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Is It Right to Have Women Preachers Today?

By Mark J. Ward

There is much controversy over the question of women preachers and women teachers today. It is good wherever there is disagreement on a Bible matter to turn to God's Word for the answer. This article will specifically deal with the issue of Women Preachers and we will leave the question of whether or not a woman may teach a class of children or other women for another study. Suffice it to say, God has spoken on this matter and we should submit to His Will on the topics at hand.

There may be someone reading this who is already a "Woman Preacher", or may consider herself to be a "Woman Pastor". Let us clearly communicate that we are not opposed to women fulfilling their God-given roles in Scripture. Likewise, we are clearly for the men fulfilling their God-given roles as outlined in Scripture. The same holds true for children's roles and even the role of kinfolk in various areas wherein God has spoken (Please read and study: Ephesians 5, 6; Titus 2; I Timothy 2; I Corinthians 11,14; I Timothy 5:16).

First, it would probably be good to remind us all that we are not under the law age of the Patriarchs (i.e. Adam, Eve, Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Joseph: Genesis 1 - Exodus 19), nor are we under the law of Moses (Exodus 20 - Malachi). Since we are under the New Law, (the new covenant, the gospel age or dispensation), we will concentrate our study on what the Bible has to say with regard to whether or not it is permissible *today* for women to be preachers.

Women Preachers - Defined

For the sake of this article, we will define a "woman preacher" as a female who gets in the pulpit and teaches a mixed assembly inclusive of mature (i.e. adult) men and women. When a "whole church" be come together into one place, the female will address the audience for the purpose of leading the Bible study, taking authority of that part of the worship, and exercising dominion over all the audience.

I Corinthians 14:33-35

Let us look to the verses and make some observations about instruction God has clearly given concerning regulating activity when the whole church be come together into one place. ***I Corinthians 14:33-35 says, "For God is not the author of confusion, but of peace, as in all churches of the saints. 34 Let your women keep silence in the churches: for it is not permitted unto them to*** (con't next page)

Times of Services

Sundays - 2:00 pm Bible class, 3:00 pm Assembly Wednesdays - 6:30 pm Bible class

May Women be Preachers Today? (continued)

speaking; but they are commanded to be under obedience, as also saith the law. 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.” Paul, inspired by the Holy Spirit, clearly teaches women that “it is a shame for women to speak in the church”. What do “women preachers” do? They “speak in the church”; they preach in the church, when the whole church is assembled together in one place. The practice of having women preachers today is in conflict with this requirement from God.

What are we to do? Are we to ignore the teaching and permit women preachers today? Are we to disregard these passages of inspired writ and do just the opposite of what is taught in Scripture? Many religious groups are doing just that and others are headed in that direction today. Do you believe God is pleased with a direct violation of His Word? Certainly not!

I Timothy 2:9-12

Another passage of Scripture that would apply (whether in or out of church assemblies) is ***I Timothy 2:9-12*** which says, **“11 Let the woman learn in silence with all subjection. 12 But I suffer not a woman to teach, nor to usurp authority over the man, but to be in silence. 13 For Adam was first formed, then Eve. 14 And Adam was not deceived, but the woman being deceived was in the transgression.”** God has given us instruction here. It does not contradict the writing of Paul in the I Corinthians 14 text, rather, it harmonizes with it. Does the passage authorize women to take a role of authority in teaching (adult) men? Certainly not!

Those that engage in and/or endorse the practice of women preachers today are in direct violation of the teaching of the New Testament. Are we “against women”? No! Certainly not! All we are doing is looking at the passages that are most pertinent concerning women preachers (as defined in this article). We must expose error in doctrine and practice with love for truth and righteousness in order to please God above.

Disagreement

Those of an opposing view will sometimes look to Acts 8:4 and point to the fact that *women and men* were dispersed due to persecution and went everywhere “preaching the word”. To this we agree, **but we do not agree for one second that the women went out preaching the Word in the sense of becoming “women preachers” in assemblies of the churches wherein they exercised dominion over adult males in the audiences!** In fact, women are taught to never exercise dominion over adult males, given our New Testament instruction on the subject. All Christians are to teach the Word (men *and* women), but we are regulated by God’s instruction in so doing. There is no precept, no approved example, or any unavoidable conclusion that would authorize “women preachers” as defined in this article. May God bless us as we study and obey His Word. Thanks for reading. - mjlw

Editor’s Note: If you would like a Home Bible Study in the privacy of your home, or would like to study further over the phone, or by computer (email), please feel free to contact us: Mark J. Ward, 445 Touchstone Parkway, Brunswick, Georgia 31525, (912) 265-6936 - markjward@yahoo.com

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