

## **THE ROLE OF WOMEN IN WORSHIP** **(1 Timothy 2:9-14)**

### **I. Arguments made for an increased role for women in worship.**

A. The biggest argument made for the expanded role of women in worship is that all the passages that restrict women in worship are dealing with specific and cultural problems unique to the recipients of the letter.

1. I found online two statements issued by two different congregations in Texas that allow women to be active in various roles in worship.

2. One is a three page statement, the other is 119 pages long.

3. Admittedly, I have not read all 119 pages of the one but I have read some and I have read all three pages of the other.

B. The next argument that is made is taken from Galatians 3:28.

1. It is argued that this verse teaches that there is no distinction between males and females in the work and worship of the church.

C. Another argument that is made is that Phoebe is called a deacon in Romans 16:1.

1. The word servant in the King James Version is from the Greek word diakonos which is translated deacon in other passages like 1 Timothy 3:12 and Philippians 1:1.

D. Another argument made is that God has given us all gifts to use, both male and female, and we should not restrict women from using them.

1. It is pointed out by some that women have become Prime Minister's of countries, presidents of corporations and achieved other high social status positions in the world.

2. Others point to the gifts mentioned in the New Testament and that God bestowed them upon all people, not just males.

E. Some argue that since women were mentioned as having prophesied in the first century, they can have a leadership role or teaching role in the worship today.

1. They point out Philip had daughters that prophesied.

2. Also, it is shown that women were mentioned as praying and prophesying in 1 Corinthians 11:1-16.

F. Still others argue that women are said to have labored for the Lord or with an apostle or were of note among the apostles.

1. Junia, mentioned in Romans 16:7, is used in this argument, with some saying she was an apostle based on this verse.

2. Others point to the way Paul spoke of Euodia and Syntyche in Philippians 4:2-3.

### **II. Answers to these arguments.**

A. The first argument mentioned is that women are allowed to lead in the worship and work of the church because the prohibitions by Paul were cultural and for that time period.

1. The biggest problem with this is argument is seen in why Paul, by inspiration, wrote these commands.

2. The basis for this role for women was not because of the lack of freedom of women at that time as some change agents teach.

3. Paul's argument for the restricted role of women in worship and work

went all the way back to creation and the entering in of sin into the world.

a.1 Corinthians 11:8-9.

b.1 Timothy 2:13.

4.In similar fashion, when Jesus stated the law of marriage, divorce, and remarriage contained in Matthew 19, Jesus answered the question of the Pharisees by going all the way back to creation.

5.Not only that, but what Paul taught in Corinth, he taught everywhere else as well.

a.1 Corinthians 1:2 - with all who in every place...

b.1 Corinthians 4:17.

6.There is no way, in keeping with proper biblical interpretation, that one could legitimately argue for a cultural only restriction on women.

B.The argument from Galatians 3:28 has nothing to do with a worship service.

1.The book of Galatians was written to congregations in Galatia who were being taught that they had to follow the Mosaic Law in order to be saved.

2.Chapter 3 is specifically talking to the Gentiles about a promise made to Abraham, that through him, all nations of the earth would be blessed.

3.The blessings promised to the seed of Abraham were not intended only for his physical offspring (Galatians 3:7, 9).

4.Man could not set aside this covenant (Galatians 3:15).

5.The Law pointed all men to Christ (Galatians 3:24).

6.Now that Christ has come, those Galatians had become sons of God through Jesus (Galatians 3:26).

7.This came about through their baptism (Galatians 3:27).

8.Because they were children of God through baptism, there was no need to be circumcised or carry out any other aspect of the Mosaic Law (Galatians 3:28).

9.Since they belonged to Christ, they were the spiritual offspring of Abraham and heirs of God as God had promised Abraham (Galatians 3:29).

10.Nowhere in this whole chapter is anything about a worship service even mentioned.

11.All Paul is telling us, is that in Christ, all are equal in being heirs of God, not in respective roles they may play in the church of home.

C.In dealing with the calling of Phoebe a deaconess, the word is translated servant in most versions.

1.The word translated servant is all that the Greek word means.

2.For it to be used of an official office or position, the context has to demand it like it does in Philippians 1:1 and 1 Timothy 3.

3.Also, it is taught that she was over men because she is said to have been a helper of many and of Paul.

a.The word translated helper means to come to the aid of someone or something.

b.This Greek word is used in 2 Timothy 4:17 (stood).

(1)If the word translated helper indicates an position of oversight for Phoebe, why would it not for Paul?

(2)Yet, you don't hear anyone teach that Paul exercised authority over Jesus do you?

4. Since it is said they helped Paul, it would have to mean that she exercised authority over Paul, an apostle!

5. All these two verses teach is that Phoebe was a servant to Christians and to Paul and was worthy of assistance because of her labors for others.

D. While arguing that gifts have been given to all people, these false teachers turn to the gifts that God bestowed in the first century.

1. The Oak Hill congregation specifically mentioned 1 Corinthians 12:7, 11.

2. What they fail to mention is that sandwiched in between those two verses are the gifts under consideration.

3. Those gifts were miraculous gifts that have ceased to exist.

4. Abilities that God has given us should be used to bring glory and honor to Him, no doubt (Romans 12:4-8).

5. However, any gift we have must be used in accordance with all of God's teaching on worship to Him.

6. There are those who have the gift of playing instruments of music, but those are not to be used in worship as we noticed last week.

7. There are those who have the gift of small engine repair, but that does not mean we are to use that gift in worship to God.

8. Any ability from God must be used in a manner that is in accordance with plain teaching found in scripture and for women it is found in 1 Corinthians 14:34-35 and 1 Timothy 2:8ff.

E. Those women mentioned as prophets in the first century are never mentioned to have used their ability in worship to God.

1. Philip's daughters are never mentioned prophesying in a mixed worship assembly.

2. The word "prophesy" used here comes from two words that, when put together, mean "to speak forth".

3. Paul, by inspiration, limited the speaking forth a woman could do in worship (1 Timothy 2:12).

4. In order to keep Paul's inspired command, there is no way a woman could have spoken forth in a way that subordinated men into the position of a student at the feet of a woman.

F. The last argument is the weakest of all.

1. People who use Euodia, Syntyche, and Junia are grasping at straws.

2. Paul called the first two fellow workers with him.

a. Paul was in no way saying they had a position of authority with him or over him.

b. Notice 1 Corinthians 3:9.

(1) The same Greek word is here used.

(2) Does this mean we have the authority possessed by deity?

c. Too numerous to name are the wonderful Christian ladies who have aided the cause of Christ through the years.

d. They did not have to have positions of leadership or authority to do such and these two women didn't have that in any way.

3. Dealing with Junia, the Greek text literally has Junian and all the pronouns modifying the name are masculine.

- a. It is very likely that the person referred to in Romans 16:7 was a man.
- b. Even if it was a woman, all that is being said of the person in question was that he or she was well known among the apostles, not that he or she was an apostle.
- c. Not only that, the word apostle does not always refer to the position or office of apostle that Paul and others held (2 Corinthians 8:23).