

QUESTION: Does I Timothy 2:9-15 say that a woman is not supposed to teach a man?

ANSWER: First of all, we know that **the gifts of prophecy (preaching) and teaching** are valid gifts of the Holy Spirit for **women** as well as men, and that women are EQUAL to men in the eyes of God in the body of Christ.

- **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**.....and on My menservants and on **My maidservants** I will pour out My Spirit in those days, and **they shall prophesy.**"
- **Acts 21:8-9** ".....and entered the house of Philip the evangelist, who was one of the seven, and stayed with him. Now this man had four virgin **daughters who prophesied.**"
- **Galatians 3:26-28** "For you are all sons (children) of God through faith in Christ Jesus. For as many of you as were baptized into Christ have put on Christ. There is neither Jew nor Greek (gentile), there is neither slave nor free, there is **neither male nor female; for you are all one in Christ Jesus.**"
- **II Corinthians 6:16 & 18** "And what agreement has the temple of God with idols? For you are the temple of the living God. As God has said, 'I will dwell in them and walk among them, I will be their God, and they shall be My people.' (Verse 18) "'I will be a Father to you, and you shall be My sons and **daughters,**' says the Lord Almighty."
- **Read also Luke 2:36-38** (Anna, the prophetess); I Corinthians 11:5 (women praying & prophesying in the church assembly).

However, even though the gift of prophecy (preaching or teaching) is a valid gift for **women** as well as men, God has given **certain rules for how they should function in the church assembly**, within the local body of believers. One of those rules is that **women are not to USURP AUTHORITY OVER A MAN**, which means women are not permitted to be pastors or ruling elders of the local church body. Women evidently were allowed to be "deacons" or "deaconesses" (see Romans 16:1- the word "servant" is the same as "deacon") because the deacons were SERVANTS, and the deacons in the church were not the ruling elders or the ones who were to preach to the congregation.

- **Read I Timothy 3:1-13** (Verses 2, 4 & 5) "A bishop (pastor), then must be blameless, the husband of one wife.....one who rules his own house well, having his children in submission with all reverence (for if a man does not know how to rule his own house, how will he take care of the church of God?)"
- **I Timothy 2:11-14** "Let a woman learn in silence with all submission. And I do not permit a woman to teach or **to usurp 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."
- **Romans 16:1** "I commend unto you Phoebe **our sister, who is a servant (deacon)** of the church which is at Cenchea."

Definition: "Usurp authority" - To dominate or act independently.

Definition: "Silence" - Stillness, quietness, to desist from bustling.

What about the verses that say a woman should keep silent in the church? "Let a woman learn in silence" was a reproof to women in the church who were talking, gossiping, or asking questions during the preaching of the word. Paul says that if they don't understand something

or have a question, they should ask their own husbands when they get home, **not make a disturbance in the church**. In I Cor. 14, the context is that of the church body misusing the gift of speaking in tongues, whether men or women. The Believers in Corinth were causing CONFUSION in their worship services, and God says HE is NOT the author of confusion, but of order.

- **Read I Corinthians 14:26-40** (Verses 33-35) "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."

Definition: "It is shameful for women to speak in church" - The Amplified translation says "it is disgraceful for a woman to TALK in church." **It is NOT the word for preach or teach**, but just TALK. Some of the women were TALKING during the church service and causing a disturbance.

How then are women to function and use their gifts of prophecy or teaching in the church? The word of God says that women are to be **submissive to their own husbands**, and that the **husband and wife are in ministry together** (joint heirs or co-laborers together). Unmarried women can be teachers of other women and of children.

- **I Peter 3:7** "Likewise you husbands, dwell with them with understanding, giving honor to the wife, as to the weaker vessel, and as **BEING HEIRS TOGETHER** of the grace of life, that your prayers may not be hindered."
- **Acts 18:2 & 26** "And he found a certain Jew named Aquila, born in Pontus, who had recently come from Italy **with his wife Priscilla** (because Claudius had commanded all the Jews to depart from Rome); and he came to them." "So he 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."
- **Romans 16:3** "Greet **Priscilla and Aquila, my FELLOW WORKERS** in Christ Jesus."
- **I Corinthians 11:5 & 10-11** "But **every woman who PRAYS or PROPHESES** with her head uncovered dishonors her head (her husband), for that is one and the same as if her head were shaved." "For this reason the woman ought to have **a symbol of authority** on her head, because of the angels. Nevertheless, neither is man independent of woman, nor woman independent of man, in the Lord."

Definition: "A symbol of authority" - In first century Corinth, for a woman to have her head covered was a **SIGN of her submission to her husband** (her husband's AUTHORITY over her). The heathen temple prostitutes had shaved heads, and Paul is basically saying that for a Christian woman to be independent and rebellious, and to refuse to be submissive to her husband (and the head covering was a **symbol of that submission in their society**), she is no better than a prostitute. We do not have such a symbol of submission in our American society today, so this is not a verse to take out of context and be legalistic about women wearing hats in church! It is the ATTITUDE of the heart that God is looking for anyway (I Peter 3:1-4). For a woman to act independently (in a rebellious manner) of her husband in ministry, is for her to be exposed to satanic attacks, because she is out from under the protective covering of God (especially regarding His angels - see I Corinthians 11:10).

- **Ephesians 5:21-24** "SUBMITTING to one another in the fear of God. Wives, SUBMIT to your own husbands, as to the Lord. For **the husband is the head of the wife, as also Christ is head of the church**; and He is the Savior of the body." Therefore, just as the CHURCH is SUBJECT to Christ, so let the wives be to their own husbands in everything."

- **Ephesians 5:30-32** "For we are members of His body, of His flesh and of His bones. For this reason a man shall leave his father and mother and be JOINED to his wife, **and the two shall become one flesh**. This is a great MYSTERY, but I speak concerning CHRIST and the CHURCH."
- **I Peter 3:1-4** "Likewise you wives, be submissive to your own husbands, so that even if some (husbands) do not obey the word, they, without a word (**without arguing or preaching to them**) may be won by the conduct of their wives, as they observe your chaste and respectful behavior. And let not your adornment be external only - braiding the hair, and wearing gold jewelry, and putting on dresses; but let it be **the hidden person of the heart**, with the imperishable quality of a gentle and quiet spirit, which is precious in the sight of God."
- **Titus 2:3-5** "The **older women** likewise, that they be reverent in behavior, not slanderers, not given to much wine, **TEACHERS of good things** -- that they admonish the young women to love their husbands, to love their children, to be discreet, chaste (modest), homemakers, good, obedient to THEIR OWN HUSBANDS, that the word of God may not be BLASPHEMED (spoken against with CONTEMPT)."

The command for wives to be submissive to their own husbands is meant to picture the relationship between Christ and His church, and Christ and the Father. The church is to be submissive to Christ (not act independently of Him). Jesus, when He was on earth, did not act independently of God the Father (see John 5:19, 5:30, John 12:49, John 14:10). Jesus was EQUAL with the Father, but He VOLUNTARILY **CHOSE to take a subordinate place** to the Father for the purpose of carrying out the plan of salvation.

- **I Corinthians 11:3** "But I want you to know that the HEAD of every man is Christ, and the HEAD of woman is man (her husband), and the HEAD of Christ is God."