

A Woman To Teach

1). Within the context of church organizations, many denominations teach and practice that it is wrong for a woman to be allowed to teach within the assembly. This viewpoint is usually based on two specific scriptures—

- **1Timothy 2:12** “And I do not permit a woman to teach or to have authority over a man, but to be in silence.”
- **1Corinthians 14:34** “Let your women keep silent in the churches, for they are not permitted to speak; but they are to be submissive, as the law also says.”

2). These scriptures appear straight forward enough, but if we think about them logically they would present us with a problem. Our Timothy scripture is not time sensitive. Therefore, it would be wrong for a woman to teach a man at any time.

- This being the case, all the men here would need to throw away all of Cindy’s Bible Studies, destroy the videos and cancel the retreat weekends – the ladies excepted of course. We would have to find a man to take Jeanne’s place on Thursday nights, as well.
- And, if we were also to take the 1 Corinthians scripture to its logical conclusion, you could not allow any women teachers in Sunday School or nursery. Neither could they pray or sing.
- Please remember that the church *is not a physical location*, the church is those who are the called out – people, not a building. If the men in this room were to meet together, and the women were to meet together, both in entirely different locations, both groups would still be the church-- even though separate from each other.

3). So, as we think these things through our conclusions appear entirely unreasonable, don’t they? But does that matter? Fortunately we have something far more convincing at our disposal – scripture itself. If we compare scripture with scripture, we would find that there seems to be a contradiction to our Timothy and Corinthians scriptures.

- Note what we find in the book of Acts—
Acts 18:26 **So he (Appolos) began to speak boldly in the synagogue. When Aquila and Priscilla heard him, they took him aside and explained to him the way of God more accurately.**
- And elsewhere—

- **Romans 16:3 Greet Priscilla and Aquila, my fellow workers in Christ Jesus,**
- **Romans 16:12 Greet Tryphena and Tryphosa, who have labored in the Lord. Greet the beloved Persis, who labored much in the Lord.**
- **Philippians 4:1-3 Therefore, my beloved and longed-for brethren, my joy and crown, so stand fast in the Lord, beloved. I implore Euodia and I implore Syntyche to be of the same mind in the Lord. And I urge you also, true companion, help these women who labored with me in the gospel, with Clement also, and the rest of my fellow workers, whose names are in the Book of Life.**
- We see here in our Acts scripture Aquila and Priscilla (a man and his wife) explaining to Appolos the way of God more accurately. And we know that within the context here they are dealing with the “way of God”, things concerning the gospel of the glory of Christ, not the gospel of grace.
 - It would be difficult for Priscilla, a woman, to do this without teaching or speaking.

4). Looking again at Romans 16:3, we see that Paul wrote Priscilla’s name first. She is referred to, along with her husband, as Paul’s fellow worker. Literally his ‘co-workers’ in Christ Jesus.

- The Greek prefix that would give us the English prefix ‘co’ is the same prefix given to the word ‘co-heirs’ with Christ.
- The point is that in both instances the prefix denotes an equality with what follows – co-heirs with Christ – co-workers with Paul.
- Now given what we know about Paul’s ministry work, it would be difficult for Priscilla to have equality in that ministry, along with her husband, without teaching or speaking.

Then how should we understand 1 Timothy 2:12 and 1 Corinthians 14:34?

- 5). Let’s look at 1 Timothy in a little more detail. Most important is the context--
- **1Timothy 2:8-14 I desire therefore that the men pray everywhere, lifting up holy hands, without wrath and doubting; 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, but, which is proper for women professing godliness, with good works. Let a woman learn in silence with all submission. And I do not permit a woman to teach or to have authority over a man, but to be in silence. For Adam was formed first, then Eve. And Adam was not deceived, but the woman being deceived, fell into transgression.**

- This is clearly dealing with *proper living* for women professing godliness with good works. And because of the woman being formed to be a “helper” for the man, we cannot help but see this in terms of the marriage relationship.
- In verse 12 the word woman is the Greek word “gune”, which means specifically a wife.
 - There are a number of Greek words that are translated ‘woman’. For example, there is a word for an unmarried woman...this is the Greek word “agamos”. We find this in 1Corinthians 7:34—

1Corinthians 7:34 There is difference also between a wife and a virgin. The unmarried woman careth for the things of the Lord, that she may be holy both in body and in spirit: but she that is married careth for the things of the world, how she may please her husband.

This verse also states that there is a difference between a wife “gune” and a virgin— here being another Greek word, “parthenos”, for virgin. So we need to be sure we understand which “woman” is being referred to in any given passage.

- Youngs Literal Translation gives v.12 as follows—
1Timothy 2:12 “...and a woman – “gune”/wife – I do not suffer to teach, nor to rule a husband, but to be in quietness...”
 - The reference to Adam and Eve in vv.13-14 gives the example of the wife ‘teaching’ her husband. Eve’s action in listening to the serpent and eating the fruit, placed her outside of the purpose and protection God had given her as Adam’s helper. She embarked on a course of action in a completely wrong direction, necessitating her husband to follow her.
 - It should become very plain to us that Paul is dealing here with the proper relationship between a husband and his wife, not with a woman teaching the gospel.

6). A parallel scripture may help to make this clearer for us—

1Peter 3:1-5 Wives, likewise, be submissive to your own husbands, that even if some do not obey the word, they, without a word, may be won by the conduct of their wives, when they observe your chaste conduct accompanied by fear. Do not let your adornment be merely outward--arranging the hair, wearing gold, or putting on fine apparel-- rather let it be the hidden person of the heart, with the incorruptible beauty of a gentle and quiet spirit, which is very

precious in the sight of God. For in this manner, in former times, the holy women who trusted in God also adorned themselves, being submissive to their own husbands...

- The word translated here 'quiet' (spirit) is the Greek word "hesuchios", which means quiet in the sense of settled, steadfast, immovable. This is referring to a woman being settled and secure in her role as wife.
- This is the same word translated "silence" in 1 Timothy 2:11,12

Let a woman learn in silence with all submission. And I do not permit a woman to teach or to have authority over a man, but to be in silence.

- This word has far more to do with being *settled* than *not speaking*.
- Look again at **1Peter 3:1 Wives, likewise, be submissive to your own husbands, that even if some do not obey the word, they, without a word, may be won by the conduct of their wives...**
 - 'Without a word' is the same thought as "I do not permit a woman to teach or have authority over a husband" from 1 Timothy 2:12. This has to do with a woman not asserting herself over her husband in a manner of trying to lead him. This has nothing to do with her keeping her mouth shut in a general sense.
 - 'The conduct of their wives' from 1 Peter 3 is the same thought as "to be in silence" – settled & steadfast. This is about the inward woman and her demeanor and attitude to her husband.

7). Let's look at the scripture from Corinthians a little more closely –

1Corinthians 14:33-35, 40 For God is not the author of confusion but of peace, as in all the churches of the saints. Let your women keep silent in the churches, for they are not permitted to speak; but they are to be submissive, as the law also says. And if they want to learn something, let them ask their own husbands at home; for it is shameful for women to speak in church.....Let all things be done decently and in order.

- Context again is dealing with the husband and wife relationship. The word translated "women" here is again the Greek word "gune" – a woman, specifically a wife.

- The women of verse 34 are to ask their own husbands of verse 35. We are not dealing with women in a general sense, but with wives, who are to remain submissive to their husbands within the context of a gathering like this.
- For things to be “decent and in order,” they need to be within the proper bounds of authority that God has set.

8). And so to take us back to any woman teaching here, on a Sunday morning – this is going to be done decently and in order.

- Jeanne, or any woman who teaches, will remain under her husband’s authority and he will release her to speak. If he were to tell her not to speak then she would not.
- If the woman is not married, then the elders will release her to speak. If they were to tell her not to speak then she would not.

9). Finally, let us deal with the particular idea of any woman teaching on a “Sunday”. Some of us may have gotten the idea along the way that a woman should *never* teach a sermon on a Sunday.

- Our gathering together on a Sunday is a man-made mandate, it is not a scriptural one. We can meet and be taught on any day of the week—it does not matter. So whether a woman teaches here on a Sunday or in a home on a Thursday, it makes no difference.
 - Our scriptural perspective on “Sunday” somehow being a “special” day should be this—

Hebrews 10:25 “...not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as is the manner of some, but exhorting one another, and so much the more as you see the Day approaching.”

As we close for the day, let’s remember that we are told to assemble; it does not matter on which day of the week we do that. We can do it on a Sunday or a Thursday or any given day. The purpose for our gathering together is to exhort – encourage and uplift—one another as we look out ahead to that coming Day. The point is to make sure that we DO assemble together.