

## **Women Preachers**

**Question:** Is it in harmony with the Scriptures for a woman to be a preacher or an elder in the church of our Lord?

**Answer:** It might not be politically correct, but the answer is "No." In fact, the Bible specifically condemns the practice of women serving in this capacity.

In Paul's first letter to Timothy, we read, "Therefore I desire 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. Nevertheless she will be saved in childbearing if they continue in faith, love, and holiness, with self-control" (1 Tim. 2:11-15). This passage not only prohibits women from "teaching" or "having authority over a man," but it also gives us the reason: "For Adam was formed first, then Eve...But the woman being deceived, fell into transgression."

After reading this passage some women might wonder what role God has for them. Paul explains that the godly women "will be saved in childbearing." Paul is saying that women are to find their salvation by fulfilling the role God gave them, i.e., bearing children and guiding the home. I know of no greater work that women could do than to bear children and instruct them in the knowledge of God.

In 1 Cor. 14, Paul discusses the matter of spiritual gifts in the first century church. After instructing the church that those who speak in tongues had to "keep silent" if there was no interpreter, and that one prophet had to "keep silent" if another prophet was speaking, he says, "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" (1 Cor. 14:34,35). To this passage is attached the following admonition, "If anyone thinks himself to be a prophet or spiritual, let him acknowledge that the things which I write to you are the commandments of the Lord" (1 Cor. 14:37).

Brother David Lipscomb made this observation on Paul's instructions to the church at Corinth: "No instruction in the New Testament is more positive than this; it is positive, explicit, and universal; and however plausible may be the reasons which are urged for disregarding it, and for suffering women to take an active part in conducting public worship, yet the authority of the inspired apostles remains positive and his meaning cannot be misunderstood. He looks at it from every viewpoint, forbids it altogether, and shows that from every consideration it was to be regarded as improper for them to take any active part in conducting the public service." (Commentary on First Corinthians, p. 216).

Beyond this, in the qualifications given for "bishops" (i.e. pastors, elders, shepherds), Paul twice says they must be "the husband of one wife" (1 Tim. 3:2; Titus 1:6). Unless you are willing to accept two lesbians living together and call it a "marriage," and one of them be considered as the husband, there is no way for a woman to be "the husband of one wife."

**-by Mark W. White**

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## **What about 'Narrow' Preachers?**

I don't know about you, but I get a little weary of hearing the word "narrow" used as a slur against preachers who adhere to the Bible in their preaching. Sure, they are "narrow", but so are factory workers, surgeons, druggists and teachers.

The factory worker is so "narrow" that he uses micrometers and measures to the thousandth of an inch the bores and pistons of engines, electronic components and balancing wheels in timepieces.

The surgeon is so "narrow" that he insists on ultra-technical laboratory analysis, meticulously sterilized instruments of special design. Why, he is so picky narrow that he makes his assistants wear masks over their faces!

The druggist is so "narrow" that he just has to have a prescription before he will let you have certain drugs. He says he has to be narrow because government regulations are narrow, and even thinks it is for good!

As you think about it, it's a blessing that somebody is narrow-minded. And however much we need to be "narrow" about vital material matters, we must be infinitely more careful and exact about spiritual laws. God will not be mocked.

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## ***"Ye Are Not Your Own"***

A common question on various applications has to do with our living accommodations. Usually we are asked if we own our home, or if we rent. For those of us who are "homeowners," the correct response is that we "own" our home. But, of course, that's not entirely accurate in most cases. Yes, we have invested in our home. Yes, we are on the record of deed at the courthouse. Yes, we are responsible if the drains back up or the furnace quits working. But, the truth is that the bank or finance company probably has more invested in the house than we do. Because of this, we have certain restrictions about what we can and can not do with the property. Fail to adhere to the terms of the mortgage, and the bank will quickly "repossess" the place. The fact is, the house is not really our own.

There is a spiritual parallel to this idea of "ownership." Many times we hear folks say: "It's nobody's business but my own -- I can do as I please." Such expressions convey the idea that we are accountable to no one. This, of course, completely ignores all that the Bible says about God's judgment (2 Cor. 5:10; Rom. 14:12).

But, those of us who are Christians have an even greater reason to think along these lines for, you see, we truly belong to God -- He "owns" us! "Ye are not your own. For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's." (1 Cor. 6:19,20) The Father has "invested" a huge amount in us. "You were not redeemed with perishable things like silver or gold . . . but with precious blood . . . the blood of Christ." (1 Peter 1:18,19)

Realizing this truth about "ownership," we should also understand that there are obvious restrictions concerning what we can and can not do. We are obligated to adhere to the rules and regulations set forth by the One who actually "holds the note." Think!

- *by Greg Gwin*