. 35 If they desire to learn anything, let them ask their own husbands at home; for it is improper for a woman to speak in church.

1 Timothy 3:1-2 NASB It is a trustworthy statement: if any man aspires to the office of overseer, it is a fine work he desires to do. 2 An overseer, then, must be above reproach, the husband of one wife, temperate, prudent, respectable, hospitable, able to teach,