

Apostolic Restoration of Women in Ministry



Restoring our Biblical Foundations

Amanda Buys' Spiritual Covering

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PART A:

THE POSITION OF WOMEN IN THE CHURCH

(This teaching is a summary of tape recordings by Dr. Ed Stewart.)

1. Freedom of Women to be in Leadership

1 Tim. 2:12 *“12 I allow no woman to teach or to have authority over men; she is to remain in quietness and keep silence [in religious assemblies].”*

I am teaching on the freedom of women to be in leadership in the church and that callings are more important than gender.

Now see what Luke wrote. He was there. He saw it. He heard it.

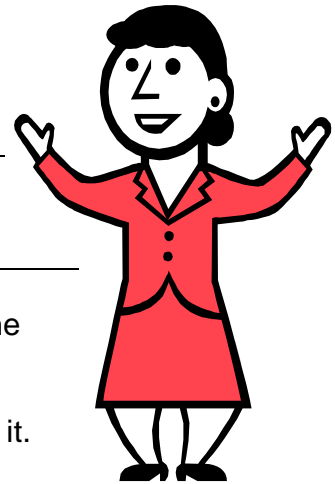
Acts 10:34 *“34 And Peter opened his mouth and said: Most certainly and thoroughly I now perceive and understand that God shows no partiality and is no respecter of persons,”*

Now we should be able to stop right there. The Bible is so clear: Over and over again the Bible teaches that God is not a respecter of persons. It doesn't matter whether you're black or you're white, whether you're Swedish or Chinese, whether you're rich or poor, or whether you're male or female. God is not a respecter of persons.

Of course we can't stop there. Why? Because we have 1000 years of tradition where we have been taught for 20, 30, 40 years that God **IS** a respecter of persons. A man can lead, but a women can't. And why? Is it because of qualification? No! Is it because of education? No! It's because I have short hair and she has long hair. It's purely based on gender!

We've got to get pass this, because God is calling men AND women all over the world to do things they never dreamed God would ask them to do. God is preparing to dump the world into our churches and we're going to need everybody.

I remember the revival in Mexico in the early 1960's. This church in Mexico city held 2000 people. They were holding seven services a day, six days a week and people were still standing in the streets, waiting to get in. The pastor could NEVER finish a message. People ran for the front of the church and gave their hearts to Jesus.



2. Callings are More Important than Gender

And we're in a time like that. And we've got to get free so that we can all obey Jesus. God hasn't called every woman to travel all over the world anymore than he has called every man to do that. But IF you're called by the Lord, the question is: "Will you obey that call?"

I have met women from all over the world. They said, "When I was just a little girl," or they say, "Earlier in my life, God told me to do this and I couldn't believe it, because the Bible said I couldn't do it."

Isn't that amazing? That God would ask someone to do something that he had already written in His Word you wouldn't be able to do?

This message is not just for women, but for the Body of Christ. If my wife isn't free, and she IS, I couldn't be free, because my wife and I **are one**. Are you listening to me? So whatever affects her, affects me, and whatever affects me, affects her.

The Body of Christ is one and whatever affects a sister, affects a brother. Jesus says if one of us is hurt, we all feel it. If one of us is blessed, we should all rejoice. And so the freedom of every member of the Body of Christ affects the freedom of every other member of the Body of Christ.

We need to take these difficult passages about women and bring a proper Biblical interpretation. We have to lay tradition aside; we have to lay religion aside; we have to lay culture aside, we've got to look at the scripture.

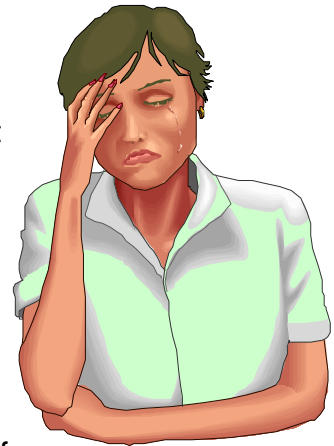
Now the reason we get wrong interpretations is simply because good Bible interpretation principles were not used. We're going to be working with three basic principles.

3. We must interpret a verse in context (Contextual Interpretation)

The Western Church is famous for lifting a verse out of the Bible, putting it on the wall, and writing their interpretation. Scripture is always interpreted within the context of the setting. Let me give you an example:

1 Cor. 14: 23-35:

"23 Therefore, if the whole church assembles and all of you speak in [unknown] tongues, and the ungifted and uninitiated or unbelievers come in, will they not say that you are demented?"



24 **But if all prophesy** [giving inspired testimony and interpreting the divine will and purpose] and an unbeliever or untaught outsider comes in, he is told of his sin and reprov'd and convicted and convinced by all, and his defects and needs are examined (estimated, determined) and he **is called to account by all**,

25 The secrets of his heart are laid bare; and so, falling on [his] face, he will worship God, declaring that God is among you in very truth.

26 What then, brethren, is [the right course]? When you meet together, **each one has a hymn**, a teaching, a disclosure of special knowledge or information, an utterance in a [strange] tongue, or an interpretation of it. [But] let everything be constructive and edifying and for the good of all.

27 If some speak in a [strange] tongue, let the number be limited to two or at the most three, and each one [taking his] turn, and let one interpret and explain [what is said].

28 But if there is no one to do the interpreting, let each of them keep still in church and talk to himself and to God.

29 So let two or three prophets speak [those inspired to preach or teach], while the rest pay attention and weigh and discern what is said.

30 But if an inspired revelation comes to another who is sitting by, then let the first one be silent.

31 For in this way you can give testimony [prophesying and thus interpreting the divine will and purpose] one by one, so that **all** may be instructed and **all** may be stimulated and encouraged;

32 For the spirits of the prophets (the speakers in tongues) are under the speaker's control [and subject to being silenced as may be necessary],

33 For He [Who is the source of their prophesying] is not a God of confusion and disorder but of peace and order. As [is the practice] in all the churches of the saints (God's people),

34 The women should keep quiet in the churches, for they are not authorized to speak, but should take a secondary and subordinate place, just as the Law also says.

35 But if there is anything they want to learn, they should ask their own husbands at home, for it is disgraceful for a woman to talk in church [for her to usurp and exercise authority over men in the church].”

Verse 23: All could speak in tongues; it needs to be done orderly, but **all** can do it.

Verse 24: All could prophesy; it also needs to be done orderly, but **all** can do it.

Verse 26: **Each one** has a hymn, a teaching, a revelation, a tongue or interpretation of it.

Verse 31: All can prophesy; all can learn, and all can be encouraged.

Paul says all may speak in tongues, all may prophesy, all may have a revelation, or a psalm, all can prophesy (he says it twice) that all may learn that all may be comforted.

Verse 34: Let your women keep silent.

Can you see the problem? Paul says, All can speak in tongues; all can prophesy; each one of you has a revelation or a psalm, but the women must be silent in the church.



Can you prophesy silently? Can you sing a psalm silently?

That is called a contextual problem, and you only see it if you read the whole passage in context.

If you highlight verse 34, you're going to write a doctrine that says, Women must be silent in the churches, while on FIVE occasions in the previous verses Paul said all could participate in the service.

Verse 35: If a woman wants to know anything, let her ask her husband at home, for it is shameful for a woman to speak in church.

Paul seems to say that all women can learn in the church (verse 31), and then he writes in verse 35 that if they want to learn anything, they must go home and ask their husbands. This will be very difficult for single women; and widows.



4. We have to read the scriptures!

We are talking about doctrine, when we are talking about 70% of the Body of Christ (did you know that nearly 70% of the Body of Christ is female?); and we tell them they can't teach, they can't lead and they can't participate in the church service – I don't know how we got here. But Jesus is lifting the Church up – above tradition and above religion – and we are going to walk and talk with Jesus Christ.

Paul wrote **letters**, but we don't read them like letters. We read a verse in chapter 14 and then a verse in chapter 3 and then chapter 15 and then 3 verses in chapter 10, because we were trained to read the Bible by verses.

If you got a letter from your mother or one of your relatives, would you open the letter, turn to page 4 paragraph 3 and read line 1? And then go back to page 2 and go to paragraph 4 and read line 2? You would never know what the person wrote you!



You start at the beginning of a letter and you read the whole thing! And **then** you get a **picture** of what Paul is writing!

1 Cor 7:1 *“1 NOW AS to the matters of which you wrote me. It is well [and by that I mean advantageous, expedient, profitable, and wholesome] for a man not to touch a woman [to cohabit with her] but to remain unmarried.”*

The Corinthians wrote Paul a letter and Paul wrote back to them. They asked questions and shared their points of view. Paul wrote back and answered their questions and corrected their wrong viewpoints. 1 Corinthians is the answer to their letter.

Prof. Sir William Ramsey was the authority on the epistles of Paul in the mid 1800's. He wrote a book called "The Church and the Roman Empire".

Here is what he said about Paul's epistles:

“We should be ready to suspect Paul of making a quotation from the letter addressed to him by the Corinthians. Whenever he references to their knowledge, or when any statement stands in mark contrast either to the immediate context or Paul's known views.”

What did Prof. Ramsey say? Whenever we find something in one of Paul's letters that does not fit the context of the passage, it is not Paul's statement, but the statement from the Corinthians. In other words, Paul quoted what they said, and then responded to what they had said. When we answer letters ourselves, we make reference to something someone else said in their letter and then we respond to it.

Paul said *“all could speak in tongues, all could prophesy, each one of you has a psalm or an interpretation”*. The Corinthians said *“let the women keep silent in the churches for it is not spiritual unto them to speak”*.

Paul said *“let all the women learn in the service”*. The Corinthians said *“if the women want to learn anything they must ask their husbands at home”*.

Verse 36: *“What! Did the word of the Lord originate with you [Corinthians], or has it reached only you?”*

This was Paul's response to what they believed. Is he agreeing with them or is he correcting them? It's a word of correction, isn't it? He's saying, "What are you teaching? Maybe I don't have the Word of God and you do. Maybe the Word of God never reached me.

This is a very strong statement, because everyone in the early church knew that Paul was the only one that had the revelation of the church. Jesus personally took him to heaven and revealed to him the New Testament, and he came back and wrote it in these letters. And for **him** to say to the Corinthian church, “*Maybe you have the Word of God but I don’t*”, was a very strong statement.

Now we have something that fits into context. Paul wrote that **all** could participate in tongues; **all** could prophesy as the Spirit of God lead; **each one** of you could participate; **all of you** could learn in church; and **then** he spoke what the Corinthians had written to him; and the he **corrected** what they wrote him. Do you see it?

It’s the only way you can put this passage together.

Verse 37: *“If anyone thinks and claims that he is a prophet [filled with and governed by the Holy Spirit of God and inspired to interpret the divine will and purpose in preaching or teaching] or has any other spiritual endowment, let him understand (recognize and acknowledge) that what I am writing to you is a command of the Lord.”*

This is not the things that they wrote him. This begins to make the passage more readable. In the same chapter we have two **completely** different statements. They cannot both be correct. But Paul used a very simple literary technique. Let me demonstrate to you.

He preaches: **All** could speak in tongues; **all** could prophesy; **everyone** of you could have a psalm or a tongue or an interpretation. **All** of you can learn in the church! And then he says, let the women keep silent. And they said, Uh? And he caught them in their own words. And then he says, What are you talking about? Did the Word of God originate with you? Are you the ones that have the truth and I don’t? Let the congregation understand that the things that I write unto you are the Word of God, not the things that you wrote unto me.



Verse 38-39: *“38 But if anyone disregards or does not recognize [that it is a command of the Lord], he is disregarded and not recognized [he is one whom God knows not].
39 So [to conclude], my brethren, earnestly desire and set your hearts on prophesying (on being inspired to preach and teach and to interpret God’s will and purpose), and do not forbid or hinder speaking in [unknown] tongues.”*

5. Paul had given the Word of Truth.

It is a shame that after 1900 years much of the church still believes what the Corinthians wrote instead of what Paul wrote.

Now, no one **really** believes that women should keep silent in Church. Every denomination and association has their own interpretation. A woman can preach in the mission field, but not at her home church. A woman can teach women, but not men.

But if the whole passage had been taught in context, and if **all** chapters had been read, and if it were understood what 1 Corinthians was, this mistake would never have been made.

Dr. Adam Clarke was an English Theologian. He says in reference to **1 Cor. 14:34**: "It is the only scripture in the whole Book of God which, even by a false translation, can be made to prohibit females from speaking in the church.

How is it then that by this **one isolated passage** which according to our best Greek authority is wrongly translated, women's lips have been silenced for centuries? **One passage!**

Now they could have helped us. They could have put verses 34 and 35 in quotation marks, showing that somebody else was saying it. They could've given a little comment in the margin.

Montgomery New Testament: *"In your congregations you write..."*

Now this would've helped us, wouldn't it? Montgomery said, **You** wrote this, **I** didn't.

The Swedish translation of the Bible has a line drawn at the beginning and at the end of the passage that sets it apart.

There are things that could've been done to help us, **but** we can all read the passage in context. And when you do, you see a very big problem.

1 Cor. 11:5 *"5 And **any woman** who [publicly] prays or prophesies (teaches, refutes, reproves, admonishes, or comforts) when she is bareheaded dishonors her head (her husband); it is the same as [if her head were] shaved."*

In this verse Paul says women can pray and prophesy in church, but chapter 14 says let them be silent.

We've had so much revelation in the last 20 years; we can't even keep up with it! But we also need to be a Church of Scholarship. We need revelation, but we need to be able to prove it in the Word of God. And all through the New Testament women are preaching and teaching and serving the Lord, and to pull **one** verse out of context and apply it as an eternal law is completely erroneous!

1 Cor. 14:34 *"Let you women keep silent for it is not permitted for them to speak."*

Wow, this is the love of Jesus, isn't it?

1 Cor. 14:34 *"34 The women should keep quiet in the churches, for they are not authorized to speak, but should take a secondary and subordinate place, just as the Law also says."*

Most people think Paul is talking about the Mosaic Law. Have you ever read the Old Testament? Did you ever read anything that said, Let women keep silent in the churches? Read the Old Testament and see if you can find it!



What law is Paul talking about then?

There are three laws taught in the New Testament:

1. Mosaic Law
2. Roman law (at that time in history)
3. Jewish traditional law.

The traditional Jewish law says: "It is a shame for a woman to let her voice be heard among men." This sounds pretty close to what we read in **1 Cor. 14:34**. The Corinthians believed old Jewish, traditional law.

6. God never told women to be silent in the churches!

We all have thoughts like, *"If it says so in the Bible, it has to be true?"* Everything in the Bible is truly stated. It is stated the way the Holy Spirit directed it to be written. But not everything in the Bible is a **statement of truth**.

John 8:52 *"52 The Jews said to Him, Now we know that You are under the power of a demon (insane). Abraham died, and also the prophets, yet You say, If a man keeps My word, he will never taste of death into all eternity."*

Is this true? Did Jesus have a demon? We do believe the Jews said this, but we don't believe Jesus had a demon, because it is **not a statement of truth**.

Paul wrote **1 Cor. 14:34-35** at the direction of the Spirit, but **it was not a statement of truth.**

Do you see it? Everything in the Bible is stated correctly – the Holy Spirit didn't make any mistakes – but not everything He had the people write was a statement of truth.

7. We have to interpret a verse in its Historical setting.

The Bible (New Testament) was written over 2000 years ago in a language that doesn't even exist today. The Greek language today is very different from the "koine" Greek of the first century. Has anything changed in 2000 years?

There are eternal principles in the Bible – they're true in any time-frame and in any setting. Examples:

1. **"Jesus Christ is the Son of God."** It was true 5000 years ago and it'll be true 5000 years from now.
2. **"The Trinity"**
3. **"Entering God's presence by faith."**

These are principles that never change. There's one True and Living God – He never changes. But not everything in the New Testament is an eternal principle. Some things were written because of the circumstances they faced in the first century. And we've accepted some passages as eternal principles such as:

1 Tim. 2:12 *"12 I allow no woman to teach or to have authority over men; she is to remain in quietness and keep silence [in religious assemblies]."*

This was interpreted as an eternal principle: No woman in any generation can teach the Bible, because if they do, they're exercising authority over men, and that's contrary to Scripture. This is the traditional interpretation of the verse.

Do you know any woman Bible teachers? Do you think they're all in sin disobeying God? Have you ever seen a woman Bible teacher anointed of God? Why did God anoint her? Maybe we should send God a letter and let Him know that He's making a mistake. [I'm being humorous only to make a point.]

Timothy was the pastor in Ephesus. In the first century of the church in Asia Minor (Turkey) there was a very serious false doctrine. It was called **Gnosticism**. It was in all the churches in Asia Minor and Ephesus was the capitol of Asia Minor. This is some historical background so you can understand what Paul was writing.

What did the Gnostics teach? In 1945 in Egypt an entire Gnostic library was uncovered. Gnosticism was a very female-dominant religion. Gnostic is the Greek word for “knowledge”.

Gnostic women believed:

1. They were the mediators between God and man.
2. Woman was created first in the garden; woman was primary in creation.
3. Woman did not sin in creation; she received special knowledge from the serpent.
4. Sexual practices bind the flesh and divine together – when people have sex with leaders it brings them closer to God.

This is what Paul is writing to Timothy about.

1 Tim. 2:5 *“5 For there [is only] one God, and [only] one Mediator between God and men, the Man Christ Jesus,”*

Doesn't everybody know this? Is this news to you? But the Gnostics were teaching something else.

So, Paul made it plain to Timothy that there's only **One Mediator**. You have to remember that this is about 60 AD and the only man that had the full revelation was Paul, and he received it by revelation from Jesus Christ.

1 Tim. 2:13 *“13 For Adam was first formed, then Eve;”*

What did the Gnostics believe? That woman was created first and man second. Paul writes, *“No, the man was first formed and then the woman”* a direct refuting of Gnostic doctrine.

1 Tim. 2:14 *“14 And it was not Adam who was deceived, but [the] woman who was deceived and deluded and fell into transgression.”*

Did the Gnostics believe woman sinned? No.

1 Tim. 2:12 *“12 I allow no woman to teach or to have authority over men; she is to remain in quietness and keep silence [in religious assemblies].”*

Let's say you're the pastor of a church and you've got someone in your church teaching that woman were created first; that the woman didn't sin in the garden; and that women are the mediators between God and man. What would you do?

Would you forbid women to teach because they're **women** or because they're **wrong**?

The only criteria to stop someone from teaching is if they teach what is wrong.

2 Tim. 2: 17 *“17 And their teaching [will devour; it] will eat its way like cancer or spread like gangrene. So it is with Hymenaeus and Philetus,”*

Here Paul **corrects two men** in their teaching. He didn't just correct the women – he corrected the men **and** the women. Paul corrected people because they were wrong, not because of their gender. So, Paul is not telling all women for all time they cannot teach.

8. We have to interpret the verse in term of the original language. (Grammatik interpretation)

Let's look at the word “authority” in the verse above (**1 Tim. 2:12**). If you do not look at the original languages, you miss the whole interpretation. The general word for “authority” in Greek is “exousia”, and there are 18 different English words you can use to translate that word into; e.g. power, authority, magistrate, strength, etc.

If you can follow the Holy Spirit, it will solve many of the problems of life.

Excerpt from an article on Gnosticism:

*“Ancient heresies and a strange Greek word:
Previously, they had been taught that fornication brought the worshipper in direct communion with deity. It's noteworthy that certain Gnostics employed the word “authentine” to indicate a force binding together the flesh and divine.”*

The author of this article says that the Gnostics used that very unusual Greek word “authentica” to describe the bringing together of the flesh with the divine. This is exactly what Paul was teaching. We can't see it, because we used the general word of “authority”.

In the 4th century the great church father, John Christerton, wrote that “authentica” was used to express sexual license.

The early church knew what this meant. All the writings of the early church fathers indicate that they understood this. It wasn't until later that this word was transposed to “authority”. That's the common translation today.

The Bible says that God gave five ministries to perfect the Church: The apostle, the prophet, the evangelist, the pastor and the teacher. We need these ministries.

Because of these passages that we've been looking at, many women have not been able to follow Jesus the way Jesus wants them to follow Him. That's the important part. We have to be able to follow Jesus.

WOMEN APOSTLES:

Did you know there were **women apostles** in the first century?

Rom. 16:7 *"7 Remember me to Andronicus and Junias, my tribal kinsmen and once my fellow prisoners. They are men held in high esteem among the apostles, who also were in Christ before I was."*

Andronikus was a man; Junias was a **woman**. They were both **apostles** in the early church and John Christeton wrote about her and he said she was a great woman; a great apostle of God.

Would you like to see a woman evangelist? I've found over 25 woman ministers in the New Testament. But sometimes because of the translation they're veiled. We can't see clearly.

PROPHETESS:

Luke 2:36a *"36 And there was also a **prophetess, Anna**, the daughter of Phanuel, of the tribe of Asher. She was very old, having lived with her husband seven years from her maidenhood,"*

So, we have a woman apostle and we have a woman prophet. God calls women to be apostles. God calls women in the prophetic office.

PREACHER:

Luke 2:37-38 *"37 And as a widow even for eighty-four years. She did not go out from the temple enclosure, but was worshiping night and day with fasting and prayer.
38 And she too came up at that same hour, and she returned thanks to God and **talked of [Jesus] to all** who were looking for the redemption (deliverance) of Jerusalem."*

When we read this we think of this little elderly lady talking to 2 or 3 people about redemption. But the word spoken there in translation, is **preach**.

Mark 2:2 *"2 And so many people gathered together there that there was no longer room [for them], not even around the door; and **He was discussing the Word.**"*

Whatever Jesus was doing, Anna was doing – it is the same Greek word. But when we think of Jesus, we think of something different than Anna would do.

Acts 8:25 *“25 Now when [the apostles] had borne their testimony and **preached** the message of the Lord, they went back to Jerusalem, proclaiming the glad tidings (Gospel) to many villages of the Samaritans [on the way].”*

Here we have Peter and John and they were ministering the Word of the Lord; the same Greek word. Whatever Peter and John was doing, Anna was doing. Whatever Jesus was doing – Anna was doing.

Luke 2: 38b *“38 And she too came up at that same hour, and she returned thanks to God and **talked of [Jesus] to all** who were looking for the redemption (deliverance) of Jerusalem.”*

She pulled up a podium and began to preach to all of them that Christ has come, because they had just brought Jesus in to be circumcised. She preached to all those who were looking for redemption.



This verse has always been in the Bible but our mindset has blinded our eyes. We don't see these things, Jesus makes you look at these things.

John 4:22, 25-26 *“22 You [Samaritans] do not know what you are worshiping [you worship what you do not comprehend]. We do know what we are worshiping [we worship what we have knowledge of and understand], for [after all] salvation comes from [among] the Jews.
25 The woman said to Him, I know that Messiah is coming, He Who is called the Christ (the Anointed One); and when He arrives, He will tell us everything we need to know and make it clear to us.
26 Jesus said to her, I Who now speak with you am He.”*

Jesus didn't tell people who He was. He always said, “I am the Son of man.” But to this woman He said, I am the Messiah. He said this to encourage her ministry, because look what she does.

EVANGELIST:

Now look at verse 39: *"39 Now numerous Samaritans from that town believed in and trusted in Him because of **what the woman said** when she declared and testified, He told me everything that I ever did."*

This woman went back to Samaria and she **preached** to the whole city. What do evangelists do? They preach to whole cities. People believed because of what this woman said to them. Many in this city believed because of the word of this woman. This is city-wide evangelism.

Jesus chooses the vessel; we do not choose.
Jesus chooses the gift; we do not choose.
Jesus chooses the call; we do not choose.

This is part of God's Sovereignty. He put gifts in each one and if you put all of them together, you will have a whole body and nothing shall be impossible.

Verse 40-41 – Now Jesus was evangelizing.

Is the woman's evangelizing anything less than Jesus? She won many Samaritans to the Lord; Jesus also won many more to the Lord. Whatever Jesus was doing, she was doing.

Verse 42 *"42 And they told the woman, Now we no longer believe (trust, have faith) just because of what you said; for we have heard Him ourselves [personally], and we know that He truly is the Savior of the world, the Christ."*

Acts 18:26-28 *"25 He had been instructed in the way of the Lord, and burning with spiritual zeal, he spoke and taught diligently and accurately the things concerning Jesus, though he was acquainted only with the baptism of John.
26 He began to speak freely (fearlessly and boldly) in the synagogue; but when **Priscilla** and Aquila heard him, they took him with them and expounded to him the way of God more definitely and accurately.
27 And when [Apollos] wished to cross to Achaia (most of Greece), the brethren wrote to the disciples there, urging and encouraging them to accept and welcome him heartily. When he arrived, he proved a great help to those who through grace (God's unmerited favor and mercy) had believed (adhered to, trusted in, and relied on Christ as Lord and Savior).
28 For with great power he refuted the Jews in public [discussions], showing and proving by the Scriptures that Jesus is the Christ (the Messiah)."*

If you're ever going to grow in your life in ministry, you're going to have to respect the leadership God places over you because God does things sovereignly.

Gen. 1:26 *“26 God said, Let Us [Father, Son, and Holy Spirit] make mankind in Our image, after Our likeness, and **let them have complete authority** over the fish of the sea, the birds of the air, the [tame] beasts, and over all of the earth, and over everything that creeps upon the earth.”*

9. Man (men and women) were created to have dominion.

Man (men and women) were created to rule and dominate the forces of nature. Verse 28 says man has dominion over everything that moves on the earth. Both men and women were given authority to dominate.

You were created to rule and dominate over everything, **not over each other**. Man must rule over the devil, rule over the circumstances of life and the resources of the earth but our culture has trained us to rule over each other – and this creates **conflict, strife** and **unforgiveness**.

When you rule **in** your family, you rule **over** the devil, sickness and disease, financial lack, etc – **but not over your wife**.

God knows you are designed to dominate – He made you that way – it’s a natural thing, but it’s not natural to dominate people. That’s unnatural in the Kingdom of God.

John 13:34 *“34 I give you a new commandment: that you should love one another. Just as I have loved you, so you too should love one another.”*

We need to learn to love. Whatever your doctrine – if it’s not dipped in the Love of Jesus, it’s not New Testament, because the basis of the New Testament is the Love of Jesus.

Gen. 3:16 *“16 To the woman He said, I will greatly multiply your grief and your suffering in pregnancy and the pangs of childbearing; with spasms of distress you will bring forth children. Yet your desire and craving will be for your husband, and he will rule over you.”*

This verse looks pretty plain, like a statement or fact. But what happened just before this verse?

Gen. 3:7 *“7 Then the eyes of them both were opened, and they knew that they were naked; and they sewed fig leaves together and made themselves apronlike girdles.”*

Both had sinned and lost their connection with God. Both of their spirits died. They had bowed their knees to another spirit and turned their back to God.

Gen. 1:28 “28 And God blessed them and said to them, *Be fruitful, multiply, and fill the earth, and subdue it [using all its vast resources in the service of God and man]; and **have dominion** over the fish of the sea, the birds of the air, and over every living creature that moves upon the earth.*”

10. God blessed the man AND the woman.

The one wasn't blessed more than the other – equal blessings. God spoke to **both** of them – equal relationship with God.

Note it does not say that man hears from God and then tells the wife, that the wife doesn't have a relationship with God herself.

Gen. 3:8 “8 And they heard the sound of the Lord God walking in the garden in the cool of the day, and Adam and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the Lord God among the trees of the garden.”



Both walked and talked with God – they had an equal relationship with God.

Gen. 1:28 “...*have dominion...*” Who was to have dominion? **THEY** were.

EQUAL blessing.
EQUAL relationship.
EQUAL dominion.
They were one in God.

What happened? They rebelled against God; they sinned; and everything changed. Now it's not God working through them, but the enemy of God: satan.

Satan's job is to rule humanity.

- Rule you in your health – we call it sickness;
- rule you in your finances – we call it poverty;
- rule you in your emotions – we call it anger and strife.

And now he was working through two people.

God was not telling people His will – we already have His Will in Genesis 1. God was prophesying what was going to happen: Because of what you've done, these things are going to come upon you. The ground isn't going to yield to you anymore. And husband is going to rule his mate – not the earth, not the resources of the earth, because he lost that – now he's going to rule a human.

The Law of the New Testament is to love one another. But that's not all, because this is what the Old Testament says as well. What Jesus told us to do, was to love each other the way He loves us.

We are the only religion in the World where the God we worship lives in the worshipper. So, we need to let Him work through us in our marriages, in our relationships, and it will release more power.

We should walk in love wherever we go. We don't have to agree with everyone about everything. We should love a brother / sister even though he/she is not spirit-filled and speaking in other tongues.

Jesus, our Saviour, lives inside Christians, and therefore we should love our fellow-Christians. If I deny my neighbour my love, I'm actually denying my Saviour my love.

My God lives on the inside of my husband / wife. How can I be offended at him / her?

We are married to the sons / daughters of Almighty God.

God wants to release the power of heaven through us. Let things go by forgiving those who have hurt us! Don't get offended.

If we learn to love one another the way God loves us, we'll have so much power and revelation flowing through us.

Even if a person never changes; never reaches great heights; falls to the lowest places – Jesus' love will not change. He loved you yesterday as much as today and as much as tomorrow. His love is not performance-centered – it's 100%!

We are to love the way He does.

You don't try to remake people so they don't bother you. You learn to love people and what they do doesn't bother you anymore. Instead of trying to change **everybody**, you only need to change **one** person – yourself.

This will explode your Christianity.

There is a special anointing for husband and wife couples who chooses to serve the Lord together. When these Christian couples minister the Word of God together, God will multiply their anointing ten times.

John 14:12b “...he will do even greater things...”



PART B:

A HEBRAIC PERSPECTIVE: THE IMAGE AND MINISTRY OF WOMEN

(Transcribed from a cassette teaching by Dwight Pryor)

1. What is the Church?

Eph 1:18-23 *“18 By having the eyes of your heart flooded with light, so that you can know and understand the hope to which He has called you, and how rich is His glorious inheritance in the saints (His set-apart ones),
19 And [so that you can know and understand] what is the immeasurable and unlimited and surpassing greatness of His power in and for us who believe, as demonstrated in the working of His mighty strength,
20 Which He exerted in Christ when He raised Him from the dead and seated Him at His [own] right hand in the heavenly [places],
21 Far above all rule and authority and power and dominion and every name that is named [above every title that can be conferred], not only in this age and in this world, but also in the age and the world which are to come.
22 And He has put all things under His feet and has appointed Him the universal and supreme Head of the church [a headship exercised throughout the church],
23 Which is His body, the fullness of Him Who fills all in all [for in that body lives the full measure of Him Who makes everything complete, and Who fills everything everywhere with Himself].”*

When we think of the Church we think of it as an instrument. This is true but far from the whole truth. God wants the Church to be Jesus incarnated. We need both views. The Church is called to be the very incarnation of Him Who was the very incarnation of God. The fullness of deity indwelt Him as a Man and now the fullness of Messiah is to indwell the Church as a Body. To even begin approaching the calling that's upon the Church, to be the fullness of Him Who fills all in all, it takes everyone.

It takes a variety and diversity of ministries, of ministers, of gifts, of abilities, of services – to begin in any measure to be the Body of Messiah ministering to the world today. In His Body He has ascended to the place of power so that His Spirit could be sent upon and within us to do His work in His Name.

The Church is a witnessing community of faith upon which there is a calling to be the fullness of Him Who fills all in all. The Church is more than an assembly – it's an army. It's more than a collection of people – it's a congregation. A community forged in spiritual purpose and set out on a mission. It's more than just called out – it has a call upon it.

And for us to respond to this call we need a plurality of leaders, ministries, men and women serving the cause of Christ. In the first Church we saw this plurality of ministries and leadership roles.

2. Men and Women are Apostles

Both men and women were acting in ministry in the Book of Acts church, the apostolic church. Women played very significant roles just as they had done in the synagogues from which the church emerged.

We, however, diminish and limit the contributions and ministries of women in the Church. The theological justification that we use is the way we read the apostle, Paul. There are a number of scriptures from Paul that are problematic.

1 Cor 14 *“...women must keep silent in the church...”*

1 Tim 2 *“...I don't allow women to teach or have authority over men...”*

Eph 5 *“...women must submit in all things to their husbands...”*

These are difficult passages interpreted differently by evangelical scholars. Paul himself is a challenging subject. Even Peter says so in his second epistle. People have misunderstood Paul and greatly so when it comes to the issue of women in ministry.

But what is undisputed and unequivocal is the ideal that Paul sees in Christ Jesus.

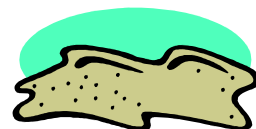
Gal 3:27-28 *“For as many [of you] as were baptized into Christ [into a spiritual union and communion with Christ, the Anointed One, the Messiah] have put on (clothed yourself with) Christ. There is [now no distinction] neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is not male **and** female; for you are all one in Christ Jesus.”*

This is the reality in the spirit and it's supposed to be the reality in practice.

Why does Paul say there's neither “male **and** female”? Because Paul is a rabbinic student and is here citing scripture, making a reference to Genesis.

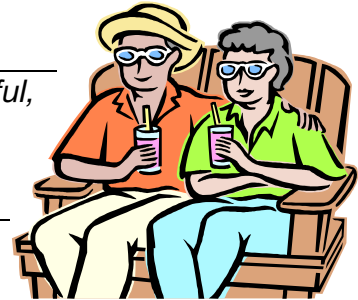
Gen 1:27 *“So God created **man** in His own image, in the image and likeness of God He created him; male and female He created them.”*

“Man” = adam = humankind (Hebrew) = dust



Paul understands that males and females were created equally in the image of God.

Gen 1:28 “And God blessed **them** and said to **them**, Be fruitful, multiply, and fill the earth, and subdue it; and have dominion over the fish of the sea, the birds of the air, and over every living creature that moves upon the earth.”



Both male and female are called to have dominion. They have the same image and they are to have a shared responsibility.

Gen 2:18 “Now the Lord God said, It is not good that the man should be alone; I will make him a **helper meet** for him.”

Meet (Hebrew) = equality, balance, one who is corresponding to and a direct counterpart of.

Helper (Hebrew) = help; to deliver, strength; the woman is a power equal to man.

How can the woman have strength and power equal to the man? Because she was made in the image and likeness of God, just like the man. And she is given the mission to exercise dominion over the earth, just like the man.

The woman was made a power equal to man. Can this be supported?

Rabbi Hersch: “Helper-meet certainly expresses no idea of subordination, but rather complete equality and on a footing on equal independence. Woman stands to man parallel, on one line, at his side.”

We see this power and equality of women at work in the Bible.

Prov 31:10-31 “10 A capable, intelligent, and virtuous woman—who is he who can find her? She is far more precious than jewels and her value is far above rubies or pearls.

11 The heart of her husband trusts in her confidently and relies on and believes in her securely, so that he has no lack of [honest] gain or need of [dishonest] spoil.

12 She comforts, encourages, and does him only good as long as there is life within her.

13 She seeks out wool and flax and works with willing hands [to develop it].

14 She is like the merchant ships loaded with foodstuffs; she brings her household’s food from a far [country].

15 She rises while it is yet night and gets [spiritual] food for her household and assigns her maids their tasks.

16 She considers a [new] field before she buys or accepts it [expanding prudently and not courting neglect of her present duties by assuming other duties]; with her savings [of time and strength] she plants fruitful vines in her vineyard. [S. of Sol. 8:12.]

17 She girds herself with strength [spiritual, mental, and physical fitness for her God-given task] and makes her arms strong and firm.

18 She tastes and sees that her gain from work [with and for God] is good; her lamp goes not out, but it burns on continually through the night [of trouble, privation, or sorrow, warning away fear, doubt, and distrust].

19 She lays her hands to the spindle, and her hands hold the distaff.

20 She opens her hand to the poor, yes, she reaches out her filled hands to the needy [whether in body, mind, or spirit].

21 She fears not the snow for her family, for all her household are doubly clothed in scarlet.

22 She makes for herself coverlets, cushions, and rugs of tapestry. Her clothing is of linen, pure and fine, and of purple [such as that of which the clothing of the priests and the hallowed cloths of the temple were made].

23 Her husband is known in the [city's] gates, when he sits among the elders of the land.

24 She makes fine linen garments and leads others to buy them; she delivers to the merchants girdles [or sashes that free one up for service].

25 Strength and dignity are her clothing and her position is strong and secure; she rejoices over the future [the latter day or time to come, knowing that she and her family are in readiness for it]!

26 She opens her mouth in skillful and godly Wisdom, and on her tongue is the law of kindness [giving counsel and instruction].

27 She looks well to how things go in her household, and the bread of idleness (gossip, discontent, and self-pity) she will not eat.

28 Her children rise up and call her blessed (happy, fortunate, and to be envied); and her husband boasts of and praises her, [saying],

29 Many daughters have done virtuously, nobly, and well [with the strength of character that is steadfast in goodness], but you excel them all.

30 Charm and grace are deceptive, and beauty is vain [because it is not lasting], but a woman who reverently and worshipfully fears the Lord, she shall be praised!

31 Give her of the fruit of her hands, and let her own works praise her in the gates [of the city]!”

She's an independent business woman, she's industrious, she's efficient, she supervises a household staff and she owns property! She's a power equal to man. And when her husband sits in the city gates he talks about her in positive ways.



3. Old Testament Women Leaders

This power and equality of women was also seen in the life of ancient Israel. Miriam, Moses' sister, was a prophetess and co-leader with Moses and Aaron (**Ex 15:20**).

Other women in the Old Testament are called prophetesses and rulers: Miriam, Deborah (**Judges 4**), the wife of Isaiah, Hannah, Esther, etc.

In the Old Testament it is true that the highest calling upon women was that of wives and mothers, because from God's point of view there's no higher calling on any of our lives, including the lives of men ministers, than family and children.

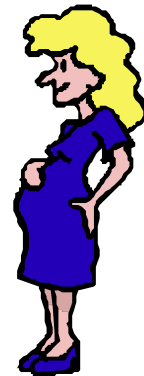
Gen 18:19 *"For I have known him [as My own], so that he may teach and command his children and the sons of his house after him to keep the way of the Lord and to do what is just and righteous, so that the Lord may bring Abraham what He has promised him."*

Why does Abraham become the father of the nation? Because he will teach the ways of the Lord to his house and to his servants.

Deut 6:7 *"...teach and impress them diligently upon the [minds and] hearts of your children..."*

The primary function is as wives and mothers because family is fundamental and of decisive importance. The home, in Judaism, is the **primary sphere** of religious activity – not the synagogue or the temple. The cell of the Body of Christ is not the individual – it's the family.

Women, who are wives and mothers can, under certain circumstances with a great anointing and a calling upon their lives, rise to levels of leadership in the community. If the community is going to rise to its calling, to be the Congregation of the Lord, we need **men and women** functioning in the Body.



We might think this is only true of the Hebrew scriptures, and that rabbinic Judaism puts down women. This is not true. It is a prejudice. There are some statements in later rabbinic Judaism that are negative towards women, but there are also many more that are positive that we don't hear.

One of the most esteemed scholars and sages in ancient rabbinic Judaism was a woman. She was married to an equally famous rabbi, but her rulings were considered more auspicious than his. Indeed, it was said of her that on one day alone she read 300 commentaries on a legal decision. This might be an exaggeration, but the point is, this was one bright woman – she was a power equal to man!

The women were exempted from the commandments that required a certain act at a certain time and place. Why? Because the home took precedence over doing some of these commandments. Women were permitted to pray and study.

4. Women in the Time of Jesus

Indeed, the most prestigious living professor of second temple Judaism in Israel today, now retired from the Hebrew University, says the evidence is overwhelming that in the time of Jesus women were not separated from the men in the synagogue. That's a later development in Judaism. They worshiped and prayed together.

One Jewish young woman did a doctoral dissertation in which she studied extensively inscriptions from archaeological discoveries of synagogues in the land of Israel and in that region. These inscriptions showed that women played extraordinary active roles in synagogue lives. Many of them were known as generous donors; patrons to the synagogues. Some were called leaders or the heads of synagogues. Some were referred to as elders. One was called the mother of the synagogue. Others are referred to as priests or ministers in the synagogues.

We might ask, What about the life of Jesus? We don't see any women leaders with Jesus.

Actually, we don't see any men leaders with Jesus either. There's only one Leader, Jesus!

There are men and women who are His disciples and who have followed Him from the beginning and they play various functions. But, unfortunately, the role women played with Jesus has been minimized.

Women played remarkable roles in His life, ministry, death and resurrection. Who was the first witness of the resurrection of Jesus from the grave? It was a woman who was a former prostitute, from whom demons had been delivered. She was given the privilege to be the first human being to lay eyes on the Risen Messiah!

One of the most remarkable women of the New Testament is Mary, mother of Jesus. She became a faithful disciple who was with Him from the beginning to the end. In the upper room when the promised Holy Spirit fell among the apostles there was also Mary, the mother of Jesus.

Remarkable women, disciples of Jesus, contributed to Jesus' ministry, were at the crucifixion and the resurrection, in the upper room, there on the day of Pentecost.

Joel said the Holy Spirit is going to be poured out on **all** flesh, not just male flesh – all flesh.

Peter says, you are **all** priests in the Kingdom of God.

The women are also called to priesthood under God's Kingship – a holy nation, a people set apart.

5. Paul's Word on Woman

Well, what about the things Paul wrote about women?

First of all, we've misunderstood Paul because we haven't appreciated his Jewishness, the culture from which he comes.

Secondly, we haven't understood the pagan context into which he's ministering. When he talks about women in Corinth, he says the women must keep silent. There are some historical factors that required him to say this: The women in Corinth were the pagan priestesses and a part of the religious ritual was to give out with wild shrieks and uncontrolled shouting. These women come from a culture in which the males are passive and women have to take the leadership role in the pagan temple, being cult prostitutes. And they're out of order! So, Paul says to them, hush up! He doesn't say, don't say anything, because just before that he says women can prophesy just like men. But, he's basically saying, be quiet, don't be out of order in the church.

We haven't understood the historical, pagan context in which Paul writes to Timothy when he says, I don't permit women to have authority. If you do a careful study of the Greek and also the context, you'll learn that there were some women who were exercising a domineering spirit. The words "exercise authority over" means "to dominate". These women were trying to exercise inappropriate authority and be the instructors of the men in inappropriate ways.

Paul celebrates the role of women and many women contributed to his ministry. In Romans 16 he lists, by name, ministers that he wants to send personal greetings to. More than one third of the list consists of women.

Phoebe, in Greek, is called *diakonas*, literally meaning deacon.

Rom 16:1-2 “Now I introduce and commend to you our sister Phoebe, a deaconess of the church at Cenchreae, that you may receive her in the Lord, as saints ought to receive one another. And help her in whatever matter she may require assistance from you, for she has been a helper of many including myself.”

Some Bibles don't translate this correctly. These translators had an ecclesiastical authority behind them, which they were supporting and defending. E.g. in **Acts 2** it says that 3000 were added *to the church* that day, which is an incorrect translation. In the Greek the words *in the church* are not even there. These translators added these words because they represent the church at this point, a centuries-old ecclesiastical institution. They also love to use the word *rule* for “let the men *rule* over the women”; they have to be the “good *rulers*” of their house.

But this word in Greek is not the term for a ruler. In fact, this term for someone who's a ruler or a king is never used for a New Testament husband or minister. The term here speaks of one who leads, stands before and goes before. “Follow me as I follow Christ” – that's a leader!

This is what husbands ought to do: They're to lead their wives who voluntarily adapt themselves to them in love. There should be no domination. Men are to love their wives as Messiah loves the Church. What's the character of this love? Sacrifice.

In **Rom 16:2** where Paul writes about Phoebe, she is called a *helper*. This is an incorrect translation. She was a patron, a benefactor, of the church. She held a superior social status and Paul devotes two verses to commend her.



Paul commends Prisca (Priscilla). She's also talked about in **Acts 18:24-26**. In the Greek it says that **Priscilla** and Aquila **taught** Apollos, a brilliant man. Priscilla, a woman, taught! In a certain Bible the order of Priscilla and Aquila was reversed, so that the man's name stood first. But this is not the way in was written in Greek, which is significant, because in Greek the man always went first. This shows Priscilla's exceptional leadership.

In **Rom 16:7** Paul talks about Andronicus and Junias, two men. In the earliest text it's “Junia”, not “Junias”. It's only from the thirteenth century on that this name was changed. Why? Because Junia is a female name and Junias a male name. There's only one problem: No where in Greek literature of the ancient world is there a single instance of a man named Junias. Paul, here, is commending a woman apostle!

There are many others, but the point is that women played vital roles and had dynamic ministries in Paul's church and the first church. They fulfilled diverse functions and they were on par with male roles.

So whether you have from the Hebrew scriptures prophetesses who were also mothers and wives, judges and spiritual leaders in Israel, or a single woman who's in leadership like Miriam or a resistance leader like Rahab – the women played vital, important roles to the community of Israel.

6. The Role of the Church Today

When the church emerges from the fertile soil of Judaism, grafted into the olive tree root that nourishes us and provides us, it's not surprising on the one hand, of course, males take a visible leadership. It has to do with their very masculinity; what they're called to be – the initiators, the leaders. But it's not surprising that women also, in various circumstances, are called up to positions of leadership with an anointing, gifting, skills and commitment.



If the Church, the Body of Messiah, is to be the fullness of Him Who fills all in all, we must realize that Messiah, Who redeemed is also Messiah Who wants to restore. He wants to put back into place that which was put in place in the creation. "Male and female He created **them**." Male and female were equal by the Creator's image; they were equal in the Creator's command to care for the creation – made in the same image and sharing the same responsibility.

Jesus as the Redeemer from the corruption of the fall of humankind now wants to restore humankind back to its original image. If we're going to have a hope of approaching the fullness of Him Who is the fullness of the Godhead dwelling bodily in a man, we have to have both male and female contributing to the cause of Christ.

So when the apostle Peter says, you all are priests, ministers, in the Kingdom of God, he means just that. We may have different functions, but we all have the same calling. Different functions are not a hierarchy of functions. Created in the same image and in Christ recreated in that image and called to discipleship.



After all, **all of us** are the Bride.

7. What happened at the Fall?

It's the brokenness of the fall of Adam (humankind) that caused the God-given masculinity in the male to become corrupted, twisted and bent, resulting in men wanting to dominate women, creation and the church. It's a **broken masculinity**.

It's a **broken femininity** when some women grasp after inappropriate authority, and it's a **broken masculinity** that won't permit them to exercise Godly authority as there's gifting, anointing, calling and community acknowledgment.

8. We all need to come into shalom – into wholeness.

The rabbi said, *“I can't fully be a man until I have a helper meet. Only when the two of us become one do we approach that original creation of humankind.”*



Rabbi's noted in the scriptures that the women of Israel did not participate in the sin of the golden calf. It was just rebellious men, constantly driven to strive, dominate, conquer and to keep people in their place, rather than lifting people up so that the fullness of Him Who fills all in all can flow. We need to be healed. We need one another. And that wholeness, that healing, is in the Lord of the Sabbath. He has the shalom. And once we come into that healing, then in interdependence, mutual respect – different gifts, different gender – we can say, what matters to me is not my place or position, but the advancing of His Kingdom. I cast aside my kingdom, my prerogatives, my selfishness and my ambition, because I want to see the cause of Messiah advance.

So, let us join hands so that Christ in us becomes all in all.

(For more info/teachings on Dwight Pryor visit his website: www.jcstudies.com)

