



Devotional Study Guide Journal

April 28th

May Women Teach in the Church?

Maybe half of the church today would answer this question, “Yes,” and the other half, for differing reasons, “No.” But let us look at the verse that is most commonly used to support the “no” response. I have boldfaced the verse causing the commotion, but have included its context.

1 Timothy 2:8-15

*I desire therefore that the men pray everywhere, lifting up holy hands, without wrath and doubting; ⁹ in like manner also, that the women adorn themselves in modest apparel, with propriety and moderation, not with braided hair or gold or pearls or costly clothing, ¹⁰ but, which is proper for women professing godliness, with good works. ¹¹ Let a woman learn in silence with all submission. ¹² **And I do not permit a woman to teach or to have authority over a man, but to be in silence.** ¹³ For Adam was formed first, then Eve. ¹⁴ And Adam was not deceived, but the woman being deceived, fell into transgression. ¹⁵ Nevertheless she will be saved in childbearing if they continue in faith, love, and holiness, with self-control.*

Verses 8–10 shouldn’t surprise anyone. Men should pray with holiness and faith. Women should not emphasize their looks with elaborate clothing, jewelry, or fancy hair. This tends to get interpreted in the culture where one lives. It doesn’t mean women have to wear ugly clothing and look like old ladies. You can figure that out before God. Basically, let your outward appearance reflect your inner holiness. Let the way you live be your adornment.

Then Paul writes, “Let a woman learn in silence with all submission.” This is where people go off track, but it’s not that complicated.

Let’s start with Greek definitions. In this entire section where English translators have written “woman,” Paul uses the Greek word *γυνή* which according to Strong’s means, “a woman; specifically a wife.” For the word

men or man Paul uses the Greek word ἀνὴρ which translates, “a man, husband.”

It would have been perfectly correct and certainly less confusing if the translators had written:

Let a WIFE learn in silence with all submission. ¹² And I do not permit a WIFE to teach or to have authority over a HUSBAND, but to be in silence.”

Why they chose man and woman instead of husband and wife, God only know. Some women might suspect it was for the purpose of excluding women from ministry.

Someone might still take offense at the husband-wife translation, but the principle of a wife submitting herself to her OWN husband as unto the Lord is clearly written elsewhere. Notice also that that verse says to be subject to her OWN husband, not any other man. She is not in submission to every man in the church—only to her own husband. I personally see this as a protection for a woman as a wife, not a subjugating factor.

It is improper to take one Scripture, and let it stand alone, especially when there are multiple other passages which show the opposite. It must be taken into context with all of the New Testament writing and context. So, let’s look what is obvious elsewhere in Scripture that shows that women did indeed teach in the church even to men.

1. First of all, Paul wrote that under the New Covenant there is no difference between classes of religion/race, gender, and socio-economic status.

Galatians 3:28

There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is neither male nor female; for you are all one in Christ Jesus.

This must have been a shocking statement both to the Jews and the Greeks.

2. Joel prophesied that the Spirit would be poured out on both men and women and that men and women would prophesy.

Acts 2:17-18

*"And it shall come to pass in the last days, says God,
That I will pour out of My Spirit on all flesh;
Your sons **and** your daughters shall prophesy,
Your young men shall see visions,
Your old men shall dream dreams.
¹⁸ And on My menservants **and** on My maidservants
I will pour out My Spirit in those days;
And they shall prophesy.*

3. Philip had four daughters who prophesied (Acts 21:9).
4. Priscilla and Aquila taught Apollos a man in correction (Acts 18:26).
5. Phoebe served as a deacon of the church at Cenchreae (Rom. 16:1-2).
6. Euodia and Syntyche labored with Paul "in the gospel" (Phil. 4:2-3).
7. Junia was named among those mentioned as "of note among the apostles." (Rom 16:7). Apostles are sent to preach the gospel.
8. Paul acknowledges many women as "fellow workers" (Rom. 16).

Since there are so many examples of women preaching and prophesying, even correcting a man with her husband, it is not sound to say that women have no speaking roles in the church. Since they served as apostles, prophets, and deacons, it is more logical to conclude that they taught in the churches.

On a personal note, I C. D. Hildebrand, know that I have been called to "preach the gospel to the saved." By His grace I am who I am, and I would rather answer to my God who called me than to someone who thinks women can't teach.

He didn't tell me to preach the gospel to women. He told me to preach the gospel to the saved which includes all those who are saved. If a man has difficulty receiving what I teach, that is between him and God. He can look for hundreds of other teachers, all men, who are preaching the same message I am. But I don't have to answer to that person. I have to answer to God who called me.

My husband, to whom I have been submitted in love for over fifty years agrees with this calling and has taken it as his own—as ours. We labor together in this ministry to the saved. I do not usurp authority over him at any time. I don't try to teach him. He is perfectly capable of learning on his

own, but we do share what we are learning with each other. Over the years, he has learned from me and I from him. But I do not in any way take authority over him in life or in our ministry. We work TOGETHER in submission to each other and to the Lord.

The New Covenant adds an equality factor to women that is unheard of in any other religion in which women are truly treated as subject and objects. Jesus publicly ministered with women by his side. Before the cross, they ministered to His needs. After the cross they became equals with men. So, Christianity, rather than being a religion that subjugates women is the only one which lifts them up to equal status.



What a powerful truth it is when we remember that God cares about what we care about. God is not an unfeeling or neutral God sitting in heaven somewhere casually listening to us as we pour our breaking hearts out before Him. God sincerely cares for us. He weeps with us. He mourns with us. How does believing this change our perspective?

If you'd like think of how you might explain this truth to a child, a friend, or a family member.

