

The
Public
Ministry
of
Women

The title is rendered in a white, serif font. The word 'The' is at the top, followed by 'Public', 'Ministry', 'of', and 'Women' stacked vertically. The text is surrounded by decorative, flowing ribbons in shades of blue and green, creating a sense of movement and depth.

John P.
Rothacker

The Public Ministry of Women

John P. Rothacker

The Public Ministry of Women

A message of essential truths for the body of Christ for proper function, pursuing maturity, and victorious spiritual warfare.

“Make every effort to present yourself approved to God as a workman who does not need to be ashamed,

HANDLING ACCURATELY

THE WORD OF TRUTH.”

II Timothy 2:15

By

John P. Rothacker

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INTRODUCTION

When we look at the “Church World” today, it is plainly evident that there is a great need for some clear teaching from God to be brought forth to dispel the confusion, errors, and ignorance that prevail throughout the body of Christ concerning the proper role of women in the church. After returning from several months of traveling ministry in 1969, the Lord directed me to write this book on the public ministry of women; that is, the part women are to have in the public ministry of the church. In the groups I had visited on that trip, it was revealed to me that the main reason for the problems, confusion, deceptions, and errors within many of these groups was because the church was not in proper order regarding men and women. Now, ten years later, after observing ministries ruined, congregations divided, and lives damaged, the awareness and confirmation that the same lack of divine order persists is painfully present.

When the first draft of this book was completed about the end of 1972, the Lord confirmed again prophetically that this teaching should be presented with apostolic authority. Because of additional revelation, I believe it best to review briefly that calling of apostleship by the Lord Jesus Christ.

On Sunday evening, May 28, 1967, after much fasting and prayer, the Lord moved through the manifestations of His Spirit, namely: tongues, interpretation of tongues, prophecy, and visions with the laying on of hands of a presbytery in the presence of the church to ordain me and give me revelation and direction concerning my ministry.

I have been endeavoring since that time to fulfill the ministry that I have received of the Lord Jesus, and the Holy Spirit has continued to lead, prompt, nudge, confirm, compel, and even chasten me to continue in the preparation and presentation of this teaching which is such a vital part of that ministry.

Because of the need for growth and development both personally and in my ministry, the book has not been published until now. Presenting it now to the body of Christ, knowing it will accomplish that for which God intends, I wait expectantly upon Him to use it as one more means of His great work of establishing His church in divine order before the soon return of our Lord Jesus Christ.

I suggest that it be read in the same spirit and attitude in which I attempted to write it, prayerfully and humbly, with the one desire to please and obey God above all else and see His church come into full maturity and to defeat Satan's work within God's glorious kingdom.

Therefore, by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving, I offer this to you.

Your servant in Jesus Christ our Lord,

John P. Rothacker

OUTLINE

As one can observe from the Table of Contents that follows, this treatise is divided into three main parts:

Part I is a thorough teaching of the subject from the scriptures with various other teachings included which are necessary for one to understand more clearly the function of women in church.

Of major importance is the summary which lists the many different ways that the scriptures teach the truth so consistently.

Part II is teaching that discusses the various objections to the truth of scripture. First, is a section concerning the women that are most often falsely used as examples of pastors, preachers, or church leaders and the problems associated with women who do function as such. Second, is a section dealing with the scriptures that people wrest in order to teach or support erroneous positions concerning the ministry of women. Third, is a section discussing the major arguments people use to oppose or reply contrary to the truth.

Part III is a brief consideration of significant historical facts and certain fundamental truths necessary in order to understand and apply the Word of God.

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PART I

THE PUBLIC MINISTRY OF WOMEN

One of the most important fundamental truths that any Christian should know is proper church order. **“God is not the author of confusion,”** it is written, **“but of peace, as in all churches of the saints”** (I Cor. 14:33). Yet, so much confusion still exists in regard to this most important subject. Since **“All scripture is given by inspiration of God and is profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness”** (II Tim. 3:16 rev.), we must examine the whole of scripture on any particular subject if we are to have the revealed truth concerning it. By taking only one or two statements, and those usually out of context, many have been misled. Some, when examining the writings of one, like Paul, find **“some things hard to be understood, which they that are unlearned and unstable, wrest, as they do also the other scriptures, unto their own destruction”** (II Pet. 3:16).

Others, because of pressure of one sort or another, or personal gain and glory, have allowed themselves to be blinded to particular truths. Others, for similar reasons, have refused to walk in the light after having first received and walked in the light concerning some particular truth. Therefore, not having their eye single, they have fulfilled the scripture, **“If therefore the light that is in thee be darkness, how great is that darkness!”** (Mt. 6:23). Also, **“Where envying and strife [Greek: *eritheia*, selfish ambition] is, there is confusion and every evil work”** (Jas. 3:16).

With hidden sin in our hearts, Satan can get an advantage over us and cause havoc. We must go on to be like Jesus who could say, **“For the prince of this world cometh and hath nothing in Me”** (Jn. 14:30). Then John said, **“He that saith he abideth in Him ought himself also so to walk, even as He walked”** (I Jn. 2:6), thereby verifying not just the possibility of, but that the Christian life is walking in the light and above sin. For **“whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin”** (Greek: is not practicing sin, I Jn. 3:9).

To begin this study then, we must start at the beginning of the creation of woman and proceed from there. In some of the first words of scripture, we read,

“And God said, Let Us make man in Our image, after Our likeness. . . . So God created man in His own image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them.”
(Gen. 1:26, 27)

In the next account of creation, we read,

“And the Lord God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul.”
(Gen. 2:7)

Then,

“And the Lord God said, It is not good that the man should be alone, I will make him an help meet for him. . . . And the Lord God caused a deep sleep to fall upon Adam, and he slept: and He took one of his ribs, and closed up the flesh instead thereof; And the rib, which the Lord God had taken from man, builded He into a woman, and brought her unto the man. And Adam said, This is now bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh: She shall be called Woman, because she was taken out of Man.”
(Gen. 2:18-24 ARV)

Here we find then that the man was created in the image of God and is His glory, but the woman was created out of the living man for his helpmate; thus, she is the glory of the man (Hebrew: *Iysh*) and thus, also, she is called woman (Hebrew: *Ishshah*; I Cor. 11:7; Gen. 2:23).

Next, we have the fall of man. Satan sought to further his rebellious kingdom against God's kingdom and destroy God's new creation. He attacked through Eve, the weaker vessel, by appealing to Eve's selfhood (Gen. 3:1-6; I Pet. 3:7).

First, he caused Eve to doubt God's word by questioning it. Then he deceived her with a lie by saying that she and Adam would not die, the direct opposite of God's word, and he made it enticing by adding, **“For God doth know that in the day ye eat thereof, then your eyes shall be opened, and ye shall be as God, knowing good and evil”** (I Tim. 2:14; Gen. 3:5). The way Satan presented it to Eve implied that God was holding back something that would be good for them, thereby making eating the fruit appear as a blessing instead of the curse that it was.

Eve started thinking, and her unfallen nature was allured through the desires of the flesh and of the eyes and of the pride of life which are of this world and are not of the Father (Gen. 3:5; I Jn. 2:16). Is it or is it not God's will is the criterion that determines whether our seeking pleasures, relationships, or material or spiritual blessing is good or not. God, whose wisdom and knowledge is infinite, always wants what is ultimately best for us because He loves us, He really does. But we, in our finite understanding, cannot always see the ultimate, thus we often disagree with God until we undergo His training to correct our arrogant, presumptuous, and rebellious thinking. Our carnal minds must become spiritual. We must think God's thoughts according to His word, both His written and His spoken word to us, and not lean upon our own understanding (Pro. 3:5).

Eve's having wanted the fruit because it was good for food was not bad; neither was it bad because it was a delight to the eyes, nor that it could make one wise like God, but because it was against God's word which is the expression of His will.

Eve disobeyed God's word that had been given to Adam before her creation (Gen. 2:16-18). Adam was with her at the time, and he hearkened unto her word instead of stopping her and obeying God's word (Gen. 3:6).

When Paul wrote to the Romans stating that "**By one man's DISOBEDIENCE many were made sinners,**" he used the word *parakoe* as opposed to the obedience of Jesus Christ (Rom. 5:19). The word literally means "a failing to hear, a hearing amiss."

Thus, it is very significant to note that the whole human race was plunged into sin by one man not listening carefully and attentively to God when He spoke. So also today, most sin is the result of not giving an attentive ear to the word of God, both the scriptures and the personal word He speaks to our hearts and minds.

"The fear of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge;" "The instruction of wisdom;" and "to hate evil; pride and arrogance and the evil way, and the perverted mouth, I hate."

(Pro. 1:7; 15:33; 8:13 NAS)

Oh, how we need the fear of the Lord!

After the fall, we find the judgment of God upon Adam and Eve as well as upon Satan (Gen. 3:14-19). The judgment upon the woman was to bear much pain and sorrow in childbearing. Her desire toward her husband and his authority over her were not part of the fall and the resulting judgment, but were part of the plan and purpose of creation (Gen. 2:18, 20; I Cor. 11:8-10). The judgment of Adam was the curse upon the ground resulting in hard labor. This was because Adam hearkened unto the voice of his wife, rather than unto the word of God, and so he ate of the tree that God told him not to. Truly, "**there is nothing new under the sun**" (Eccl. 1:9 NAS).

Here, then, in God's historical account of creation and the entrance of sin, we find in regard to woman, first, that she is placed under the headship of man by God Himself and secondly, a proneness to spiritual deception. In regard to the man, we find a proneness to hearken unto the voice of another rather than God, particularly his wife. This divine order persists throughout the scriptures and is confirmed by Paul, an apostle, when writing to Timothy, another apostle, in regard to proper conduct in the assembly (I Tim. 3:15).

Therefore, contrary to the "tradition of the elders," First and Second Timothy are not Pastoral Epistles, but Apostolic Epistles, that is, letters to a young apostle. They are filled with instruction and encouragement, teaching and exhortation, some of which are very prophetic, especially for the "Apostasy" which is coming now into its fullness. In First Thessalonians, we find the salutation or greeting given by Paul, Silas, and Timothy in verse 1. In chapter 2:6, we find all three referred to as apostles of Christ, an apostle being one sent forth with a commissioning and calling of the Lord Himself through the ministry of the Holy Spirit to evangelize and then disciple the converts; he is one who plants the church, in Christ, in love, and in the faith; he has the authority and responsibility of setting the church in order (I Cor. 3:5-15; Col. 1:23, 2:7; Eph. 3:17; I Cor. 11:34). We find at least nineteen men designated as apostles in the New

Testament and find that the office of an apostle is the first in the church (I Cor. 12:28).

An apostle will usually also have another ministry gift of either being a prophet or a teacher; and these two ministries often accompany one another (I Tim. 2:7; Acts 13:1; Acts 14:4, 14). He will also have manifestations of the Holy Spirit, some of which are referred to as "Gifts of the Holy Spirit" (I Cor. 12:1). These gifts are "*pneumatika*," or "spiritual things," sometimes referred to as "*charismata*," another Greek word meaning literally "gifts of grace" (I Cor. 12:4). The list of "*charismata*" includes not only the spirituals, but also includes many other gifts (I Cor. 12:8-10, 28-31; Rom. 12: 6-8). They are manifested through an individual as he yields himself to the Holy Spirit, and the Holy Spirit directs, controls, and divides to every man severally as He wills instead of the man directing, controlling, or choosing the manifestations as he wills (I Cor. 12:7). They are gifts in the sense that certain people have been given the privilege and responsibility of ministering definite ones of them to others, but not gifts in the sense that they are ours to manifest any time or manipulate in any way we choose (I Pet. 4:10, 11; I Tim. 4:14; II Tim 1:6).

In Paul's letters to Timothy, he states he was ordained as a preacher, an apostle, and a teacher (I Tim. 2:7; II Tim. 1:11). So with the exhortation of a preacher, the authority of an apostle, and the expounding of a teacher, Paul writes to Timothy in his first letter:

- :8 **"I will therefore that men pray every where, lifting up holy hands, without wrath and doubting.**
- :9 **In like manner also, that women adorn themselves in modest apparel, with shamefacedness and sobriety; not with broided hair, or gold, or pearls, or costly array;**
- :10 **But (which becometh women professing godliness) with good works.**
- :11 **Let the women learn in silence with all subjection.**
- :12 **But I suffer not a woman to teach, nor to usurp authority over the man, but to be in silence.**
- :13 **For Adam was first formed, then Eve.**
- :14 **And Adam was not deceived, but the woman being deceived was in the transgression.**
- :15 **Notwithstanding she shall be saved in childbearing, if they continue in faith and charity and holiness with sobriety."**

(I Tim. 2:8-15)

In verse 11, Paul writes that a woman in the assembly is to learn in "**silence**" (Greek: *heruchia*, meaning silence with stillness or restfulness, thus quietness is the better one-word translation) and in "**total**" (Greek: *pase*, meaning all manner of, in every way) "**subjection**" (Greek: *upotage*, under orders, in submission) to man's headship. Note this quietness is while learning; not of course, when she is exercising gifts or praying, as the scripture says, "**Every woman that prayeth or prophesieth with her head uncovered dishonoreth her head,**" indicating the woman can and should exercise these gifts (I Cor. 11:5). In verse 12, we find several very interesting points when we examine it carefully. First, the sentence could begin with "And" rather than "But" from the simple Greek connective "*de*." It is a natural continuation of

thought here, as we shall see. Second, the phrase **“to teach”** from the word *“didaskain”* is in the Greek present tense. It means simply “to teach” and not “to teach over the man.” A woman, even though directly under a pastor’s authority, is not to teach an assembly of men and women. Third, the phrase **“usurp authority over”** is from the word *“authentein,”* which means, “to govern” or “exercise authority over” or “domineer.” Thus the idea of usurping is not at all indicated. Also, the usual word in scripture for authority is *“exousias,”* which means “the power or right to determine, adjudicate, control, or command,” but here it is *“authentein”* which from a root source means, literally, “to use one’s own armor,” and in later Greek means “one who acts on his own authority.” From this we can state then that the woman is not to govern the man nor to use her gifts in a way that makes her dominant over the man in the assembly. The excuse that a woman did not usurp her authority, meaning she did not seize it or force herself over the man, but that it was given to her by God or a man is invalid, both from this scripture and from the entire testimony of the rest of the scriptures. God does not act contrary to His word. When a church is seen as the entire body of Christ in a city, and not just a small portion of it, the errors of history can more easily be understood.

Now please note Paul’s reasons for this: (1) The man was formed first. (2) The woman was deceived by Satan, but the man was not. There is a slight difference in the words used for Adam not being deceived and Eve being deceived. The root is the same, but the one for the woman has a prefix that gives a meaning of being thoroughly deceived. This susceptibility to spiritual deception continues today, and is why the woman needs the headship of the man. Without it, she always will be led astray. Paul’s argument is from the creation account, and thus he ends with a promise regarding God’s judgment on women given in Genesis 3:16. The New American Standard for these verses is a very good translation.

Before we proceed, let us make a few statements of conclusion of scriptural facts. First, a woman may pray and exercise spiritual gifts in the assembly, but she is not to be in any position of authority over men (I Cor. 11:5; I Tim. 2:11-12). She may and in fact should teach other women as exhorted in Titus 2:3-5, but this is not to be the custom in the assembly when men are also present in order to teach them. She may teach children, both boys and girls, whether men are present or not (Pro. 1:8; 6:20).

Next, let us verify this further by looking at several of the offices of authority and ministry given as gifts to the body of Christ. In Ephesians 4:11, we find that after Jesus Christ arose on high,

“He gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers.”

Their ministry is given in the next verse,

“for the equipping of the saints for the work of service, to the building up of the body of Christ.”
(NAS)

The Greek construction here makes it clear that the ministries in Ephesians 4:11 are to specialize in equipping the saints, and then the equipped saints can do

their Christian service in building up one another. Also, these gifts in 4:11 are to be in the church until Jesus returns because there will always be those being “born again” into God's family and in need of maturing and equipping. Verses 13 through 16 make this very clear.

First, concerning the apostles under the new covenant, we do not find any women apostles of the nineteen listed. The original “**twelve apostles of the lamb**” are “**Simon, who is called Peter, and Andrew his brother; James the son of Zebedee, and John his brother; Philip, and Bartholomew; Thomas, and Matthew the publican; James the son of Alphaeus, and Lebbaeus, whose surname was Thaddaeus; Simon the Canaanite, and Judas Iscariot,**” who also betrayed Jesus and was replaced by Matthias; these are all men (Rev. 21:14; Mt. 10:2-4; Acts 1:26). The post ascension apostles are Paul, Barnabas, James, the Lord's brother, Apollos, Silas, and Timothy (Acts 14:4, 14; Gal. 1:9; I Cor. 4:6-9; I Thes. 1:1, 2:6). All these are men. However, we do find women traveling with them on occasion, such as sisters in the Lord and wives as given in I Corinthians 9:5.

All the post ascension prophets listed by name are also men. They are Agabus, Judas, and Silas and probably Barnabas since he is first in a list of prophets and teachers, plural, which means there was at least one more there at Antioch (Acts 11:28, 21:10; 15:32; 13:1). However, we find women who prophesy such as the four daughters of Philip, the evangelist, who is the only evangelist given by name (Acts 21:8-9). There are no pastors by name given as examples in the New Testament. Elders named, such as Peter and John, are also both apostles; the rest are unnamed (I Pet. 5:1; II Jn. 1). Teachers named are such as Paul, James, and at least one other listed as part of those in the church in Antioch (Acts 13:1; Jas. 3:1). All these are men. The deacons listed by name are also all men. They are Stephen, Philip, who was also an evangelist, Prochorus, Nicanor, Timon, Parmenas, and Nicolas (Acts 6:5).

Let us look now at the verses in Paul's first letter to young Timothy in regard to proper order in the house of God. We read that a “**bishop**” from the Greek word “*episkopos*,” which is another name for an elder indicating the fact he is an overseer, must necessarily be a man (I Tim. 3:1-6; Titus 1:5, 7). This is because only a man can be “**the husband of one wife,**” permitted to teach in the assembly, and the ruler of his own house, since men are the heads of the household (I Tim. 3:2-5; I Tim. 2:11-12; Titus 1:5-9). This is very clear from Paul's writing to the Ephesians in which he says,

“Wives, submit yourselves unto your own husbands, as unto the Lord. For the husband is head of the wife, even as Christ is the head of the church: and he is the saviour of the body. Therefore as the church is subject unto Christ, so let the wives be to their own husbands in every thing.”
(Eph. 5:22-24)

“Children, obey your parents in the Lord: for this is right. Honour thy father and mother.”
(Eph. 6:1-2)

Paul also gives us these same instructions again when to the Colossians he writes,

“Wives, submit yourselves to your own husbands, as it is fit in the Lord.”
(Col. 3:18)

Also, Peter writes in his first letter,

“Likewise, ye wives, be in subjection to your own husbands; that, if any obey not the word [of God], they also may without the word [Greek: “a word,” therefore, no exhortations even with “the word.”] be won [to obedience] by the conversation [Greek: *anastrophes*, behavior, conduct, manner of life, including talk] of the wives; while they behold your chaste conversation [behavior] coupled with fear. Whose adorning let it not be that outward adorning of plaiting the hair, and of wearing of gold, or of putting on of apparel; but let it be the hidden man of the heart, in that which is not corruptible, even the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit, which is in the sight of God of great price. For after this manner in the old time the holy women also, who trusted in God, adorned themselves, being in subjection unto their own husbands: even as Sarah obeyed Abraham, calling him lord: whose daughters ye are, as long as ye do well, and are not afraid with any amazement.”

(I Pet. 3:1-6)

Paul also stated this in his first letter to the Corinthians when he wrote,

“Now I praise you, brethren, that ye remember me in all things, and keep the ordinances [traditions] as I delivered them to you. But I would have you know, that the head of every man is Christ; and the head of the woman is the man; and the head of Christ is God.”

(I Cor. 11:2-3)

Also, we can see from the preceding scriptures that man is not only to be the head of the household, but that it is one of the qualifications for an elder that he rule his own household well. Now we also find that it is a qualification for a deacon when we read, **“Let the deacons be the husbands of one wife, ruling their children and their own houses well”** (I Tim. 3:12). That a deacon, therefore, must be a man agrees with the qualifications given for the original seven deacons of the church in Jerusalem when we read, **“Wherefore, brethren, look ye out among you seven men of honest report, full of the Holy Ghost and wisdom, whom we may appoint over this business”** (Acts 6:3). We should take note here that the deacons were men set over; that is, in charge of the material realm, not necessary the ones to do all of the work. With the large task in hand, they undoubtedly needed other men and women to help. These, then, were also servants of the church, but not in charge. In First Timothy 3:11, the word *“gunaikas”* is correctly translated “wife” as it is in the next verse and First Corinthians 7:3, 10, 13; Ephesians 5:22, 28. It also can be translated “woman” but never “deaconess.” We find, therefore, that for a man to rule in the church, his

wife, children, and household, which may contain others under his authority, must first be found obedient to him with all respect.

Not only were all the New Testament elders men, but throughout the centuries of Israel's history, all the elders were men. When Moses selected the elders to rule over the children of Israel, the qualifications were that they were to be **"Able men such as fear God, men of truth, hating covetousness"** and were to be **"rulers of thousands, rulers of hundreds, rulers of fifties, and rulers of tens"** (Ex. 18:21).

When Moses needed help in bearing the burden of the people, God said, **"Gather unto Me seventy men of the elders of Israel, whom thou knowest to be the elders of the people, and officers over them; and bring them unto the tabernacle of the congregation, that they may stand there with thee"** (Num. 11:16, 17).

Each city had its own elders who worked together and made up the local presbytery, for it is continually written, **"the elders of that city"** (Deut. 19:12; 21:3, 4, 6, 19, 20; 22:18; 25:8). God's original plan was always for His people to be one. This was the **"old wineskin"** Jesus talked about in the days when it was **"new"** (Luke 5:33-39). He that hath ears to hear, let him hear!

Also, the priests were the official teachers of the law, and they were all men. It is repeatedly written, **"the priests, Aaron's sons"** or **"the sons of Aaron,"** referring to the Levitical priesthood (Lev. 1:5, 8, 11; 1:7). Also, they had specific qualifications whereby not all of the male Levites would be eligible for the priesthood (Lev. 21).

Now that we have examined the truth of God's word that all positions of authority and the ministry gifts involving teaching were by qualification to be given to men, and as we have seen by examples that they were, let us study carefully a portion of scripture which will further clarify the extent of the woman's ministry in assembly.

While teaching about the gifts of tongues and prophecy, brother Paul writes, in I Corinthians,

- :26 **"How is it then, brethren? when ye come together, every one of you hath a psalm, hath a doctrine, hath a tongue, hath a revelation, hath an interpretation. Let all things be done unto edifying.**
- :27 **If any man speak in an unknown tongue, let it be by two, or at the most by three, and that by course [in turn]; and let one interpret.**
- :28 **But if there be no interpreter, let him keep silence in the church; and let him speak to himself, and to God.**
- :29 **Let the prophets speak two or three, and let the other [Greek: plural, others] judge.**
- :30 **If any thing be revealed to another that sitteth by, let the first hold his peace.**
- :31 **For ye may all prophesy one by one, that all may learn, and all may be comforted.**
- :32 **And the spirits of the prophets are subject to the prophets.**
- :33 **For God is not the author of confusion, but of peace, as in all churches of the saints.**

- :34 **Let your women keep silence in the churches: for it is not permitted unto them to speak; but they are commanded to be under obedience, as also saith the law.**
- :35 **And if they will learn any thing, let then ask their husbands at home: for it is a shame for women to speak in the church.**
- :36 **What? came the word of God out from you? or came it unto you only?**
- :37 **If any man think himself to be a prophet, or spiritual, let him acknowledge that the things that I write unto you are the commandments of the Lord.**
- :38 **But if any man be ignorant, let him be ignorant.**
- :39 **Wherefore, brethren, covet to prophesy, and forbid not to speak with tongues.**
- :40 **Let all things be done decently and in order."**

(I Cor. 14: 26-40)

Here one can readily realize that the Lord is teaching us through Paul that women in assembly are not to have the same liberties in regard to speaking that a man has. We now need to know, then, just what Paul means and why.

In verse 27, Paul is limiting the number of utterances that persons may speak in unknown tongues as messages to the assembly. The number is unlimited for individual worship or prayer in the assembly or in private (Acts 2:4). The Greek word for "speak" is "*lalei*" and means to speak audibly or to express oneself orally. The Lexicon reveals to us that the emphasis of this particular word is "to the sound and pronunciation of the words and in general the form of what is offered" while "*lego*" (another word for speaking not used in this passage) refers "to the meaning and substance of what is spoken." Anyone desiring to give a message in tongues is told in verse 28 that if there is no interpreter, he is to be silent in the assembly. Here the word is "*sigato*" and means to keep still, be silent, with a root meaning of concealment. In this case, he is told not to speak out so as to address the assembly with this message, but please notice he can "**speak [*laleito*, speak audibly] to himself, and to God"** and also speak out as the Spirit leads in other ministries.

Next, in verse 30, the phrase "**hold his peace**" is again "*sigato*." This tells us that the man had been addressing the assembly, but is to stop when another receives a revelation. We understand clearly, then, the instruction to be silent is not all inclusive, but only in regard to this portion of ministry.

Now then, let us examine verses 34 and 35. Here, women are instructed to "**keep silence [*sigato*] in the assemblies: for it is not permitted unto them to speak [*lalei*]."** And, "**it is a shame for women [Greek: a woman] to speak [*lalei*] in the church."** We realize then that what God is instructing us here is that women are not to speak out audibly so as to address the assembly.

I might add that the word "*lalei*" also is used for "chatting or prattling." However, it does not imply here that women cannot participate in the assembly in the areas which are legitimate for them such as singing, playing musical instruments, praying, and any of the nine spirituals listed in First Corinthians 12:8-10 (I Cor. 11:5-6; Psa. 68:25). Areas that are specifically not permitted in the assembly with men are ministries of authority, teaching, preaching, discussion, and asking and answering questions (I Tim. 2:12; I Cor. 14:34-35).

Paul wrote these instructions in reference to the small assemblies in the homes although they also apply to the larger meetings as well. We can realize this because Paul addressed this letter principally **“unto the church of God which is at Corinth”** (I Cor. 1:2). The word church is singular (Greek: *ekkleesia*, meaning called-out ones) and could be translated “assembly.” It refers to all the saints in Corinth, the entire group of local Christians, which is the one true local church. This group of believers could not have been very large at this time for Paul says that if **“the whole church be come together into one place”** and then **“if all prophesy”** an unbeliever could find the reality of God (I Cor. 14:23-25). Again Paul writes, **“ye may all prophesy one by one, that all may learn, and all may be comforted”** (I Cor. 14:31). When referring to their misconduct at the Lord’s Supper, which was an actual supper meal plus the communion of the Lord’s Table, he stated **“When ye come together therefore into one place...”** (I Cor. 11:20). This, of course, did not prevent them from having a common meal or communion in the smaller assemblies as scripture reveals they did (Acts 2:46).

However, when Paul gives instruction about women not being permitted to speak in church, he writes, **“Let your women keep silence in the churches [assemblies]”** (I Cor. 14:34). Thus by the plural, Paul is referring primarily to the numerous small groups meeting regularly in the believers’ homes. When Paul then writes, **“it is a shame for women to speak in the church,”** the definite article “the” is not present and, therefore, the literal translation should be **“in church”** or **“in assembly,”** meaning any assembly of Christians meeting together to minister unto the Lord and have Him minister unto them directly by His Spirit and through the members of His body (I Cor. 14:35).

Most Christians are so indoctrinated by the “synagogue system” in which a man, the chief ruler of the synagogue, most often today called pastor, determines most of the time who should speak, and in which the other rulers of the synagogue, today usually called elders, perform most of the official duties, that they have no concept of how the assembly is to function as part of the body with our Lord Jesus Christ as its head leading by the direct “innervation” of the Holy Spirit in each member.

Instead of functioning properly as a true theocracy, an assembly often functions as a constitutional monarchy in which the king has only the title and the officials elected by the people decide what shall be done, and what shall be law and order. However, the Lord Jesus never relinquishes His authority. He just withdraws Himself and may even place some of the sheep in another fold. He may remove His presence and “write **Ichabod**” over the assembly (I Sam. 4:21).

The fact is, this **“old wineskin”** is so old by now that anyone desiring to get up in a “Christian synagogue” and address the congregation like Jesus and the early disciples did in the Jewish synagogues would be considered highly “out of order.” It is so brittle that any new life of the Spirit would tear the structure, and the new wine would be lost.

How different is this system from the one Paul describes here in which every member participates substantially, for he writes:

“How is it then, brethren? When ye come together, every one of you hath a psalm, hath a doctrine, hath a tongue, hath a revelation, hath an interpretation. Let all things be done unto edifying.” (I Cor. 14:26)

Paul then goes on to give further instruction indicating that each one should speak as inspired by the Spirit and directed by the Lord, observing certain rules the Lord has given. This is in contrast to being motivated by the flesh and directed by man.

To confirm this practice of the church meeting in the homes of believers more thoroughly, we need to consider that in the record of the New Testament church, the original and authentic pattern for the body of Christ, we do not find any scripture supporting the fact that the church ever established or built a special structure for the purpose of worship, prayer, preaching, or teaching. Throughout the scriptures we find the disciples going from house to house: praying in the upper room; experiencing the outpouring of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost; praying for the healing and the infilling of the Holy Spirit for Paul in the house of Judas; converting the Gentiles in the house of Cornelius; praying of the church in Jerusalem in the house of John Mark's mother, Mary; and elsewhere the scriptures refer to meeting in the private homes of people (Acts 1, 2, 9, 10, 11, 12; Rom. 16:5; I Cor. 16:19; Col. 4:15; Phile. :2). Only when the early apostles taught and evangelized in the traditional Jewish synagogues, which were patterned after the temple but are believed to have originated during the Babylonian captivity (he that hath ears to hear, let him hear), were they in larger structures specially designed for these purposes. The church very pointedly did not establish "Christian synagogues" until it had lost the reality of the living Christ leading in their midst by His Spirit. There is no record of a special church building until the third century. However, even then it was neither substantial nor costly. Then when Constantine became emperor of the Roman Empire in the 4th Century, he made Christianity the official religion of the state. This merger of church and state resulted in the pagan halls of justice, the ancient basilicas, being turned into "church buildings." Christian architecture then became an art that appeared primarily in two different forms, the Basilican, which is oblong, and the Byzantine, which is square and has a large dome as the principal feature. Pews did not become a regular feature until many centuries later. The cathedrals are huge edifices where for hundred of years the people stood for the entire service.

The state-church leadership was extremely carnal at best and often unregenerate. Pagans came into this state church by the thousands by merely being baptized with water without being baptized by the Spirit into the body of Christ, the true church (I Cor. 12:13). Since the natural man cannot receive spiritual truth, he can only see the law, which is given to bring us to Christ (I Cor. 2:14; Gal. 3:24). Thus, the organization of an early "church building" was patterned after the law in its religious ceremony, and after what was repeatedly referred to as "**the synagogue of the Jews**" in its physical arrangements (Acts 14:1; 17:1, 10). With this merger of church and state at Rome, spiritual Babylon became firmly entrenched in Christianity.

However, in the first century most assemblies were held in the private homes of believers and were, therefore, relatively small groups. Also, the church gathered in the fields, catacombs, and in the Jewish synagogues until they were ejected by the unbelieving Jews. It is written of the twelve, "**daily in the temple, and in every house, they ceased not to teach and preach Jesus Christ**" (Acts 5:42). Paul reminded the Ephesian elders that he had declared the gospel to

them and had taught them **“Publicly, and from house to house”** (Acts 20:20). Let us look at what the scriptures reveal about Paul’s public ministry in Ephesus:

“He went into the synagogue, and spake boldly for the space of three months, disputing [Greek: *dialogomenos*, meaning reasoning, arguing without contention or strife] and persuading the things concerning the kingdom of God. But when divers [certain ones] were hardened, and believed not [Greek: *apeithoun*, meaning, were unpersuaded] but spake evil of that way [Greek: “the way”] before the multitude, he departed from them, and separated [Greek: *aphorisen*, meaning literally to mark off from others by boundaries, therefore, I interpret this to mean that Paul limited the believing Jews and did not allow them to return to the synagogue among the disobedient Jews, and then he turned to the Greeks, the Gentiles, with the message of Christ] the disciples, disputing [reasoning] daily in the school of one Tyrannus.”

(Acts 19:8-9)

Some western Greek texts add “from the fifth to the tenth hours” indicating that at the customary noon recess of Greek schools from 11:00 A.M. until 4:00 P.M., Paul used the lecture room. This is the indicated extent of Paul’s public ministry for two years in Ephesus. He did not gather the converts together to erect a building and place himself behind a pulpit. In fact, we never find a pulpit mentioned in any church. The city had many converts and was very wealthy. Many of the converts had books on magic that they destroyed which were valued at 50,000 pieces of silver. Some scholars estimate this at \$10,000. But when we consider that a piece of silver, a Greek *denarius*, was the payment for one day’s labor in the vineyards, we realize the value was considerably more (Mt. 20:2). If we counted a day’s wage at only \$20.00, this would equal \$1,000,000.

Paul had very rich friends, some of whom were “Chiefs of Asia” (Acts 19:31). These were the ten “honorable and opulent nobles,” who gathered annually in Ephesus for the public games and religious rites, chosen from among the delegates, one from each city of proconsular Asia. Certainly with all the available wealth and influence, Paul would not have had any difficulty in ‘building himself a church’ if he had wanted to. But his plans were to follow God’s plan, which was and still is to build His church only, of which each believer is a **“living stone”** (I Pet. 2:5). Much of this wealth was given to the poor saints, many of whom were in other countries, particularly at that time, Judea (I Cor. 16:1-3; Acts 11:28-30). Also, those spreading the gospel and teaching the word from house to house had to be supported (I Cor. 9:14; Gal. 5:6).

Not only are there numerous references in the scriptures to the church meeting in homes, but there are four specific occasions where it is called **“the church in thy house”** (I Cor. 16:19; Rom. 16:3-5; Col. 4:15; Phile. :2). When Paul wrote the Corinthians from Ephesus, one of his closing remarks was:

“Aquila and Priscilla salute you much in the Lord, with the church that is in their house.”
(I Cor. 16:19)

Later, when he wrote to the Romans from Corinth, we find Priscilla and Aquila had moved to Rome, and the disciples were gathering together in their home again where we find Paul giving them this greeting:

“Greet Priscilla and Aquila my helpers in Christ Jesus . . . Likewise the church that is in their house.”
(Rom. 16:3, 5)

In the same letter, we find Paul sending greetings from Gaius of Corinth with whom he stayed and where the whole church assembled. He wrote,

“Gaius mine host, and [host] of the whole church, saluteth you.”
(Rom. 16:23)

Many churches such as the church in Jerusalem were much too large to be all in one home at one time and so were meeting in many different homes all over the city (Acts 11: 22; 12: 5, 12, 17).

God’s rules of order for the church are the same whether it is assembled as small congregations in homes, as was usual in the early church, or as larger congregations in specially designed buildings which are so traditionally sought after today. In fact, when Christians start seeking God more, they will find the smaller meetings not only better, but an absolute must for edifying and creative fellowship, spiritual growth, maturing in love, and for learning how to experience more thoroughly Christ as head of His body, the church (Eph. 1:22-23).

Now that we have established the type of assemblies that Paul is referring to here, let us take note of the reasons why women are not to speak in the assembly:

1. **“It is not permitted unto them”** (I Cor. 14:34). This would be from Paul’s personal understanding as an apostle and teacher, and we can count his gifts as having proven their authenticity throughout the centuries as well as Peter’s own words confirming Paul’s letters as scripture (I Tim. 2:7; II Pet. 3:16).
2. **“But they are commanded to be under obedience”** (I Cor. 14:34). Greek: *upotassesthai*, literally “to be placed under,” therefore meaning “under subjection.”
3. **“The law”** which is the first five books of the bible and in this case refers primarily to Genesis (I Cor. 14:34). Women were told by God that the man **“shall rule over thee”** which Paul interprets, along with other scriptures, **“to be under obedience,”** or it could be translated **“in subjection”** which is here equated with not speaking (Gen. 3:16; Gen. 1, 2, 3; 18:12, 19).
4. **“It is a shame for women to speak in church”** (I Cor. 14:35). For this reason, if she has a question, she is to ask it at home of her own

husband. If she is unmarried, then it would be her father, guardian, or an elder or minister that she could go to outside the assembly.

One might say, "I feel no shame." But that is only because of conformity to our perverted culture and our unrighteous training. It is apparent that half-nakedness, immodesty, and outright vulgarity also cause no shame to most Christian men and women today. Conviction of conscience only comes as one is taught and enlightened by the Word of God working together with the Spirit of God. Therefore, a lack of shame, rather than proving the righteousness of any conduct, is often indicative of the sad moral state of that individual. If that individual is a Christian, it can also be a reflection upon the quality of his spiritual training and teaching, which in turn is a reflection upon his family, his pastors, or the older Christian men and women who are to teach the younger such matters of conduct (Eph. 6:1-4; Titus 1:9; 2:2-5). There are too few preachers today like Noah, who was a "**preacher of righteousness**" (II Pet. 2:5). But God is raising them up!

5. These instructions are "**the commandments of the Lord**" (I Cor. 14:37). Paul realizes that because of pride, many will object to the truth he is writing. Therefore, he asks them if they think the Word of God originated with them or if it came to them alone (I Cor. 14:36). Paul writes that if someone really thinks he is a prophet or a spiritual person, he is to understand that Paul is not writing his own thoughts, but has received personal revelation from the Lord Himself. This is what He commands and Paul confirms and delivers these orders as an apostle, the first position of authority under Christ Himself, not that of a prophet which is second (I Cor. 1:1; 12:28). Concerning women's position in the church, there is no place for pagan backgrounds or church traditions to assume spirituality or to influence God's children against His expressed desires and explicit commandments. God's divine order must be recognized, respected, understood, and obeyed if we are to be effective in building a unified and mature body (Eph. 4:11-16).

The next statement Paul makes is a very significant one.

"But if any man be ignorant, let him be ignorant." (I Cor. 14:38)

Here we find in some manuscripts that the form of the second "**ignorant**" is given in the Greek present tense, indicative mood, and either the middle or passive voice since both have the same form. The witness of the Spirit is with the middle voice, which is very distinctive and means one acts in some way for himself. Some translators use the passive voice which has Paul saying that the person "is being ignored," but that also is not at all in keeping with Paul's heart in which he often says, "**I would not have you ignorant, brethren**" (Rom. 1:13; 11:25; II Cor. 1:8; I Thes. 4:13). In fact, he uses this very phrase in starting this teaching on the understanding, purpose, function, and proper order of many of the gifts of the Spirit when he says, "**Now concerning spiritual gifts**

[*pneumatikon*] **brethren, I would not have you ignorant,**” and so he would not end this teaching with a statement to the contrary (I Cor. 12-14).

Paul’s whole purpose is to inform the ignorant, not to ignore him. His desire is always to **“present every man** (Greek: *anthropon*, person) **perfect in Christ Jesus**” (Col. 1:28). Also, this verse begins with a simple Greek connective “*de*” meaning “and”; thus the verse should be translated to read:

“And if any man be ignorant, he is ignorant for himself.” (I Cor. 14:38)

Here then in this scripture which actually is in regard to the proper ministry of women in the assembly, as well as to preceding remarks on the gifts of the Spirit, Paul gives a clear statement that some people will be ignorant or not knowing the truth because they are acting for their own personal interests and not for the Lord’s. By their teaching, they are building up themselves at the expense of the Lord’s body, the church. It brings judgment from God of varying severity, such as chastening or withholding spiritual growth, fellowship, ministry, or blessing, depending upon the circumstances involved (I Cor. 11:29-32; Heb. 2:2; 6:1-3).

Next, Paul in summary gives an exhortation similar to the one which we find at the beginning of this fourteenth chapter. First, Paul exhorts us to pursue love and to desire earnestly the spirituals, preferring to prophesy above all other manifestations. Notice that love, a fruit of the Spirit, is not set against the gifts of the Spirit, but both are to be zealously sought after together. Also, of all the spirituals, and he lists nine of them previously, prophecy is the most important for the building up of the church, the goal of true love. Love without gifts or gifts without love indicate immaturity.

Notice, also, that we are to desire “to prophesy” not “the gift of prophecy” as some translators render it (I Cor. 14:1). There is an important distinction. You see, we can seek and receive a gift of the Spirit, and then through neglect or bad theology, not use it (I Tim. 4:14). We are stewards of these gifts and graces of God and someday will give an account as to how we have used them or whether we have abused them (Mt. 25:14-30; I Pet. 4:10; II Cor. 5:9-11). We are to seek to receive and exercise our gifts, especially those of prophecy and tongues, to which we have most of this fourteenth chapter devoted, for the purpose of building up the body (I Cor. 14:1-6, 12, 19, 26, 31; Eph. 4:12, 16).

Next, Paul writes that no one is to forbid the exercise of the gift of tongues, and we might add that this is true for all other gifts as well. Thus, the doctrine concerning tongues of “seek not, forbid not” is half-wrong, half-right, like Satan’s lie in the garden. The consequence is a refusal to seek the gift which results in its not being received, and, therefore, not functioning (I Cor. 14:39, 1, 5; Gen. 3:1-5; Jas. 4:2). We may at times have to discipline a member of the body, but we must not hinder the free exercise of the gifts themselves. Satan has always stirred up opposition to the supernatural manifestations of the Holy Spirit since they are the life of Christ being manifested and effectively drawing men unto the Lord Jesus (I Cor. 12; II Cor. 4:10, 11; Jn. 12:32). Tongues are perhaps the most vigorously opposed since it involves a believer’s communication with God, and that in perfect harmony with His will (Rom. 8:27; I

Cor. 14:15). It is not understood by the unlearned or the carnal mind (I Cor. 14:23; Rom. 8:7). It is for many purposes, not the least of which is for one's own personal strengthening (I Cor. 14:4). Prayer and intercession, praise and thanksgiving, signs and messages are of supreme importance, also (I Cor. 14:15, 16, 22, 5, 13). We are forbidden by God to stop or hinder speaking in tongues whether by ignorant instruction, incorrect orders, false teaching, or bad examples (I Cor. 14:39). Some have received the gift and then not used it because they sought it for wrong reasons. They were told it was "the evidence" of "the baptism of the Holy Spirit," power for witnessing, instead of a gift to be sought, used, enjoyed, and nurtured (I Cor. 14:1, 15; 12:26; Rom. 14:17; III Jn. :4; I Tim. 4:14-16; II Tim. 1:6-7). All true Christians have been baptized by the Holy Spirit into the body of Christ, but not all of us are sufficiently filled with or gifted by God's Spirit (I Cor. 12:13; Eph. 5:18; I Cor. 14:1, 12). Nor, we might add, are most taught by, walking in, or led of the Spirit, which is so needed for effective service (Jn. 14:26; Gal. 5:16, 18; II Tim. 2:21).

Next, Paul concludes this important section on the gifts of the Spirit by instructing that "**all things be done decently and in order**" (I Cor. 14:40).

The "**all things**" is self-explanatory. It includes all singing, praying, preaching, teaching, or ministry of any type.

The "**be done**" is the imperative form of the Greek word "*ginomai*" which means "to become, to appear, to come into existence, to be born." It is a beautiful description of how ministry is performed when totally dependent upon God. It is brought forth spontaneously as a gift from God's own heart and mind.

The word "**decently**" (Greek: *euschemonos*) has a prefix meaning "well" and the root meaning "everything striking the senses, that is, the figure, bearing, discourse, actions, or manner of life." It includes, therefore, our appearance in actions and dress, our manner of speaking, both as to the style and the spirit. He is not referring here to what is ministered, but to how we are to minister.

The phrase "**in order**" (Greek: *kata taxin*) means literally "according to proper arrangement." *Taxin* means "a fixed succession observing a fixed time." This tells us that not only does God have a proper order for the various ministries, but also that each one of us must wait on God's timing to bring it forth. There are many reasons for this, such as that the continuity of thought is to be maintained; a proper spiritual atmosphere must be kept; the congregation must be prepared for certain types of ministry; and when we have a flexible meeting of extended length with people entering and departing at various times, a word from the Lord must be given at the Lord's direction in order for it to be received by those for whom it is intended, and not for those it may not be.

This fourteenth chapter has a wealth of information that enables us to learn many of God's methods of truly building up the body of Christ (I Cor. 14:4, 5, 12, 26).

It will be His life expressed in His order and not our life expressed in our preconceived and preplanned order. This freedom will insure that the life of Jesus Christ Himself is expressed through His body. We can then say with conviction, "Jesus is Lord!" Some of the life brought forth may indicate spiritual sickness or even death, but this will give opportunity to bring healing and life to those members in need.

The only alternative to the strength of God's Spirit and ordinances is the weakness of man's flesh deceived by Satan and his rituals, or a compromising

mixture. We can either look forward to our gatherings with exciting anticipation not knowing what God will bring forth, only knowing that it will be satisfying because it will be God Himself, or we can expect the drab monotony of a programmed play in which God may not even have a part or even be allowed to express Himself in the audience except from a cue on stage.

Oh, how the traditions of man make the commandments of God “**of none effect**” (Mt. 15:6).

The last and final proof that all offices of spiritual authority for the church have been given to men by Christ is that taken from the clear and definite meanings of the Hebrew and Greek words for “**elder**,” the name given to those who have authority along with but under the apostles.

The Hebrew word for “elder” is “*zkn*,” all Hebrew words being written without the vowels. It is pronounced “*zahkehn*.” The word for “beard” is “*zkn*” also, only pronounced “*zahkahn*.” The word translated “for age” in reference to Jacob is “*zkn*” also, only pronounced “*zohken*.” We can see from this, the masculine nature of the root words from which all three words come, which are spelled the same, but pronounced differently. In fact, putting the three together, we would have an “aged,” “bearded,” “elder,” who, of course, would be a man.

The Greek word for “elder” has both a masculine form, “*presbuteros*,” and a feminine form, “*presbuteras*.” Both appear together in First Timothy 5:1, 2 where we find that the “*presbutero*,” the dative singular masculine form translated “elder,” is to be treated as a father, and that the “*presbuteras*,” the feminine plural form translated “elder women,” are to be treated as mothers. Now then, whenever we find the word for elder used in the Greek New Testament scripture in reference to the elders of the church, or the ones in authority, it is always in its masculine form. Also, we find from its use that the elders (Greek: *presbuteros*, Acts 20:17) are the ones made overseers (Greek: *episkopos*, Acts, 20:28), often translated “bishop.” And elder and bishop are found to be synonymous in the qualifications given to Timothy and Titus, two young apostles given responsibility to ordain then in “**each city**” or “**each church**” (I Tim. 3:1-7; Titus 1:5-9; Titus 1:5; Acts 14:23). The elders here in Acts 20:28 are told to “**feed the church of God.**” It is from the Greek verb *poimaino*, which means to tend or shepherd and is translated “rule” and “feed”. The noun form *poimeen* is translated seventeen times “shepherd” and only once “pastor,” and that is in a list of ministries in Ephesians 4:11, thereby making it impossible to compare it usage unless these facts are known.

The same combined usage of the words for elder, bishop, and pastor are found in First Peter 5:1-2 where the elders, “*presbuteros*,” are told to “**feed** [Greek: *poimano*, to shepherd or pastor] **the flock of God which is among you, taking the oversight** [Greek: *episkopontes*, acting as a bishop] **thereof...**” When we see the true revelation of the one local church and have the will to practice this truth, we see that an elder, pastor, or bishop are all the same person. The first descriptive word refers to maturity usually gained by age; the second refers to his working as a shepherd in feeding, guiding, and protecting; and the third refers to the ministry of a watchman and superintendent over the flock or church in any city.

Now that we have examined the Hebrew and Greek independently, we shall also add that the "Septuagint," the Greek translation of the Old Testament scripture, used the masculine form of the Greek to translate the Hebrew word "elder" when used as pertaining to those in authority.

In conclusion, therefore, we find that the gender of the word "elder" when referring to an office in the church is always masculine throughout the Word of God from Genesis through the Revelation of Jesus Christ.

SUMMARY

In summary, we have found that the man is specifically appointed to the positions of authority and teaching in the church, and that the woman is specifically not appointed to these positions. This has been verified by every conceivable means:

1. Specific statements of the scriptures, both Old and New Testaments
2. Examples, both Old and New Testaments scriptures
3. The creation of mankind supported by Old and New Testament scriptures
 - a. Purpose of creation
 - b. Order of creation
 - c. Manner of creation
 - d. Nature of creation
4. The fall of mankind
5. Word derivation and gender, both Old and New Testament scriptures
6. The Septuagint Greek translation of the Old Testament scriptures
7. Required qualifications, both Old and New Testament scriptures

We can add here that not only do the scriptures teach thoroughly these truths, but also centuries of experience invariably confirm them as the Word of God. Not only has the church consistently practiced these truths from the creation of man until the Lord Jesus Christ came in the flesh, but during the twenty consecutive centuries of the New Testament, the church has consistently done so as well. Not until this century, and particularly the past few years, have these truths been so perverted. But this we must expect as God reveals the creation of Babylon the great, the great harlot church that would be filled with every form of false teaching and demonic practice (Rev. 17, 28; I Tim. 4:1-2). But God is building and preparing His true church, the bride of Christ, which will be in order and prepared for her heavenly bridegroom, without spot and without

wrinkle (Rev. 19, 21, 22; Eph. 5:27). When Christ is submitted to as Lord, and meetings flow under the freedom of the Holy Spirit allowing God to operate as He chooses, the church will come **“unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ”** (Eph. 4:13).

To the degree that we deceive ourselves or allow Satan to deceive us, to that degree we devitalize the ministry of the body of Christ to which we all must look for edification, maturity, and perfection in our Lord Jesus Christ (Eph. 4:11-16).

PART II

CONSIDERING THE “CONTRADICTIONS”

A. “Women Pastors and Preachers”

Beloved, now that we have seen clearly the truth of God’s word in regard to women’s role in the assembly or positions of authority, let us consider some of the most frequently expressed opinions contrary to this “sound doctrine” (Tit. 1:9; II Tim. 4:3).

Let us now consider the women of the scriptures that people commonly bring forth as “proof” that “women can and are to lead and have the same ministry as men.” Before we do this, we should look at some most important and revealing scripture from the prophet Isaiah.

He wrote,

“And I will give children [youths] to be their princes [rulers], and babes [the immature] shall rule over them.” (Isa. 3:4)

And again,

“As for my people, children are their oppressors, and women rule over them. O my people, they which lead thee cause thee to err, and destroy the way of thy paths.” (Isa. 3:12)

We must consider these verses in the context of at least the first five chapters of the book. Isaiah is writing about his day and the state of the church, the city of God.

The times are perilous, and God's chosen people are rebellious, spiritually blind, and exceedingly sinful (Isa. 1:2-4). There is great mental illness and spiritual cowardice (Isa. 1:5). There is rampant physical sickness, and there are no healings being brought forth by the pastors who have been given this responsibility (Isa. 1:6). The country is desolate; strangers and foreigners are everywhere, boldly and openly burning the cities (Isa. 1:7).

There is only a small remnant of the faithful left (Isa. 1:9). However, there still are plenty of church services going on, yet the Lord says He is fed up with them; they are sinful in His sight (Isa. 1:11-15). Even the “prayer meeting,” as

Paul told the Corinthians about their coming together in the church, is a time of coming together for the worse instead of the better (I Cor. 11:17-18). I pray to God we would have less formal meetings and get down on our knees alone or with a few who are serious about godliness and **“seek the Lord while He might be found”** (Isa. 55:6).

It is so like our God of love to give a word of grace in the midst of this rebuke. If we sit down with the Lord and judge ourselves and confess our sins and return to Him, we shall be cleansed as **“white as snow”** (Isa. 1:18).

The church, the city of God, which was once faithful to the Lord, has become a religious harlot, professing love for the Lord but only religious in ways that benefit itself. Where it once was full of those who lived righteously according to the laws of God, it is now filled with those who murder each other, which would include even their own unborn children (Isa. 1:21).

The leaders of God's people are rebellious and keeping counsel with the ungodly (Isa. 1:23). They are serving for gifts and money and are not properly caring for the widows and orphans; this is the very opposite of true religion, as James states (Isa. 1:23; Jas. 1:27). In the midst of all this, however, God is going to restore His people to holiness. He will accomplish it by judgment, and converts shall be gained through righteousness (Isa. 1:27). Then we have a prophetic statement,

“And it shall come to pass in the last days, that the mountain of the Lord's house shall be established in the top of the mountains, and shall be exalted above the hills; and all nations shall flow unto it.”
(Isa. 2:2)

Now let us continue reflecting upon Isaiah's commentary on Israel, the church of that day, and apply it to the church today which has backslidden into a deplorable state, indeed a **“Laodicean age”** (Rev. 3:14-22). The true children of God do not realize their spiritual poverty. They have used Babylonian ways, which are the ways of man and not God (Isa. 2:6). Directed by man and not the Holy Spirit, these are **“customs of the East,”** foreign religion and ideologies. They follow false prophets, mix themselves in marriage, business, and friendship with the unsaved (Isa. 2:6). They even make agreements with the ungodly. Peace pacts with atheists are not new, but still an abomination, which ends in judgment. They heap up material wealth and military armor (Isa. 2:7). They worship the almighty dollar and deem success as the world does, not realizing their spiritual, eternal poverty (Isa. 2:8). The Lord is taking away their supplies of foodstuffs, preparing for more judgment (Isa. 3:1). They have lost their prophets and wise counselors and judges (Isa. 3:2-3). They are oppressed by each other, and the children are insolent and rebellious against their elders (Isa. 3:5). There is not only a shortage of ministers who can bring deliverance, but few men even want to do the work (Isa. 3:7). The expression on their faces reflects their emptiness and lack of the Spirit of God (Isa. 3:9). The sins of the land are as they were in Sodom and Gomorrah, yet they are not only unashamed, but proclaim their vileness openly before all (Isa. 3:9; 1:10). They have taken advantage of the poor, and their deceitful practices are only to fill their own pockets (Isa. 3:14). Children are oppressing the people and women are taking over the rule of church and state (Isa. 3:12). The **“Women's Liberation**

Movement" is growing. The Christian women are proud and seductive. They are dressed with all sorts of external jewelry and expensive clothing while their best men are being killed in wars (Isa. 3:16-25).

Immorality and illegitimacy are widespread; however, the Spirit-filled saints of God are set apart unto the Lord in true holiness (Isa. 4:1). God is cleansing ungodliness from His people by judgment and by the baptism of the Holy Spirit and fire, and signs and wonders are forthcoming to testify to all of this wonderful restoration (Isa. 4:2-5).

The unproductive churches are being judged severely as God removes His protecting hand. They are being consumed and destroyed. The Holy Spirit is not entering in to give refreshment and drink to thirsty souls (Isa. 5:5-7). Refusal to bear fruit is always a serious sin. God's judgment is upon the land and now it is becoming unproductive (Isa. 5:8-10). Materialism also is being judged! Alcoholism is epidemic (Isa. 5:11). The Christians are eating, drinking, and entertaining themselves with music and not looking to the true work of God (Isa. 5:12). Because they disregard the works of the Lord and do not perceive what He is doing, they have no understanding and, therefore, have gone into captivity, both spiritually and physically (Isa. 5:13). Because judgment is delayed by God's mercy, the people mock God's prophetic word (Isa. 5:19). Oh, the mercy of God! From the "pulpits" of the land, the people hear perverted speech, such as calling evil good, and good evil (Isa. 5:20). Praise is given to the rebellious and ungodly, and scorn against the truly righteous, while the pulpiteers drink and preach for financial and personal gain, discrediting the righteous (Isa. 5:21-23). The judicial system has also become corrupt, as judges serve not justice, but for their own benefit -- judicial bribery and oppression is rampant (Isa. 5:23, 7; 1:21, 23, 26, 27; NAS).

Because the word of God is rejected and despised, the Lord will do a quick work of judgment, even using foreign people, and the end will be darkness and sorrow when "**the light is darkened in the heavens**" or, as rendered in the New Testament, "**the sun shall be turned into darkness**" (Isa. 5:24-30; Acts 2:20).

From the preceding scripture then, we understand that when God's people backslide, women will become pastors or elders and as the situation gets worse, even the children will rule over the parents, both the men and the women. The leaders will cause the people to go astray by not rightly dividing the word of truth and, thus, destroy "**The [true] way of holiness**" (Isa. 3:12; 35:8).

With this in mind, let us now look at several of the women often held up as leaders of the people.

First, there is Miriam, the sister of Moses and Aaron. She is called "**Miriam, the prophetess**" (Ex. 15:20). Therefore, let us consider here the scriptural meaning and usage of the word "prophet." Primarily a prophet is one appointed by God to speak for Him. When the Spirit of the Lord is upon a person, and he speaks forth under direct inspiration of the Spirit of God, that which is spoken is called prophecy. It is forthtelling, that is, God using the person to speak forth His words for edification, exhortation, or comfort; in addition, it may include foretelling, that is, words inspired by God and predicting future events (I Cor. 14:3; Isa. 46:10-11). The term prophet is used, also, for one

man speaking for another man as in the case when Moses said to the Lord, **“O my Lord, I am not eloquent, neither heretofore, nor since thou hast spoken unto thy servant: but I am slow of speech, and of a slow tongue”** (Ex. 4:10-16; 7:1-2). Therefore, God said, **“Aaron thy brother shall be thy prophet,”** thus making Aaron the spokesman for Moses. Also, in the scriptures of the New Testament, we find the word used in reference to a Cretian man who spoke of his people (Tit. 1:12).

In the record from Exodus, if we study the entire context, we find out how Miriam functioned there. The children of Israel had just escaped Egypt through the Red Sea. Moses then led all the men, women, and children in a song. Immediately afterward, Miriam led only the women in part of the same song with timbrels and dances (Ex. 15:20-21). That Miriam had the gift of prophecy is established, since it is also indicated in the other major account of Miriam, the one in which she and Aaron spoke against Moses for marrying a woman of another race (Num. 12:1-15). They said, **“Hath the Lord indeed spoken only by Moses? Hath he not spoken also by us?”** (Num. 12:2). Miriam being the woman had the greater sin and was stricken with leprosy by the Lord (Num. 12:10). Then she remained silent and Aaron pleaded for her to Moses, calling him Lord, for he had been made to him as God (Ex. 4:16). Moses then interceded with God, and Miriam was healed (Num. 12:13). We must remember that although one has the gift of prophecy, this does not make him a leader or hold the office of a prophet. Paul writes that **“all may prophesy”** but, also, **“all are not prophets, are they?”** (I Cor. 14:24, 31; 12: 28-30 NAS; Eph 4:11).

In the church today, we find many “Miriams,” godly women who by receiving salvation escape from the world (Egypt) and are given the gift of prophecy, a song, and the ministry of leading other women. However, when they overstep their rule, they sin, often bringing in false doctrine that splits the church, with the result that the Lord chastens them with weakness, sickness, and even premature death (I Cor. 11:29-32). How wonderful, though, when they fulfill their ministry; how greatly needed are women who will bring other women into their proper ministries.

Secondly, we have Deborah. Notice first that **“Israel again did evil in the sight of the Lord”** (Judg. 4:1). Therefore, **“the Lord sold them into the hand”** of their enemy (Judg. 4:2). As was God’s procedure at that time, after the people cried under the oppression and sought Him, He **“raised up judges who delivered them from the hands of those who plundered them”** (Judg. 2:16 NAS). Deborah was a prophetess and she used to sit under a palm tree and the sons of Israel came to her for judgment (Judg. 4:4-5). Her prominence was a continual reminder of their backslidden condition. When the Israelites cried unto the Lord, God stirred up Deborah to prophesy an encouraging word from the Lord to Barak, a leader of the people (Judg. 4:6-7). She did not have authority over the people or army of God, nor lead them in battle as other judges did, but she was the instrument of God to get men who were leaders of Israel to do their job. Barak was the one chosen by God to lead the people. He wanted Deborah to go with him as he needed the “voice of God.” Barak led the victory over their enemy, and then he and Deborah sang together beginning:

“For that the leaders took the lead in Israel, for that the people offered themselves willingly, bless ye the Lord.” (Judg. 5:2 ARV rev.)

And again,

“The rulers in Israel ceased, they ceased in Israel until I Deborah arose, that I arose a mother in Israel.” (Judg. 5:7 ARV)

And again,

“My heart is toward the governors of Israel, that offered themselves willingly among the people. Bless ye the Lord.” (Judg. 5:9)

Please note that in the book of Hebrews, in the list of God’s faithful, Barak is listed alone to receive the honor from this occasion (Heb. 11:32). He is the one that “led captivity captive” and Deborah acted as “**a mother in Israel**” (Judg. 5:12, 7; Eph. 4:8). Praise God for a woman like Deborah. How I wish there were many more like her that sought and knew the voice of God and would exhort the leaders to lead and, thus, to bring victories in the battles against the enemy. She knew her gift from God and did not try to exercise authority over the man God had ordained to leadership and, thus, bring defeat. Instead, she prophesied encouragement and exhortation to Barak, for him to take his stand and fight, because God commanded it.

Thirdly, let us consider Huldah (II Kgs. 22:1-20; II Chr. 34:1-33). She was a prophetess in the time of Josiah, the king, who turned Judah back to serving the Lord. Notice if you will that although they had the temple (the church today), they had lost the law of God (His ways and instructions for building His nation). One day Hilkiah, the high priest, found the book of the law in the house of the Lord (the body of Christ), and Shaphan, the scribe, brought it and read it to King Josiah. The king rent his clothes. He recognized God’s people were in gross idolatry and must return to God in spirit and in truth. He wanted to hear from the Lord directly so he sent to Huldah the prophetess, and she delivered a message from God. She did not take a place of authority or try to teach the people; she prophesied the word of the Lord. Thank God, Josiah’s heart was tender and humble. With tears of supplication, he sought the Lord, and the Lord heard him and brought about a mighty restoration and revival through him. Josiah made all Israel serve the Lord and destroyed Baal, that Babylonian religion that is still forever plaguing God’s people (II Chr. 34:33; II Kgs. 23:4-5). How we need “Huldahs” today, to prophesy not out of their own hearts, but prophesy the word of the Lord. So we find that Huldah was not a leader either. She was there in prominence because of the backslidden condition of Judah.

The fourth great woman of God, occasionally used as an example of a woman leader, is Esther, the beautiful queen. However, as we study the book, we find her beauty not only physical, but spiritual as well. The men in those days held the authority in the home and nation. Esther came to her position when Queen Vashti disobeyed that authority (Esth. 1:12). Now please notice that Esther subjected herself not only to King Ahasuerus, but also to Mordecai, her

first cousin, who reared her as his own daughter (Esth. 2:7). We read, **“Esther had not yet made known her kindred or her people, even as Mordecai had commanded her, for Esther did what Mordecai told her as she had done when under his care”** (Esth. 2:20 NAS).

Although Esther held the position and responsibility of being a queen, and as such functioned in that office, she was a humble woman of God under proper authority and fasted and prayed for her people (Esth. 4:16). I wish that all women would do the same today. Thank God for those who do.

Now for a fifth woman, commonly said to be in an official position of authority, let us go to the New Testament and consider Phebe, said to be a “deaconess.” We read about her from Brother Paul’s letter to the Romans which states:

“I commend unto you Phebe our sister, which is a servant [*diakonon*] of the church which is at Cenchrea: that ye receive her in the Lord, as becometh saints, and that ye assist her in whatsoever business she hath need of you: for she has been a succourer of many, and of myself also.”

(Rom. 16:1-2)

The word translated servant is from the Greek word “*diakonon*” and means servant or minister and is so translated here and elsewhere. For example, Jesus makes a statement to His apostles as recorded by Matthew:

“Whoever will be great among you, let him be your minister [*diakonos*, servant]; and whosoever will be chief among you, let him be your servant [*doulos*, meaning bondsman]. Even as the Son of man came not to be ministered unto [*diakonethenai*, served], but to minister [*diakonesai*, serve], and to give his life a ransom for many.”

(Mt. 20:26-28)

We know, of course, that Jesus was not a deacon, and neither were His apostles for they had seven chosen when needed as recorded in Acts, chapter 6. They said, **“We will give ourselves continually to prayer, and to the ministry [*diakonia*] of the word.”** Would to God that the spiritual leaders would do so today, that is, put prayer first and then the serving of the word of God in the naturally following truth, revelation, and power of the Holy Spirit, rather than allowing themselves to get caught up in “serving tables,” especially all the material, financial, and man designed “spiritual” programs of carnal methods of promotion that we have today.

Let us now consider that this letter to the Romans was written from Corinth while Paul was staying in the home of Gaius and ministering to the church there and the neighboring harbor ports (Rom. 16:1, 2, 23; I Cor. 1:14). Cenchrea is the small eastern port of Corinth, which has two very large natural harbors, one opening on the eastern coast and one on the western coast of Greece. Paul does not indicate specifically why Phebe was going to Rome; he merely mentions that in **“whatsoever business”** she has need of there, the church should help her. The word translated “business” often means official trade or could refer to any matter, incidental or spiritual. Phebe had been a

succorer of many, including Paul himself. The Greek word means “patroness, protectress, helper.” The word “succorer” is a good translation and means “helper, one who gives assistance and relief in time of need or distress.” From these facts, we can deduce that Phebe had financial means enough to take this trip and since she helped Paul and many others in her service to the church in Cenchrea, now she should be helped in her time of need by the church in Rome. Paul states in his second letter to the Corinthians that he had not taken wages from them but had from other churches in order to do them service (*diakonian*) (II Cor. 11:8). Possibly some of it came from our sister Phebe when he took a trip over to this neighboring town. In any event, we know that Phebe’s service was directly from her and not as a “deaconess” in the church in Cenchrea. The credit was given to her and not to the church in Cenchrea, and also as a woman she does not meet the qualifications laid down by the apostle as stated before when he wrote:

“Let the deacons be the husbands of one wife, ruling their children and their own houses well.”
(II Tim. 3:12)

Let us give thanks for our faithful sister Phebe. How very important are the faithful women who serve in the manner she did.

At this point, let us consider briefly the ministry of women in regard to this type of service. First, let us look at the life of our Lord Jesus. We find many women following Him from place to place and ministering unto Him of their substance and whatever they could do for Him. He needed their services as any man does, and God carefully records them in the three synoptic gospels (Mt. 27:55-56; Mk. 15:40-41; Lk. 8:2-3). We find such women as Mary Magdalene, Mary the mother of James and Joses, Salome, Joanna, and Susanna. It was a custom in that day for wealthy women to support men of God. The scribes, however, were abusing this privilege and Jesus warned his disciples against them when He said, **“Beware of the scribes...which devour widows’ houses”** (Mk. 12:38, 40).

Paul mentions in his first letter to the Corinthians how he and Barnabas had a right to take along a sister or a wife just as Peter and the other apostles (I Cor. 9:5). The way Paul states this as a question implies that the women would be of help to them. In Paul’s letter to the Romans, we find him mentioning not only Phebe, but also Mary who **“labored much for them”** (Rom. 16:6). Also, when saluting Rufus, he mentions his mother as also his (Rom. 16:13). This is an expression that we often use which indicates that this woman was very dear to him and had undoubtedly served him very affectionately as her own son, and Paul appreciated it. Brethren, how grateful I am to the many mothers in Christ, and sisters in the Lord, for all the loving help and assistance they have given me. How very faithful is our Lord to His word when He said:

“There is no man that hath left house, or brethren, or sisters, or father, or mother, or wife, or children, or lands, for my sake, and the gospel’s, but he shall receive an hundredfold now in this time, houses, and brethren, and sisters, and mothers, and children, and lands, with persecutions; and in the world to come eternal life. But many that are first shall be last; and the last first.”
(Mk. 10: 29-31; Mt. 19:29-30; Lk. 18:29)

Also, I want to thank God for a very special aunt who ministered to me both in her life and in her death; she is now with Jesus.

And I want to thank God especially for my own dear, wonderful mother for all the love and care she has untiringly bestowed upon me from the time I was but a hope, and a promise of prayer, through all the trying and difficult years of my life without Christ, and now in my service dedicated to the Master. The more God's love matures in me, the more I am able to see the depth and to appreciate the commitment of my mother's love, which is really God's love for me in her. Thank you, Mother, and thank you, God!

And I thank God for all the women who have a part in this ministry. How faithful our God is, and how I appreciate His handmaidens who labor with me for Him.

The sixth woman we shall consider is Anna (Lk. 2:25-38). In Luke's writings, we find that she was a prophetess, but examination reveals her ministry was not that of a leader. Her ministry was serving God by fastings and prayers, night and day, and she had done this faithfully for many years ever since she had become a widow early in life. Her praise to the Lord was inspired by the prophetic revelation she received concerning the infant Jesus and His mission of redemption. Paul writes similarly to Timothy how a true widow is to be supported as she "**continues in supplication and prayers night and day**" (I Tim. 5:3-5).

The seventh woman we shall consider, who occasionally is used as an example of a woman pastor, is Kyria. In John's second epistle, we find the salutation to be:

"the elder unto the elect lady and her children." (II Jn. :1)

The Greek word here translated "lady" is "*Kuria*," which is a proper name translated into English as "Kuria" or "Cyria." It should be so here. It appears also in verse 5, and in this context, it can be understood clearly that John is addressing a woman. This is also consistent with his third epistle which he addresses to an individual by name, Gaius (III Jn. :1). Also, the complimentary close of both letters in the same (II Jn. :12-13; III Jn. :13-14). Further, internal evidence reveals that she is not to allow deceivers that are antichrist into her house nor to give them even the common salute which is elsewhere translated "Hail" and "Greeting," and which to us might be "Hello" or "Goodbye" (II Jn. :7, 10, 11; Mt. 26:49; 27:29; Lk. 1:28; Jas. 1:1). John's complimentary close also included a farewell bid from Cyria's sister's children (II Jn. :13). Nowhere may it even slightly assumed that Cyria was a pastor.

The eighth woman that we shall consider who is occasionally reported to be in authority is Junia, who is said to have been an "apostle" because of the instructions to the Romans:

“Salute Andronicus and Junia, my kinsmen, and my fellow-prisoners, who are of note among the apostles, who also were in Christ before me.”

(Rom. 16:7)

First, Let us look at the Greek text, and here we find the name spelled “*Iounian*.” This is the Greek accusative form and, therefore, does not tell us whether the person is male or female. It may be from the masculine form “*Iounias*” or feminine for “*Iounia*,” and students of the scripture have long been uncertain as to which it is from; and, therefore, whether the person is a man or a woman. However, Ivan Panin in Paper VII of his monumental works on Bible Numerics proves that this person is a woman named Junia, and so we shall thank God for her and proceed. Now, the really significant fact of the statement concerning her and Andronicus is the phrase “**of note among the apostles.**” The words “**of note**” are from the Greek word “*episamos*” which is used only one other place in scripture, and that is when Barabbas is referred to as “**a notable prisoner**” (Mt. 27:16). A better translation of the word would be “well known.” Therefore, since Barabbas was a well known prisoner among many of the general populace, but was not a free member of it, Junia was “well known among the apostles,” but was not one of them.

In addition, if Andronicus was an apostle, a fact of which we are not certain, and Junia traveled with him, then she was part of his apostolic ministry, but not an apostle herself. What is also significant is that Paul reveals to us that Andronicus and Junia were both Jews and were converted before he was. This gives us the answer as to why they were well known by all of the first apostles. They were part of the first Jews converted, probably at Jerusalem. Since they were now in Rome, they possibly were among those visiting from Rome on the day of Pentecost and were converted on that day. Since they were also fellow-prisoners with Paul, they were of proven character which would have facilitated their becoming well known or “**of note among the apostles**” in the infant church at Jerusalem.

The ninth and last woman we will consider is another very precious sister named Prisca. She is reported by some to be a teacher and by others to be even an evangelist and teacher superior to her husband. This is indeed almost unbelievable if it were not for the knowledge that some people will go to all extremes without any support for their claims to try to justify a false position they have laid hold of. After all, how can a false teaching or claim be supported by anything other than false supposition and “wicked imaginations” (Pro. 6:18). When we study the four occasions in which Prisca is mentioned, we clearly find that neither she nor her husband Aquila was a teacher or an evangelist, but they were beloved workers in the gospel with Paul and, therefore, trained, zealous supporters of the church of the living God (Acts 18; Rom. 16:3-5; I Cor. 16:19; II Tim. 4:19). Always opening up their home to the saints for worship, as was not just the custom of the early church but was apostolic revelation, they traveled from place to place working under apostolic authority and bearing fruit accordingly.

We first find Prisca mentioned by Luke in the Book of Acts where we find her husband Aquila mentioned first. He is described as recently having come from Italy. Then Priscilla’s name, the diminutive form of the formal, proper, or

given name of Prisca, is mentioned next. Paul always uses, as evidenced by the best manuscripts, the given name Prisca. No reason is given as to this difference between Luke and Paul, but experience and conjecture lead me to believe that Paul, who made tents with Prisca and Aquila and lived with them for over eighteen months in Corinth, knew Prisca very well and loved her enough (as Paul loved all women, especially those who labored and lived for Christ) to inquire and to call her by the name she preferred. Luke's use of the name Priscilla which we might consider a nickname is used in narrative, while Paul uses Prisca either as a personal greeting to or salutation from this wonderful woman of God.

How well I know of a particular sister whom everyone calls by her nickname, but few realize or love her enough to understand that she prefers to be called by her proper given name. Love is the difference. Although her proper name is more difficult to use, love will use what she prefers, not what is more convenient for us, or that which we prefer.

We can tell by Luke's account that not only was Prisca not a teacher, which would be contrary to scriptural truth, but neither was Aquila for two reasons. First, Luke consistently identified men with the ministry they held, whether that of apostle, prophet, evangelist, teacher, or deacon, or for that matter, even disciple, leader, high priest, orator, centurion, or king (Acts 1:26; 2:14; 9:10; 10:1; 12:1; 13:1; 14:14; 15:22, 32; 16:1; 18:12; 21:8; 23:2, 24; 24:1).

They did, however, both have important functions in the body of Christ. First, they lodged Paul and he worked with them making tents to support himself. I am sure Prisca did his laundry and cooked his meals and performed the other necessary domestic tasks for Paul so that he could devote more time to ministry. Paul taught them and took them with him to Ephesus (Acts 18:18-19).

After Paul left, Apollos came and spoke publicly in the synagogue and they took him "**aside and explained to him the way of God more accurately**" (Acts 18:26 NAS). This private ministry does not make them teachers and is no indication Prisca ever taught in the synagogue or in church. Even when Aquila taught the church in his own house, this did not make him a teacher any more than prophesying made one a prophet. The second reason we know Prisca and Aquila were not teachers or evangelists in the body of Christ is that they did not teach or baptized those who were coming to Christ. We find this to be true because when Paul returned to Ephesus, he found certain disciples who had not even heard there was a Holy Spirit, let alone received Him, and, also, they had not been baptized into Christ (Acts 19:1-6). Philip, who was an evangelist, baptized new believers immediately (Acts 8:12, 38). Later, Paul's letter to the Romans reveals Prisca and Aquila had returned to Rome after living in Ephesus and again had the church meeting in their house, a very important ministry and one in which they were faithful wherever they went (Rom. 16:3-5). Paul thanked them for having laid down their own necks for his, for which they received an added testimony to their ministry that affected all the Gentile churches.

The last time we hear about Prisca and Aquila is when Paul is in prison at Rome and he writes his second letter to Timothy and sends greetings to them, indicating they had left Rome again and probably had returned to Asia Minor (II Tim. 4:19).

To some, the mere mention of Prisca's name preceding that of her husband Aquila, as in "**Prisca and Aquila,**" is sufficient proof that she was a

teacher and evangelist superior to her husband; however, these same persons ignore sequences of "**Aquila and Prisca**," since this sequence does not support their assumptions. We can conclude that this is a good example of what the scriptures call a "**wicked imagination**" and "**imaginings, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God**" (Pro. 6:18; II Cor. 10:5). We must cast down these "**imaginings**" or "**high things**" contrary to scriptural knowledge. They are the result of pride, bitterness, jealousy, and sometimes "**seducing spirits and doctrines of devils**," which are so evident when reading in detail the false arguments people put forth (I Tim. 4:1).

Luke definitely gives Aquila his proper role as head of his wife, Priscilla, and then graciously places Priscilla's name first in the affectionate form as he continues his narrative (Acts 18:2, 18, 26).

Paul gives Aquila's name first when sending a salutation from them both and Prisca's name first when sending a greeting to them both so how anyone can speculate from this that she is a teacher or an evangelist of a rank superior to that of her husband is beyond comprehension except for the understanding of seducing spirits leading people according to their own prideful lusts for power, importance, acceptance, dominance, or superiority (I Cor. 16:19; Rom. 16:3; II Tim. 4:19).

To conclude, then, we find people teaching that a woman is a teacher in the body of Christ merely because she helps her husband in private instruction or an evangelist of a rank superior to her husband because her name is given before his. This is a horrendously false teaching and exposes the extremes to which people will go and the straws at which they will grasp in order to try to support scripturally a false doctrine for which Holy Writ gives absolutely no defense.

Rather we find Prisca, a woman who together with her husband, continually gave her home and her life, moving her entire household as the Lord directed, in order to serve the people of God. And she did this, not because she or her husband were ordained into one of the five-fold ministries of the church, nor because either of them was relieved from secular employment, but because she gladly served in that supportive ministry to which God had called her and her husband, counting the things of this world as nothing and risking not only her own life, but even that of her own husband in order that they might spare the life of a beloved brother (Rom. 16:3-5; Eph. 4:11). Jesus said, "**Greater love has no one than this, that one lay down his life for his friends**" (Jn. 15:13 NAS).

What a tribute, then, to this great woman of God and her husband that we find them mentioned again and again by Paul, that dedicated and singular apostle of Christ. We have, then, a memorial testimony given to us by the Holy Spirit Himself through the scriptures, a memorial of great significance to the body of Christ -- thrilling, motivating, and instructional, to those who study and consider their manner of life and ministry.

How many thanks have gone up to God for them, not only in that first century as recorded, but even now as we remember their glorious life of service to Christ and His church. Thank you, Lord, for such wonderful people, such as inspiring couple, such a glorious example, such true servants of Yours!

Now, then, besides the fact that we have seen that these women just mentioned were not leaders of God's people, another fact should be mentioned.

Eleven words are used in the New Testament for the spreading of the gospel and translated "preaching." We shall consider here the two most common which shall explain the point we wish to make. The first is "*euangelizo*," which means, "to tell the good news." "*Euangelion*" is a combination of two words, "*eu*," which means, "well" and "*angelion*," which means "news or message." We use the word "gospel" which means "good news." The word "*angelos*" is the word "angel" which means "messenger." "*Euangelizo*," the word meaning to "evangelize," is used in reference to the ministry of all Christians. It may refer to public preaching or the personal witnessing of men, women, or children. Everyone who is born again has this ability and ministry. It results in reconciling or re-establishing mutual friendship between God and man. Paul declares this truth when he says,

"If any man be in Christ, he is a new creature [creation]: old things are passed away; behold all things are become new. And all things are of God, who hath reconciled us to himself by Jesus Christ, and hath given to us the ministry of reconciliation..."

(II Cor. 5:17-18)

When the early church was persecuted in Jerusalem and scattered abroad, all of them went everywhere "**preaching** [Greek: *euangelizomenoi*, evangelizing, announcing the good news of] **the word**" (Acts 8:4). These were men, women and children! It would have helped tremendously if the translators had given us a consistent, literal translation here and elsewhere for this word.

The second word used for preaching that we shall examine is the Greek word "*keerusso*" and means, "to cry, to proclaim, to herald" and infers a public ministry "with a suggestion of formality, gravity, and an authority which must be listened to and obeyed." It is never used with respect to a woman, either in referring to the present New Testament or past Old Testament preachers. The noun "*keerux*" is used for "a herald or a messenger vested with public authority who conveyed the official messages of kings, magistrates, princes, and military commanders, or who gave a public summons or demand and performed various other duties." This is the word for one of the gifts Paul had received which he lists when he wrote to Timothy, and is translated "preacher" (I Tim. 2:7; II Tim. 1:11). It is also used in such instances as when Philip the evangelist went down to Samaria and "**preached Christ unto them**" (Acts 8:5). After studying these two words, and the other nine which fit the category of either one or the other of the two examined we find that there are no women preachers in the New Testament scriptures.

In summarizing this section, we can say that there were no women ever called by the Lord as preachers, pastors, teachers, or into any position of leadership over men in God's kingdom, either before or during the Old or New Covenants as revealed to us by the scriptures.

In closing, let us answer the question most often asked after this truth is revealed.

“Why, if God does not call women as preachers and pastors, does He bless some of those who are?”

This is a good, logical, and legitimate question. The answer is simple if we understand a few basic facts. First, there are many, literally dozens of gifts and callings of God, either to full or part-time spiritual ministry for both men and women. For too long, practically everyone receiving “a calling from God” and given various gifts of ministry has been considered “a preacher” and often a following has gathered, and he or she has then become a “pastor.” Anyone in a traveling ministry or anyone not a pastor has labeled himself an “evangelist.” Because of the fact that there have been relatively few mature and anointed apostles functioning, many basic truths have not generally been taught. The result is that instead of one true united local church in each community, we have a scattered, confused, disorganized group of man-made and man-directed organizations called churches. The fact that a person has a following, no matter how large or small, is in itself no indication of that person’s ministry even being of God. One only has to look at the false cults to see this. If we look at the women who are true believers in Christ and have a large ministry, we find that the anointing of God’s Spirit is not on their ministry of “pastoring” or “preaching” as revealed in a true New Testament ministry, but is upon the gifts and callings that God has given. The gifts that most often help to create a large following are those of faith, healings, miracles, and word of knowledge. The first three are gifts of power, and in such a sick body of Christ as we have today, they are greatly needed, and thank God for every woman who has them and will yield herself to God as His instrument. As God raises up the three most important ministries to the body, those of apostle, prophet, and teacher, and gives them the gifts of miracles and healing, Christians will learn not to look to the Lord and see the individual human instrument, but to look to Him and see His body, and God’s order will be restored (I Cor. 12:28). When we find a smaller gathering around a woman’s ministry, we often find her gifts are the utterance gifts of prophecy, tongues, and interpretation which are in essence the voice of God, which most Christians are seeking. The problems here are that often the utterances are not judged and that there are no qualified men present to judge those pertaining to scriptural truth (I Cor. 14:29). What causes schism is a woman’s assumption that because she has these wonderful much-needed gifts, she is a “preacher, pastor, or teacher” and that she may endeavor to function in these capacities. Her ministry is then a mixture, partly of God which draws people unto Christ, and partly not of God which repels many people from her, and thus from Christ.

There are relatively few women who “**preach the word**” and, as Paul charges Timothy, “**reprove, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine** [teaching]” (II Tim. 4:2). It is not the function of women, nor is it proper, for them to publicly reprove or rebuke men and women and to expound the scriptures at length. A pastor must also exercise discipline in the church, and if a woman is in order in the home, she has neither the experience nor qualifications, and neither is it a fitting nor proper ministry for her. When any woman, even if she has a tremendous ministry of healing and miracles, tries to function with the gift of teaching or leading God’s people, it invariably leads to heartaches, false teaching, and division. This is true, also, of any man who is not called to do so.

Even when men are in authority and teaching, if women are permitted to talk and ask questions out of God's order, many men and some women are repelled and choose not to share in this type of fellowship. This is a major reason why many fellowships soon find themselves with the women far outnumbering the men in attendance.

To all who have a vision of the many membered body of Christ and who have a love and respect for each member and for the various gifts given to each one and who have an appreciation of how they are to work together complementing one another under the headship of Christ for the mutual upbuilding of the whole body of Christ, it is a continual source of sadness and grief to experience the schism in the body when women or men who have been given tremendous gifts from God and are, therefore, thrust into public prominence, go their independent ways and thus, out of personal ambition to increase the status and scope of their own ministries, function in ways that they are not called to do and, therefore, in capacities in which they cannot possibly properly perform.

We must remember that we are going to give an account of our stewardship of the gifts God has given to us, not only as to how frequently we allowed ourselves to be used, but also as to how we used them to unify, edify, and enlarge the one corporate body of Christ. Paul warns the Corinthians about this very thing. Corporately, all the Christians in the city were one temple (I Cor. 3:16). A person will be judged as to how his work affected that one temple! A person can by carnal methods, use spiritual gifts to build a ministry of his own and call it a church, ministry, organization, or what have you, and it may look good when only considering "their" portion of the body, but when one considers how their ministry affects all the members of the body living in that particular city, the one true local church, it will be found to be schismatic and on Judgment Day, "**wood, hay, [or] stubble**" (I Cor. 3:12). In fact, Paul warns that "**If any man defile [Greek: *phtheirei*, corrupt] the temple of God, him shall God destroy [Greek: *phtherei*, corrupt]; for the temple of God is holy, which temple ye are**" (I Cor. 3:17). Some of His children are being judged now in weakness, sickness, or death (I Cor. 11:29-32). Beloved, let us each build on Christ with "**gold, silver, [and] precious stones**" (I Cor. 3:12).

God honors His word, however, whether the person giving it is called of Himself or not. Many people have come to Christ through hearing the Word of God from a minister that is not even converted himself. This is why Paul can say even of ministers who are preaching from envy, strife, and selfish ambition: "**whether in pretense, or in truth, Christ is preached; and I therein do rejoice, yea, and will rejoice**" (Phil. 1:15-18). God's love for fallen man causes him to save, heal, and help people through faith in His word and the Lord Jesus Christ, no matter through what instrument it is received. The Lord Jesus sent Judas to preach the gospel even though he was a thief. He sent Balaam to prophesy even though he was a soothsayer. Jesus said,

"Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my father which is in heaven. Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? And in thy name have cast out devils? And in thy name done many wonderful works? [Greek: *dunameis*, works of power,

miracles] **And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: Depart from me, ye that work iniquity** [Greek: anomian, lawlessness].”

(Mt. 7:21-23)

They worked without the law of love. They did not do the Father’s will, but their own. They followed not the cross, but their own appetites (Rom. 16:17-19). They did not desire first the kingdom of God, the building of one body, but served first their own little kingdom, their own selfish ambitions (Gal. 5:20-21).

Beloved, let us be careful how we build on Christ (I Cor. 3:10-12). Let us not be **“saved; yet so as by fire”** but let us work to please Him and gain an abundant entrance into the **“everlasting kingdom”** (I Cor. 3:15; II Pet. 1:11).

“For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad. Knowing therefore the terror [fear] of the Lord, we persuade men.” (II Cor. 5:9-11)

B. WRESTED SCRIPTURE

The first method we shall consider of how people are frequently led astray is the most common. It has been Satan’s oldest tool for deceiving God’s people. First, Satan casts doubt as to what God has really said: “Has God really said that?” (Gen. 3:1). Then, the next thing Satan does is to pervert or wrest God’s Holy Word, the scriptures (Gen. 3:4-5).

Before we look at specific examples pertaining to this doctrine, let us consider some of the reasons why even Christians, born-again children of God, become deceived. The first reasons come to us from one of the most important revelations that the Lord Jesus has given us. This revelation is similar to the one we examined earlier by Paul when he said that if a man is ignorant concerning the truths we are studying, his ignorance is due to selfish motives.

John, the beloved apostle, quoted Jesus as saying,

“My doctrine is not mine, but his that sent me. If any man will [willeth to] do his will, he shall know of doctrine, whether it be of God, or whether I speak of myself. He that speaketh of himself seeketh his own glory: but he that seeketh his glory that sent him, the same is true, and no unrighteousness is in him.”

(Jn. 7:16-18)

We can clearly see by this passage that in order for a person to know the truth concerning a doctrine, whether something should be one way or the other, he must be willing to do, to act upon, whatever that truth teaches! If not, he will be blinded spiritually. Oh, how often the scripture says, **“He that hath ears to hear, let him hear”** (Mt. 11:15; 13:9). Jesus very carefully explains this when He

says, **“this people’s heart has become fat, and with their ears they scarcely hear, and they have closed their eyes; lest they should see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and understand with their heart, and should be converted [Greek: *epistrepsosin*, turned around], and I should heal them”** (Mt. 13:15 rev.). This is true of saint and sinner alike. We can keep refusing the prompting of the Holy Spirit as He attempts to teach us, and then we must reap the consequences. Usually we have sown to the flesh and of the flesh we reap some type of judgment (Gal. 6:8; I Cor. 11:29-32). We find Jesus in His majestic resurrection glory telling John to write to the seven churches of Asia, the Christians in the seven cities named. Jesus exhorts these children of God urgently, and repeatedly ends with these words, **“He that hath an ear to hear, let him hear what the Spirit sayeth unto the churches”** (Rev. 2:7, 11, 17, 29; 3:6, 13, 22). The body of Christ is the one true church, and all the members of that body in any particular location make up the one local church of that location, identified by the name of the city. Asia is an area, and therefore, **“the churches”** such as Ephesus, Philadelphia, and Laodicea consisted of all of the Christians in the different cities, the different portions of Christ’s body separated only by location, each portion having a local city-wide government of elders and deacons (Phil. 1:1). Today’s carnal and sectarian structures keep the children of God blinded to this revelation and, thus, hold them back from maturing on to **“full stature in Christ”** (I Cor. 3; Eph. 4:13). Mixed with unbelievers and unbelief, they misrepresent Christ as He really is to the saved and unsaved world. This is detrimental to all, for the church loses eternal riches; the world their eternal souls. He that hath an ear to hear, let him here!

Now, not only must we first be willing to do the truth before we may receive the revelation of the truth, but we must also want to do it for the glory of God and not for our own. Oh, how much **“work”** is done for self-glorification and is just so much **“wood, hay, [and] stubble”** (I Cor. 3:12).

Jesus also said:

“The prince of this world cometh, and hath nothing in me.”

(Jn. 14:30)

We must realize that if there are yet areas of self or undisclosed sin, Satan can come and gain entrance and bring harm or destruction to God’s work and ourselves.

Now let us examine the scriptures most frequently wrested in order to try and prove that women are to rule and have ministries of authority as in Ephesians 4:11. The first and by far the most frequently wrested verse is:

“there is neither male nor female: for ye are all one in Christ Jesus.”

(Gal. 3:28)

This is taken to mean that God does not look at us as male or female when we have been baptized into Jesus Christ, and, therefore, women are the same as men. The easiest and simplest way to expose this obvious fallacy is to realize that if this were true, then women would also be eligible for rulership in the home. Hardly anyone, however, takes that position, as the scriptures, some

of which we have already considered, are too many refuting such distortion (Gen. 3:16; Eph. 5:22-24; Col. 3:18; Titus 2:5; I Pet. 3:1-6; I Cor. 11:3). However, Paul wrote Timothy that the Spirit very emphatically was speaking to them that in the last days there would be those who would depart from or leave the faith (I Tim. 4:1). They would give heed to, that is, give attention and hold to, deceiving spirits from Satan and the teachings of demons. This area of the ministry of women is one of Satan's' prime targets, for it deals with God's order and authority from the top to the bottom. When the Lord's army is out of order, there is no functioning authority that is effective in tearing down Satan's kingdoms. As the case is today in most places, some are being saved from his powers of darkness and translated into the kingdom of God, but Satan's kingdoms are growing more powerful all the time. This invasion of seducing spirits is now effectively attacking the structure of the home, the very basic unit of corporate life. Therefore, it is not surprising that we should now find "Spirit-filled" Christians receiving "revelations" that would allow the wife to be the head of the house and of her husband, or to say that neither one is the head over the other. However, someone must make the final decisions, and God created man for this, and the woman for his helpmate. Together, they are to be one flesh, and when the wife sticks her head up, we have a two-headed body and a real monster. **"A double-minded man in unstable in all his ways"** (Jas. 1:8) and this then becomes the case in a double-minded family unit. Next, we will see Satan teaching that the children, also, have equal authority in the home. In practice, often the children have even more, but the parents would not acknowledge it. To teach this perversion to Christians who believe the Word to be inspired of God, Satan must wrest the meaning of the words themselves. Beloved, let it be understood, the Holy Spirit chose His words very carefully, and He said what He meant and meant what He said. The letters of Paul, for example, which are the ones perverted in this case, were first, to be read aloud; second, to be read to common folk; and third, to be read in their everyday language, which was Koine Greek. Remember, God is never trying to hide what He is attempting to reveal to us. His truths are written clearly and carefully, and often in many different ways, so we do not miss them. Blindness to them is not because of the difficulty of digging them up, but because of our hardened hearts of unbelief whereby we have eyes that do not see and ears that do not hear. Who does not remember how after he entered salvation that he was amazed how clearly and thoroughly this doctrine is expounded from Genesis to Revelation. This is true also of the doctrines of divine healing and health. We find them all through the scriptures once our heart has been opened to these truths! However, Satan is able to seduce some people into believing that God has hidden truths in the Word that are beneath the surface and that the Holy Spirit did not really mean what He said but was trying to teach something else which they often refer to as "one of God's mysteries." Their interpretation then becomes such that it directly contradicts what God has explicitly said.

Let us consider an example of this as it pertains to the ministry of husband and wife. It is implied that when Paul said "**man**" he meant "the Spirit" and when he said "**woman**" he meant "the flesh." Therefore, the claim is made that when the scripture says, "**the husband is head of the wife,**" what is actually meant is that "the spirit is to rule over the flesh." Now, of course, we know the Spirit is to rule over the flesh, and so many babes in Christ are deceived. They

take a passage like First Corinthians 11:1-16 and quote only part of it, and it is then very easy to deceive someone as they follow only the “teacher’s” ideas and comments. However, if we take each verse and word and check this method of substitution, it becomes absurd. Suddenly, we must have the carnal nature (actually the woman) shorn or shaven (I Cor. 11:5-6). Also, we would have “the flesh” the glory of “the spirit” which is nonsense (I Cor. 11:7). When Paul refers to the creation story, we are told he is using the man-woman relationship, but is actually trying to teach us this “great mystery” that only they have seen (I Cor. 11:7-12). They ignore that “the spirit” must suddenly have long hair, so nature itself must be a mystery only they can understand (I Cor. 11:14). This same perversion is done with Paul’s teaching to the Ephesians (Eph. 5:22-33). However, we find by this “revelation” that “the spirits” are to love “the flesh” and even as their own bodies which is already their flesh (Eph. 5:28). John tells us that the lusts of the flesh are not of God, but of the world, and those who love it will pass away with it (I Jn. 2:15-17). Paul’s quotation here from the creation account really becomes absurd if we are to be consistent in this method of substitution whereby we receive “underlying revelation” (Gen. 2:24; Eph 5:31). Truly, the great mystery Paul writes about which is actually the comparable relationship of Christ and the church would become a mystery of mysteries.

Another passage sometimes so treated is that one Paul wrote to Timothy in his first epistle (I Tim. 2:8-15). Here we would have “the Spirit” lifting holy hands and the names of Adam and Eve must be ignored; or else we have the spirit before the flesh, which is the opposite of the creation account when God formed the flesh and afterward breathed into it the Spirit (Gen. 2:7).

The whole type of perversion seems preposterous to many, and it is. Yet many are being seduced. The reasons are simple. Often, they do not wish to obey the plain teaching of the Word! (Jn. 7:17; I Cor. 14:38). The men no longer wish to take the responsibility of leadership given to them by God, and thus are rebellious against the Lord. The women also do not wish to be put under subjection to the Word of God because it places them under the leadership of man. Peter’s statement in his first epistle is a clear instruction to the wives to be in subjection to their own husbands and is impossible to wrest if one is to be consistent and honest before God (I Pet. 3:1-7).

The reason women do not wish to submit to their husbands is because they are in rebellion against the Living Word, the Lord Jesus Christ. The first step of correction is for one to totally submit to God and then learn that this involves submission to the other members of the body of Christ and to those appropriate ones outside the body as well. Only then can wives submit to their husbands, and I might add that when they do this, they could expect more love manifested to them from their husbands.

Paul gives us a revelation for successful submission (Eph. 5:18-21). He wrote that we are first, to be constantly filled with the Spirit by the Lord; second, to speak to one another and to ourselves in Psalms and hymns and spiritual songs even though it sometimes takes effort, and we have to command our soul; third, to let our singing and praising come in and fill our hearts in worship to the Lord; fourth, to be obedient in giving thanks for everything, which is not always easy but is possible if we humble ourselves and reflect on God’s goodness and past provisions, His ever present love, and assurance of the future; and this then leads to the fifth step, to obediently submit ourselves to each other in the fear of

Christ (Psa. 103:1-5; Col. 3:16; I Thes. 5:18; Rom. 8:28-29). Submitting to others and to all authorities is an important aspect of our submission to God (Eph. 5:21 - 6:10; Rom. 13:1-5). When we humble ourselves in submission to God, we can then resist the devil and expect him to flee from us (Jam. 4:7; I Pet. 5:5-11). Clothed in all God's armor, we can experience victorious spiritual warfare (Eph. 6:10-18).

Now then, we might add that most Christians usually acknowledge the doctrinal position of the headship of the husband although they usually do not practice it very well. Likewise, having acknowledged God's order in the ministries of men and women in the home, we must acknowledge the even greater importance of God's order in ruling the household of God!

Another reason many are seduced by this false teaching on women is that they see the spiritual application of the man's headship over the woman applied to Christ and the church and have a deceiving spirit that spiritualizes all natural truth to the utter disregard and negation of the natural truth that is also so very important.

Now, in order for us to properly understand what God means in the Galatians 3:28 passage, we must consider its context. Paul was writing about the law being our schoolmaster to bring us to Christ. Then after faith comes, we all are children of God by faith in Christ Jesus.

"For ye are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus. For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ. There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female: for ye are all one in Christ Jesus. And if ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise."
(Gal. 3:26-29)

Let us compare this with the letter to the Ephesians when Paul is writing about the Gentiles having been separated from the Jewish salvation:

"But now in Christ Jesus ye who sometimes were far off are made nigh by the blood of Christ. For He is our peace, who hath made both one, and hath broken down the middle wall of partition between us . . . to make in Himself of twain one new man, so making peace; and that He might reconcile both unto God in one body by the cross."
(Eph. 2:13-16)

Again, to the Colossians, Paul writes that they had:

" . . . put on the new man, which is renewed in knowledge after the image of Him that created him: Where there is neither Greek nor Jew, circumcision nor uncircumcision, Barbarian, Scythian, bond nor free: but Christ is all, and in all."
(Col. 3:10-11)

To the Corinthians, Paul writes:

“For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles, whether we be bond or free; and have been all made to drink into one Spirit. For [also] the body is not one member, but many.”
(I Cor. 12:13)

In these portions of scripture, we see three different points of emphasis, two of which are mentioned in the Galatian passage. Only by comparing scripture with scripture can we come to understand the correct interpretation of God’s Word.

The Spirit’s Nature and Fruit

First, all are to **“put on Christ,” “the new man”** (Gal. 3:27; Col. 3:10). This means to put on the spiritual nature, the divine nature from the abiding presence of Christ by His in-dwelling Spirit. This is in contrast to the old man and its works of the flesh (Col. 3:5-9). We see this clearly as we follow Paul’s thoughts through the entire epistle to the Galatians. This epistle was written to correct certain false teachings from men who were preaching another gospel, a gospel of works under the law versus the true gospel of the grace of God (Gal. 1:6-7). Therefore, it is quite logical for Paul to go on from the passage in question (Gal. 3:28) to talk more of the Spirit and give us the fruit of the Spirit (5:22-23) and end the epistle with similar words when he says:

“for in Christ Jesus neither circumcision availeth anything, nor uncircumcision, but a new creation.”
(Gal. 6:15 rev.)

There is no mention in this letter of spiritual gifts or charismata, not once! What we do find is God’s love and desire for His people to be like Christ no matter what their race, social status, or sex. He rejoices in establishing his covenant with the women, children, and slaves, as well as the men. This thought also helps shed light on this passage, written to those recently escaping from heathenism.

The Spirit’s Body - One

The second point of emphasis is that we are all one body in Christ. Paul writes:

“For ye are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus.”
(Gal. 3:26)

“For ye are all one in Christ Jesus.”
(Gal. 3:28)

We can clearly see that Paul was saying that there was not to be separation between the different groups listed such as men and women, but all are one in spirit since we all have the same father and, therefore, are one family

spiritually. Hardly could this be interpreted in the physical realm for people were not to destroy their sex, nor circumcision nor uncircumcision, and certainly could not change their nationalities. There is not to be one race separated from another, but all one in Christ.

The Spirit's Manifestations or Gifts (Charismata)

The third point of emphasis is that we all are to have different functions of membership in the body of Christ. This emphasis is not referred to in the Galatian passage because functionally there is distinction between male and female. We function by the gifts God gives to us. Although all are members of the same body, Christ's, and all, therefore, have the same nature, Christ's, all are different members of Christ, each with their own different function! (I Cor. 12:12-14). Each member with their own particular gifts, together with each other member, makes up the body of Christ with Christ Himself as the head. (Eph. 1:23). As Christ is the fullness of the Godhead bodily, we are, therefore, corporately the expression of this fullness (Col. 1:19; 2:9-10). Praise the Lord!

Paul made it clear in the Corinthian passage that all of the members need one another to make this completeness (I Cor. 12:20-21). Not every member would have the charisma (gift of grace, singular) of being an apostle, prophet, or teacher; or have such charismata (gifts of grace, plural) as miracles, gifts of healings, helps, governments, or others (I Cor. 12:28; Eph. 4:7-11). For instance, not all men would be qualified to be a pastor (elder), a charisma having very definite qualifications (I Tim. 3:1-7; Titus 1:5-11).

Charismata or gifts are given by the Holy Spirit severally as He wills (I Cor. 12:11). There are different determining factors for qualification such as marriage status, sex, personal behavior, spiritual maturity, and even station in life (Tim. 3:2-13). An example of the last would be that a bondsman could not freely function in the capacity of an apostle, one sent forth from place to place directly under the authority and leading of the Holy Spirit (Acts 13:1-4).

The scriptures are clear that the bond (slaves) were to remain such and give respect and service to their masters **"as to the Lord,"** as they were His freemen (I Cor. 7:18-24). Also, freemen were to consider themselves the Lord's servants, and those who were masters were to care properly for their slaves, even when both were Christians and, therefore, one in Christ (Eph. 6:5-9; Col. 3:22 - 4:1; I Pet. 2:18-21; I Tim. 6:1-2).

So, we see, beloved, **"there is no respect of persons with God"** (Rom. 2:11; Eph. 6:9). All are to grow up unto full stature in Christ, but each of us has his own specific ministries or gifts (Eph. 4:13). Certain ones are for men only; others are for women only; others are for either, but not for children; others are for everyone. But remember this, **"many that are first shall be last; and the last shall be first"** (Mt. 19:30). Some humble sister who may be only a slave here, but a faithful steward of her gifts, will outrank many a preacher after they both pass through the judgment seat of Christ (II Cor. 5:10-11). Let us be faithful to our calling for we will be judged according to the stewardship of our gifts and our works, how we helped or hindered others (Mt. 25:14-30; I Cor. 3:13-15). The greater gifts will undergo greater judgment as James said:

“My brethren, be not many teachers, knowing that we shall receive the greater judgment.”
(Jam. 3:1 rev.)

Dearly beloved, the saints that are going to be victorious in the terrible tribulation ahead of us are only going to be those that know their ministry, gifts, and place in God and function accordingly. As God said:

“they shall march everyone in his ways, and they shall not break their ranks; neither shall one thrust another; they shall walk every one in his path:”
(Joel 2:7-8 rev.)

Let me add, also, another reproof to this wresting of scripture that would teach that there is no difference in the ministry of men and women. Paul writes to the Corinthians that their women are to be silent in the churches. His reason is from the scripture in Genesis, the first of the five books of Moses, which are commonly referred to as “the law” (Gen. 3:16; Mt. 11:13). The apostle says it is a shame for women to speak in church (I Cor. 14:34). Of course, some will reject all evidence of scripture and say this means gossip and chattering and the like. Brethren, is it any less shameful for men to carry on the same? Of course not! Others say Paul was referring to speaking out of turn or order in the assembly. Brethren, is it any less shameful for a man to interrupt another inappropriately? Therefore, these arguments are false, otherwise the apostle’s instruction to Timothy would not make any sense. Although these scriptures are sometimes quoted, they are deliberately glossed over quickly and often are either left unexplained or designated for the early church only in order to make ineffective Paul’s clear statement:

“Let a woman quietly receive instruction with entire submissiveness. But I do not allow a woman to teach or exercise authority over a man, but to remain quiet.”
(I Tim. 2:11-12 NAS)

Here is a beautiful illustration of the Lord through Paul making a clear distinction between the ministry of men and women. Again, he that hath ears to hear, let him hear!

Another false reasoning from scripture is “that men and women had equal dominion before the fall. Afterward, the curse entered and the woman was put under the rulership of man. But now we are free from the curse and, therefore, man is not to rule over the woman.” Let us look, however, at the scripture. God gave mankind, both man and woman, to have dominion over the earth (Gen. 1:28-30). However, this says nothing of their relationship to one another. To find this, let us look at the creation accounts.

In the first account, we find God revealing His will to have creatures like Himself, made in His image. They would have free moral will, be able to think and act and have emotions. This is true of both male and female. They would have dominion over the earth and were to be fruitful and multiply (Gen. 1:26-28).

In the second account, we find there was no one to till the ground, so God formed man from “**the dust of the ground**” and put man in the Garden of Eden to cultivate and to keep it (Gen. 2:5-8, 15). Then God said:

“It is not good that the man should be alone; I will make him an help meet for him.”
(Gen. 2:18)

We note that man was made to fulfill God’s desire for beings in His image and after His likeness. Woman was made to fulfill man’s need for companionship and help. She was created **“meet for him.”** The English word **“meet”** is a very good translation of the Hebrew word here. First, it means she was “to meet” him or be joined to him, be with him. Second, she was “to be meet” for him; that is, be suitable or adapted properly for him. She would, as the Hebrew word means, “be a helper that is correspondingly suitable for him,” his counterpart. Both aspects of the meaning of this one Hebrew word are translated in the Greek Septuagint when it is translated in verse 18, a help **“according to him”** and in verse 20, a help **“like him.”** A man and a woman are alike in the general sense as compared with the other creatures of God’s creation, but yet they are different. Although they seem to be almost opposite in some characteristics, they really are not; but their needs and natures differ in order to complement one another perfectly. The woman being the weaker vessel shows more readily the needs that they both have. The woman was made according to the specifications of man’s needs. Both the man and the woman have their needs fulfilled in the joyful obedient fulfilling of the purpose of their creation as God’s Spirit fills them and directs them. Fulfilled by being filled full!

Woman was made from a part of the man’s own body (Gen. 2:21-24). This is to remind him to love his wife as he does himself, for she is a part of him (Eph. 5:25-33). It reminds the woman that she is to be his completeness, to submit to his direction and leadership. For she was created for him; he was not created for her (I Cor. 11:9). This is the very argument Paul uses to show the Corinthians the headship of man during this present age (I Cor. 11:2-16). Paul says:

“I would have you know, that the head of every man is Christ; and the head of the woman is the man; and head of Christ is God.”

(I Cor. 11:3)

He writes this to Spirit-baptized believers. Paul then gives the reason from creation:

“Man is the image and glory of God: but the woman is the glory of the man.”

(I Cor. 11:7 rev.)

That means the excellence of the man will show glory and honor to God, while the excellence of the woman will show glory and honor to the man. The man’s failure dishonors God, and the woman’s failure brings dishonor and shame to her husband. Paul follows this by giving two reasons why the woman is the glory of the man.

1. **“For the man is not of the woman; but the woman of the man.”**

(I Cor. 11:8)

2. **“Neither was the man created for the woman; but the woman for the man.”**
(I Cor. 11:9)

Now notice this is before the fall! Therefore, a woman being under the man has nothing to do with the fall at all, but rather it was purposed that way by God and our Lord Jesus Christ when they created mankind (Heb. 1:2; Jn. 1:3, 10; Col. 1:16).

The judgment of the woman was:

“I will greatly multiply thy sorrow and thy conception; in sorrow thou shalt bring forth children; and thy desire shall be to thy husband, and he shall rule over thee.”
(Gen. 3:16)

The curse is the increase of sorrow and pain during pregnancy and childbirth.

The last part of the verse is not new but only a clear statement to Eve of the way God had made her, and the fact that as a helpmate to Adam she would continue to be ruled by him. Certainly, the curse was not for the woman to desire her husband, so too, neither was it judgment that he was to rule over her. However, because of our fallen nature, the headship of the husband needed to re-emphasized as a reminder to the woman not to be so carnally minded as to rebel against God’s authority over her, this authority being vested in her husband.

As the subjection of the woman to the man is not part of the curse, neither is the work given to the man for that was also determined before the fall. The curse is upon the ground, the sweat of man’s face in toil, and death. Men and women the world over still attest to the fact that the curse is still in effect. Mankind still returns to the dust.

“As it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment.”
(Heb. 9:27)

This is New Testament scripture. Praise God, we have been redeemed from the curse of the law, which in part is spiritual death, and we can have spiritual eternal life by receiving the Holy Spirit of life through Christ. But Christians still die and that sometimes is judgment from the Lord Himself (I Cor. 11:30-32). The curse of physical death, Paul writes, will not be lifted until the resurrection at the last trumpet sound.

“Then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory.”
(I Cor. 15:54; Isa. 25:8)

We repeat then, both men and women have the same spiritual nature, Christ’s, not different ones; and both men and women are members of the same body, not different ones; but men and women are to have different functions in Christ Jesus our Lord.

The next scripture we will consider is Peter's quotation of Joel's prophecy: (Joel 2:28-29)

“And it shall come to pass in the last days, saith God, I will pour out of My Spirit upon all flesh: and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, and your young men shall see visions, and your old men shall dream dreams: and on My servants and on My handmaidens I will pour out in those days of My Spirit; and they shall prophesy.”

(Acts 2:17-18)

Here again, beloved, God is making no distinction between male and female as to receiving the Holy Spirit. However, this scripture speaks nothing of God's divine order for husband and wife. Remember, Paul taught that women can pray and prophesy, yet in the same passage points out that she is to be under man's authority (I Cor. 11:5, 3). Women could pray and prophesy under the Old Covenant, but they certainly were under the leadership of men. How often people quote **“Jesus Christ the same yesterday, and today, and for ever”** (Heb. 13:8) to show God's ways do not change and then want to forget it or ignore it when it comes to some particular truth such as the one under consideration.

Here then, beloved, I must bring your attention to one very important fact. Often, entirely too often, in men's teachings and writings, they will quote a verse of scripture to support their ideas, and the scripture is really saying nothing about what they are attempting to get from it. Be careful of this, for it is very common.

This is the case when some men and women have Phebe even a pastor, and the Samaritan woman at the well with Jesus a teacher and preacher because she goes back and witnesses to her townsfolk. This is a perversion of the meaning of the ministry of a teacher and a preacher. Some even go so far as to have Mary Magdalene preaching a sermon when she was instructed to **“go to my brethren, and say unto them...”** (Jn. 20:17). Praise God He chose a redeemed woman **“from whom seven demons had gone out”** to be the first witness of the resurrection! (Lk. 8:2; Mt. 28:1, 10 NAS). How wonderful God showed His love for women by choosing them for one of the most important events in the history of man. But witnessing and preaching have two different meanings.

This leads to another scripture that is used in a similar way as Acts 2:17-18 is. Paul wrote to the Corinthians:

“Ye may all prophesy one by one, that all may learn, and all may be comforted.”

(I Cor. 14:31)

Here, this scripture, as the one in Acts, is wrested to mean that since Paul wrote that **“all may prophesy”** then he is saying that women can preach and teach and function the same as men.

As we learned that witnessing and sharing the gospel person to person privately is different from preaching the gospel publicly, so we must learn that prophesying, whether privately or publicly, is different from preaching publicly. Prophecy is an inspired utterance directly from God of a supernatural nature.

The speaker is not using preconceived thoughts and wisdom from God, but is speaking directly in the words God chooses in a language the speaker knows. It is one of the nine spiritual gifts listed in First Corinthians 12 that are manifestations of the Holy Spirit (I Cor. 12:10). It is a **“thus saith the Lord”** (Ex. 4:21-23; Isa. 44:2-8; Jer. 31:31-40; Eze. 3:4-27; Acts 11:28; 21:11). It is what the prophets of old spoke as they were moved by the Holy Spirit, not what they preached out of their own intellect (II Pet. 1:20-21). It is as supernatural as the gift of tongues, only the one prophesying is speaking in a language he knows, while the one speaking in tongues is speaking in a language he does not know. Any boy or girl, man or woman can prophesy, but only some men are called to preach authoritatively with reproof, rebuking, and teaching (II Tim. 4:1-5).

Unfortunately, certain translators who do not understand the supernatural gifts of the Holy Spirit in First Corinthians 12 translate prophecy as “inspired preaching” but these are two totally different gifts. They are two different words having two totally different meanings.

Prophecy is inspired words from the mind of the Holy Spirit, words chosen by God directly and given to the one speaking; preaching is usually, or should be, inspired proclamation from the mind of the preacher who chooses the written word of God as a basis of his message, as Paul exhorts, **“preach the word!”** (II Tim. 4:2).

Another scripture we will consider is:

“For the kingdom of God is not meat [food] and drink; but righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost.” (Rom. 14:17)

Some take this scripture to mean that since the kingdom of God is not food and drink, it, therefore, does not matter what we eat or drink. Some may go further and say that this scripture teaches that the kingdom of God is not one of rules and regulations and, therefore, there are no rules regarding women in the church. They neglect the fact that this scripture says the kingdom of God is righteousness, which means doing the right thing, “a life which conforms to the divine law” (Gen. 15:6; 30:33; Mt. 5:6, 10, 17-20 - 7:27).

Let us look at this further. First, what is meant by the fact that **“the kingdom of God is not meat [Greek: food]”** is as Paul wrote to the Corinthians:

“But meat commendeth us not to God: for neither, if we eat, are we the better; neither, if we eat not, are we the worse. But take heed lest by any means this liberty of yours become a stumblingblock to them that are weak.” (I Cor. 8:8-9)

Paul goes on to explain, for example, that if a brother thinks eating meat that has been offered to idols is sin, and you realized it is not, and so go ahead and eat, and so your brother eats also, and goes against his conscience, your brother sins. Therefore, you have sinned against him in causing him to sin, and since he belongs to Christ, you have sinned against Christ (I Cor. 8:10-12). He ate without faith and **“whatsoever is not of faith is sin”** (Rom. 14:23).

If we consider the context of the text in question, we find that a few verses later, Paul said, **"It is good neither to eat flesh, nor to drink wine, nor anything whereby thy brother stumbleth"** (Rom. 14:21). So we conclude it does matter under what conditions we do or do not eat and drink even God-given food.

Secondly, the emphasis of the kingdom of God is not one of following a multitude of rules and regulations, but following the Lord; nevertheless, there are rules and regulations to follow. For example, Paul has written rules for proper conduct in the assembly as regarding the gifts of the Spirit, dress, leadership, behavior, and attitudes (I Cor. 12-14; I Tim. 2:8 - 3:15; I Cor. 16:14).

This leads us to another scripture that is often wrested:

"for ye are not under the law, but under grace." (Rom. 6:14)

This scripture is most often the reply from anyone who wishes to continue in his old ways and does not want to submit to the righteousness (doing the right things) of God. Notice it is not even the complete sentence and the context is one in which Paul is teaching about sin. He writes:

"Do not let sin reign in your mortal body that you should obey its lusts, and do not go on presenting the members of your body to sin as instruments of unrighteousness; but present yourselves to God as those alive from the dead, and your members as instruments of righteousness to God. For sin shall not be master over you, for you are not under law, but under grace.

What then? Shall we sin because we are not under law, but under grace? May it never be! Do you not know that when you present yourselves to someone as slave for obedience, you are slaves of the one whom you obey, either of sin resulting in death, or of obedience resulting in righteousness? But thanks be to God that though you were slaves of sin, you became obedient from the heart to that form of teaching to which you were committed, and having been freed from sin, you became slaves of righteousness. I am speaking in human terms because of the weakness of your flesh. For just as you presented your members as slaves to impurity and to lawlessness, resulting in further lawlessness, so now present your members as slaves to righteousness, resulting in sanctification. For when you were slaves of sin, you were free in regard to righteousness. Therefore what benefit were you then deriving from the things of which you are now ashamed? For the outcome of those things is death. But now having been freed from sin and enslaved to God, you derive your benefit, resulting in sanctification, and the outcome, eternal life. For the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord." (Rom. 6:12-23 NAS)

When people are confronted with some particular act of righteousness that they should do or act of unrighteousness that they should refrain from, they will often use this scripture to keep from doing God's will and may even say, "That's bondage!" However, this scripture reveals that all are forever under bondage. The choice is whether to be in bondage to sin resulting in death

(eternal separation from God and damnation), or to God and righteousness resulting in holiness with the outcome of eternal life; slaves of self or slaves of Jesus Christ; bondage to sin is true slavery, bondage to righteousness is true freedom.

What did Paul mean when he said to “**present yourselves to God as those alive from the dead, and your members as instruments of righteousness to God. For sin shall not be master over you, for you are not under law, but under grace**” (Rom. 6:13-14 NAS)?

Paul was saying we are dead to the law because we died in Christ to the law, and now we are to walk in newness of life because Christ has been raised from the dead, and we have been put into Him (Rom. 6:4; 7:4, 6). This has been accomplished but God’s grace which we have entered into and stand in by faith (Rom. 5:1-2).

Now, notice, although we are dead to the law, Paul says we are to obediently present ourselves as slaves to righteousness (doing the right thing) (Rom. 6:16-19). If we present ourselves again to sin, we shall die (Rom. 6:16; 8:12, 13) “**for the wages of sin [what sin earns] is death**” (Rom. 6:23).

We might add here a few more reasons why we are not under law, but under grace.

First the definite article “the” is not present in the Greek manuscripts; therefore, the verse reads we “**are not under law**” not “**the law**” as some translations render it (Rom. 6:14). This means we are not under even the principle of law, and not just “the law.” Instead, we are under the principle of grace.

Secondly, law gives no power to live a godly life or an ungodly life. All it can do is to expose sin, and the sin kills and, therefore, the law or “**the law of commandments**” brings death (Rom. 3:20). However, sin does not have power over us, for we have been freed from its power and placed under the power of God’s life through grace. Paul gives an example in the next chapter. The law says, “**thou shalt not covet**” (Rom. 7:7). But the law cannot stop Paul from coveting, but only exposes his coveting as sin and, therefore, kills Paul, for it is written, “**the soul that sinneth, it shall die**” (Eze. 18:4). Then Paul concludes, “**So then, the law is holy, and the commandment holy, and just, and good**” (Rom. 7:12). Paul goes on to say that the law is also spiritual, but he is carnal, sold under (under the power) of sin, and needs a greater law to overcome “**the law of the sin and death**” that works in his members which is “**the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus**” (Rom. 7:14; 8:2, 4). This is what can make us spiritual, and thus we can fulfill the law, which is spiritual. Hallelujah!

It is like a bird that is falling under the laws of gravity (sin) towards the earth (death, then hell); but when it starts flapping its wings (life of faith), the laws of aerodynamics (the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus) enable the bird to rise and soar freely (real salvation). To enjoy and maintain this salvation, we must continue to “fly” “**after the Spirit and not after the flesh**” (Rom. 8:4 rev.). And in so doing, we fulfill the law.

The Spirit works in us both to will and to do God’s will which is expressed by His word (Phil. 2:13). God’s word is the greatest book of law and science ever given to man! It expresses in minute detail the science and laws of life and death, mortal and immortal, and give us a multitude of examples to help us understand

and have complete confidence in them (I Cor. 10:11). This is true on the individual level and on the corporate level, which is government. Law is defined as "The principles and regulations emanating from a government and applicable to a people, whether in the form of legislation or of custom and policies recognized and enforced by judicial decision" (American College Dictionary, ACD). Christ rules now as King of kings and Lord of lords over every principality and authority (I Tim. 6:15; Eph. 1:20-23). We live by the laws of the kingdom of God. Also law is defined in scientific use as "a statement of a relation or sequence of phenomena invariable under the same conditions" (ACD). Examples of such laws would be those of spiritual, mental, and physical health; the laws of faith and love; the laws of sowing and reaping (Rom. 3:27; Jn. 15:12, 17; Mt. 22:37-40; Gen. 1:11-12; Gal. 6:7). The definition of science is "a branch of knowledge or study dealing with a body of facts or truths systematically arranged and showing the operation of general laws" (ACD). What greater truths to study and know do we find than those in God's Word which "**is truth**," all of which is embodied in Jesus Christ our Lord, who is the truth and the life, and the way (Jn. 17:17; 14:6).

What greater laws are there than when Jesus said:

"Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind.' This is the first and great commandment. And the second is like unto it, 'Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself.' On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets."

(Mt. 22:37-40; Deut. 6:5; Lev. 19:18)

Jesus said that the conditions for Him to manifest Himself to someone are that he has and keeps His commandments, His laws.

"He that hath My commandments, and keepeth them, he it is that loveth Me: and he that loveth Me shall be loved of My father, and I will love him, and will manifest Myself to him."

(Jn. 14:21)

Someone always says, "Love is the important thing," and this is true, but we find that love for God and mankind is keeping His commandments. John's epistles declare this truth:

"By this we know that we love the children of God, when we love God, and keep [do] His commandments! For this is the love of God, that we keep His commandments: and His commandments are not grievous [burdensome, difficult to observe]."

(I Jn. 5:2-3)

Paul wrote:

"Circumcision is nothing, and uncircumcision is nothing, but the keeping of the commandments of God."

(I Cor. 7:19)

Paul also wrote the Romans that God sent His son Jesus so:

“That the righteousness [Greek: *diakaioma*, ordinance] of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit.”

(Rom. 8:4)

Also, beloved, righteousness means keeping God’s standard which is perfection and His laws. Jesus had to be baptized in order to fulfill all righteousness and He included us when He said:

“for thus it becometh us to fulfill all righteousness.” (Mt. 3:15)

Now even though we are to keep God’s commandments, there is another important reason why we are **“not under law, but under grace.”**

Laws are not very flexible, but God’s grace is perfect to each situation. For example, if one commits sin under law, the law pronounces a certain penalty. God’s judgment under the Old Covenant for adultery was:

“the adulterer and the adulteress shall surely be put to death.”

(Lev. 20:10)

God’s judgment for murder was:

“he that killeth any man shall surely be put to death.”

(Lev. 24:17)

David committed adultery with Uriah’s wife, Bathsheba, and God opened her womb so that she became pregnant (II Sam. 11; Gen. 29:31). David tried to cover up by getting Uriah to lie with her. When God continued to work through Uriah so that he would not go in unto his wife, David, instead of confessing his sin, killed Uriah, for God said through Nathan the prophet:

“Thou hast killed Uriah the Hittite with the sword, and hast taken his wife to be thy wife, and hast slain him with the sword of the children of Ammon.”

(II Sam. 12:9)

By the law, both David and Bathsheba should have been stoned to death. But, thank God, the age of grace for man started with Adam and not at the New Testament as many people are taught. God has always dealt with man in grace as well as having given him laws to reveal Himself, His nature, and His purposes for man and the universe. Before the Old Covenant was established, it is written:

“Noah found grace in the eyes of the Lord.”

(Gen. 6:8)

Although God forgave David and Bathsheba, they both had to be chastened by His grace. Bathsheba lost her child, but David as king and leader of Israel who had committed murder as well as adultery was punished much more severely. David’s judgment was threefold.

God said:

1. Because David had committed murder,
“the sword shall never depart from thine house.” (II Sam. 12:10)
2. Because David had sinned in secret at night, He would raise up a man to lie with his wives for all of Israel to see, and in broad daylight (II Sam. 12:11).
3. Because David’s deed gave great cause for the Lord’s enemies to blaspheme, the child would surely die (II Sam. 12:14).

All three came to pass after David had confessed his sin and God had forgiven him, for Nathan said:

“The Lord also hath put away thy sin; thou shalt not die.”
 (II Sam. 12:13)

Then David’s child died and his son Absalom lay with David’s wives in the sight of all Israel. Sons of David were murdered within his own lifetime, within Solomon’s lifetime, and on down through the history of the sons of David even until the crucifixion of our Lord Jesus Christ (II Sam. 12:18; 16:22; 13:28-29; 18:15; I Kgs. 2:25; Acts 2:29, 30, 36). Praise God for His grace and sovereign power. As the psalmist said: **“Surely the wrath of man shall praise thee”** (Psa. 76:10).

This last murder made salvation possible for all men from Adams race, as Jesus died and shed His innocent blood for my sin and yours. Have you accepted it?

“Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.”
 (Acts 2:38 rev.)

And thus you will:

“Save yourself from this crooked generation.” (Acts 2:40 rev.)

How we need to understand God’s ways, his grace and laws, and His covenants. God deals with us just as He did with David and Bathsheba. For it is written:

“For the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men, teaching [Greek: *paideuouosa*, disciplining, chastening] us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world; looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ; who gave Himself for us, that He might redeem us from all iniquity [Greek: *anomias*, lawlessness], and purify unto Himself a peculiar [Greek: *pepiouision*, chosen, special, for one’s own possession] people, zealous of good works.”
 (Tit. 2:11-14)

And:

“If we sin willfully after that we have received the knowledge of the truth, there remaineth no more sacrifice for sins, but a certain fearful looking for of judgment and fiery indignation, which shall devour the adversaries. He that despised Moses’ law died without mercy under two or three witnesses: of how much sorer punishment, suppose ye, shall he be thought worthy, who hath trodden under foot the Son of God, and hath counted the blood of the covenant, wherewith he was sanctified [these are Christians], an unholy thing, and hath done despite unto [treated with contempt, insulted] the Spirit of grace? For we know Him that hath said, ‘vengeance belongeth unto Me, I will recompense, saith the Lord.’ And again, ‘The Lord shall judge His people.’ [Not talking of sinners here]. It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God.”

(Heb. 10:26-31; Deut. 32:35-36)

His ways, grace, and law have not changed. However, we are under a New Covenant. Under this covenant, many of the numerous laws of the Old Covenant which were to teach about Christ and His sacrificial death are no longer necessary for they have been fulfilled in Christ’s sacrificial life and death.

Another aspect of the law, which we need to know, is that the law is for direction, not for power! It is written,

“For the commandment is a lamp: and the law is light; and reproofs of instruction are the ways of life.” (Pro. 6:23)

The law is also for correction, revelation, and the knowledge of God and His will (Rom. 2:17-21; II Tim. 3:16-17). It also reveals sin! (Rom. 3:20; 7:7).

How we need to remember that when Satan tempted Jesus to sin, it was by trying to get Him to transgress the literal interpretation of the law (Mt. 4:1-11). Jesus replied by quoting the literal letter of the law, and it killed Satan’s attack (Deut. 6:13-14; 8:3). We need to understand this. Paul wrote,

“We know that the law is good, if a man use it lawfully; knowing this, that the law is not made for a righteous man [one doing the right thing] but for the lawless and disobedient [this could be a Christian].” (Pro. 6:23; I Tim. 1:8-9)

Quote it to the one sinning and to Satan. Often after this, we need to reveal to the one sinning God’s salvation through the grace of our Lord Jesus.

Let us be emphasized that although God’s grace chastens us severely at times, it is for our good and the good of those who look to us as examples (Heb. 12:5-11). The law would have had both Bathsheba and David killed. God’s grace not only spared Bathsheba’s life but also allowed her to become the wife of the king and mother of Solomon and ultimately of our Lord Jesus Christ. God’s

grace also spared David and established his throne forever (II Sam. 7:12-16). David's sins of the flesh were serious, therefore, he was chastened; but his repentance and seeking of God's mercy were rewarded (II Sam. 12:13; Psa. 51). In contrast, Saul had acted foolishly and continued his rebellion against God, and rejected His word; therefore, the Holy Spirit left him. God's mercy was taken from him, and the Lord slew him and brought his house and throne to dishonor and ruin (I Sam. 13:13; 15:22-24; 16:14; 28:15-19; 31:2-10; II Sam. 7:15; 21:6-9; I Chr. 10:13-14).

Let us yield ourselves to the Spirit of God to fulfill God's laws, and we will not be under the condemnation nor power of the law for it is written concerning the warfare between the flesh and the Spirit:

"If ye be led of the Spirit, ye are not under the law." (Gal. 5:18)

If you go back to the life of the flesh, you will be under God's law (I Tim. 1:9; Gal. 5:21; 6:8). If you try to justify yourself by the righteousness of law, you have then fallen from grace as Paul wrote to the Galatian Christians who were then under grace:

"Christ is become of no effect unto you, whosoever of you are justified by the law; ye are fallen from grace." (Gal. 5:4)

But praise God, let us be able to say with the scripture:

"But we are not of them who draw back unto perdition; but of them that believe [Greek: *pisteos*, have faith] to the saving of the soul." (Heb. 10:39)

In conclusion on this point, let us state that God is the greatest and supreme lawgiver. Since we are all sinners or lawbreakers, we need Jesus as our Saviour (Rom. 3:23). He is the one who took our sins upon Himself, and, therefore, our judgment as required by the law was upon Him (I Pet. 2:24; Eze. 18:4). We need Him as our lawyer, which is His function as our advocate, and great high priest, as He is ever living to make intercessions for us (I Jn. 2:1; I Tim. 2:5; Heb. 7:25-26). Praise God! Although Satan stands before God accusing us day and night, we overcome him on account of the blood of the Lamb and of the word of our testimony; and we love not our lives (souls) unto the death (Rev. 12:10-11).

The next wrested scripture that we will discuss involves one of the most absurd and Satanic attacks on God's Word one can imagine. The portion under attack reads:

"Let your women keep silence in the churches: for it is not permitted unto them to speak; but they are commanded to be under obedience, as also saith the law. And if they will learn anything, let them ask their husbands at home: For it is a shame for women to speak in church. What? Came the word of God out from you? Or came it unto you only? If any man think himself to be a prophet, or spiritual, let him acknowledge that

the things that I write unto you are the commandments of the Lord. And if anyone is ignorant, he is ignorant for himself.” (I Cor. 14:34-38 rev.)

Because the scripture is so plain here, the attempt to get around it is by saying, “Paul was not writing here ‘the commandments of the Lord,’ but was quoting what the Judaizers were saying.” How absurd! This technique suggests that anytime you do not like a statement of scripture, just subscribe it as a quotation of a false teaching. Unbelievable? No! They have given “**heed to seducing spirits and doctrines of devils**” and so minister these evil spirits to others who willingly swallow these lies of the devil (I Tim. 4:1). Watch (out) and pray!

Of course, Satan first injects doubt, as when “**the serpent beguiled Eve,**” by suggesting that one can only understand or authenticate the true meaning by reading it in the original Greek translation (II Cor. 11:3). Then, most Christians are at a loss because they do not know Greek. Beloved, the Greek is even plainer! However, one writer even has the audacity to proclaim that all scholarly translators of the English Bibles have been “blinded” and their “minds closed” to the proper rendering of the Greek manuscripts. Also, this writer charges that most commentators have deceitfully “upheld the delusion,” as she calls the truth that is stated so plainly in the King James and other versions, rather than give us “her revelation.” She accuses these translators of being jealous of their masculine priesthood when in reality, like Korah and his followers of old who rose up against Moses, it is her own jealousy and rebellion that is so evident and infectious (Num. 16:1-40). But, the righteous judgment of God is sure as it is written, “**The Lord shall judge his people**” (Heb. 10:30).

Paul states plainly that if anyone does not agree with these plain statements of scripture because he thinks he is a “prophet” or “spiritual,” he is to “**acknowledge** [Greek: *epiginosketo*, thoroughly understand] **that the things that I write unto you are** [not the teachings of Judaizers, but] **the commandments of the Lord!**” (I Cor. 14:37).

Now, let us consider a few false reasons given to try to prove that this scripture, First Corinthians 14:34-38, is “a quotation of the Judaizers” and not what it really is, the Word of God. The first false reason is “The law never has anything to say about this matter.” This is ridiculous. Such a false statement can only be believed by those who have given themselves to a seducing spirit. The phrase in this passage of scripture, “**as also saith the law,**” refers not only to Genesis 3:16, but Genesis Chapters 1 and 2 and many other verses in the writings of Moses (I Cor. 14:34). “The law is speaking” (concerning the woman being in subjection to the man) by means of the creation account given to us by Moses and explained by Paul an apostle and also by examples, one of which is the description of the relationship of Abraham and Sarah, an example confirmed by Peter, another apostle (Gen. 1; 2; 3; 3:16; I Cor. 11:1-16; I Tim. 2:11-15; Gen. 18:12, 19; I Peter. 3:5-6). Another example of the law speaking is also an example of a dead man speaking, though we have no record of any words that he ever spoke. It is the testimony of Abel’s acceptable sacrifice by faith and the New Testament scripture stating that “**by it he being dead yet speaketh**” (Gen. 4:1-16; Heb. 11:4). This is scriptural confirmation that the historical narratives of the Holy Writ given to us by Moses are, in fact, “the law speaking to us.”

Another false reason says that “Paul never appealed to the law for the guidance of the church,” but even a brief reading of his letters reveals that he quoted from it continuously to substantiate his gospel. For example, when Paul gives instruction in this same letter just a few chapters before as to how gospel workers are to be supported financially, he says, “**For it is written in the law of Moses, ‘You shall not muzzle the ox while he is threshing,’**” and then interprets this to mean that “**the Lord directed those who proclaim the gospel to get their living from the gospel**” (I Cor. 9:9, 14 NAS; Deut. 25:4). If this is not using the law for direction, what is it? But the really amazing thing is that only 13 verses before the one in question, Paul uses the law again to give understanding and direction, this time as to the proper usage of the gift of tongues. We quote, “**In the law it is written, ‘With men of other tongues and other lips will I speak unto this people; and yet for all that will they not hear me, saith the Lord’**” (I Cor. 14:21; Isa. 28:11-12). Obviously, they still are not listening! So then, who really is blind? No one is so blind as the proud, the rebellious, or the selfishly ambitious.

Yet another false reason given to try to prove that Paul is quoting the Judaizers and not the Old Testament scriptures is the claim, “When Paul uses the phrase ‘**the word of God,**’ he is referring either to the gospels or to prophetic utterance. This is the only sense of this phrase in all of the New Testament scriptures.” Even a casual reading of the New Testament exposes this teaching as obviously false (Rom. 9:6-9; II Cor. 2:17; 4:2; I Tim. 4:5; Heb. 13:7; II Pet. 3:5). When the New Testament scripture says, “**the word of God is quick and powerful,**” any Christian with even an elementary experience has discovered through the Holy Spirit that this is profoundly true of the Old Testament scriptures as well as the New, thank God! (Heb. 4:12).

The last false reason we will consider concerning the wresting of First Corinthians 14:34-38 reveals to us not only a most pathetic misunderstanding of proper church order, but a deficiency of valid experience as well. The argument is made that “since Paul wrote that women were not to ask questions in church, he could not have been writing to the Corinthians instructions from the Lord because it is not known whether even men asked questions in church as they did in the Jewish synagogues.”

This reveals to us not only a lack of understanding of proper New Testament order as revealed in the scriptures where we find the meetings are informal and filled with dialogue, but an erroneous assumption that the rigid, formal, ritualized, and totally man-controlled “worship services” of the present institutional church, which have become more brittle than the old wineskins of the Jewish synagogue, do in fact present the New Testament order for church services.

Where is the understanding of the church in the home so often spoken of? (Rom. 16:5; I Cor. 16:19; Col. 4:16; Phile. :2). Where is the acknowledgment of Paul’s oft mentioned method of open discussion which he practiced always, whether in the synagogue, the marketplace, the home church, or his own public meetings? (Acts 17:2, 17; 18:4, 19; 19:8-9; 20:7-12). I cannot think of any greater bondage for church order than the bondage of the monotonous, pre-planned, programmed, man-structured order of institutional, carnal Christianity. Even the mere mention of the Holy Spirit can excite a cracking of the old wineskin, let alone any of His divinely chosen manifestations. What a brittle bag!

Well, this is enough to expose the preceding arguments as a blatant attempt to discredit God's Holy Word. It is sufficient to say "**let God be true, but every man** [Greek: *anthropos*, man or woman] **a liar!**" (Rom. 3:4).

To summarize this section, we have found that the scriptures most commonly used to teach that the women may have authority in the church have been wrested. They have either been taken out of context or have been totally misinterpreted from what God intended. We have found this to be true when examining them more completely and comparing one scripture with another.

C. False Arguments

In closing this section, let us end with four false arguments that we find occasionally. First, "Since the gift of the Holy Spirit is for all, so are the lesser gifts such as preaching, teaching, and pastoring." Beloved, "the gift of the Holy Spirit" is the indwelling of God Himself, which makes one a Christian or a child of God (Acts 2:38-39; Rom. 8:9). The "lesser gifts" are for ministry and are given severally as God wills, and His will is never contrary to His word (I Cor. 12:5, 11). The gift of the Holy Spirit Himself is never to be equated with the gifts that the Holy Spirit bestows! (I Cor. 12:13). The gift of the Holy Spirit makes us members of the body of Christ, and the gifts from the Holy Spirit then give our membership function and individuality (I Cor. 12:6, 14, 27).

The second argument is "God changes His mind concerning us as we grow spiritually. Thus some Christians will be under some laws, and others are not to be, and we as individuals will go from one set to another as we grow." Beloved, God's word does not change and His word expresses His will and His ways. It is true, we will not be able to do certain things as we grow in grace and love that we once did. But this is not due to a change in God, but of our understanding of Him as revealed through the scripture which causes a change in us (II Cor. 3:18). As it is written, "**Sanctify** [set apart from worldliness to godliness, from flesh to Spirit, from Satan to God] **them through thy truth: thy word is truth**" (Jn. 17:17). However, if any particular truth is revealed to us, it will remain the same if we are just newborn babes in Christ or have scores of years of Christian life behind us. The doctrine of Christ and the early apostles and prophets never has changed and is the foundation of our faith even now, centuries later (Eph. 2:20).

The third false argument is "The ministry of women must be understood by the sociological factors involved, and that today the customs of first century man do not bear upon us as times have changed." This argument is easily refuted in the minds of those that hold the scriptures as the Word of God and not the words of mere men (II Tim. 3:16; II Pet. 1:19-21). You see, the scriptures reveal that a woman's ministry is based upon the intelligent and unchanging will

and purpose of our Heavenly Father as expressed in her creation by His hand and that these are given to us by His inspiring men to write the facts exactly as they were and are (Gen. 1 - 3). Therefore, we have an accurate, historical, and scientific account of the origin of man in a sinless state and his fall into a sinful state in which he continually degenerates whenever without the influence of God and His Word (II Tim. 3:13-17).

A woman's ministry under man's leadership and teaching are the same throughout the centuries of recorded scripture, from creation thousands of years before Christ, to and during His ministry in the flesh, and afterward. A woman's place has nothing to do with the world's customs which fluctuate and change from culture to culture, century to century. Neither is it based upon the devil's lie that man evolved from the chance circumstances of "Mother Nature" and that all mankind is evolving ever upward toward perfection.

In conclusion the pertinent factors that contradict these false "sociological concepts of development or evolution" are the true sociological factors concerning our beginning -- the purpose, order, method, and nature of mankind's very special creation and the factors concerning the fall (I Cor. 11:1-16; I Tim. 2:11-15). The fact that women are now taking spiritual leadership is not some new sociological advance but rather an age-old sign of the spiritual decline that always reoccurs during times of apostasy (Isa. 3:12).

The fourth and final argument we wish to refute is the one that states, "Jesus is coming soon, and we must get the job done; and so, God is willing to use any and all means available." Beloved, Jesus is not coming back until the Father sends Him, and He is never in a hurry (Acts 3:20-21; 17:31). Relax! Right now, He is sitting in the heavens laughing at the world, for it is written, "**He that sitteth in the heavens shall laugh: the Lord shall have them in derision** [mock them]" (Psa. 2:4). Everything is right on time, and God is on the throne. This false argument is common among spiritual babes in Christ who, although they may have been born again for years, have never come to know their Father very well nor His sovereignty. The end never justifies the means! (Rom. 3:8). God is at rest, having finished all His works as it is written, "**and God did rest the seventh day from all his works**" (Heb. 4:4). If anyone is so anxious about God's work not getting finished that he has to disobey His word, it is clear that he has not entered into God's rest "**because of unbelief** [Greek: *apeitheian, disobedience*]" (Heb. 4:6). In fact, the opposite of this argument is true. As the end of the age gets closer, God's perfecting of His church is progressively increasing (Eph. 4:11-16). God is bringing His people into more of His truth and the practice of His ways, which are ways of love that bring about our perfection (Col. 3:14). Truly, "**The glory of this latter house shall be greater than of the former, saith the Lords of hosts**" (Hag. 2:9).

We can conclude that false arguments are from the immature whose "imagination" have not yet been cast down, and whose thoughts have not yet been brought into captivity to the obedience of Christ (I Cor. 10:5).

Part III

PUBLIC MINISTRY OF WOMEN IN THE EARLY CHURCH AND TODAY

First, we have the time of the early church when it was vibrant, alive, powerful, and while under severe persecution was winning multitudes to Jesus Christ in such proportions that it has not been equaled since. What was it like? Our New Testament scriptures reveal much to us. Paul wrote to the saints in Ephesus, a Gentile city, and told them that the blood of Christ had broken-down the wall of division between Jew and Gentile and brought all of them into one body by the cross (Eph. 2:11-17). Therefore, he wrote:

“Through Him we both [Jew and Gentile] have access by one Spirit [only one, and it is the same Spirit] unto the Father [only one, and it is the same Father]. Now therefore ye are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellowcitizens with the saints [unity of all saints everywhere], and are of God’s household [a family relationship with God as the Father], having been built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets [we are living stones built upon the lives of these holy men of the past and present], Jesus Christ Himself being the cornerstone [a personal relationship with Christ as Lord], in whom all [the entire body of Christ] the building fitly framed together [each one cooperating with the other, laying down his life for Christ and each other] is growing [it is alive and fruitful] into a holy temple in the Lord [it is discarding the ways and weights of this world for “holiness unto the Lord”; it is being separated unto Him for we know that “without holiness, no one will see the Lord.” Heb. 12:1, 14]: in whom ye also are builded together for a habitation of God through the Spirit [a dwelling place of God in which He lives and manifests His life by His Spirit]. (Eph. 2:18-22 rev.)

Oh, what a church! It was powerful. The supernatural manifestations of God were continual. People were added to the church daily by the Lord as they all continued in one accord with praises to God; they were steadfast in the apostles’ teaching, in fellowship, in breaking of bread informally from house to house, and in prayers (Acts 2:41-47). The fear of the Lord was present. All that believed were together and had all things common; they prayed together and were filled with the Holy Spirit and boldness (Acts 4:24 - 5:11). This was the early church.

It was in this atmosphere that the women were taught their ministries. None assumed positions of leadership, as they were too busy with their own tasks. In the writings of the early church, writings of such men as Cyprian, Tertullian, Clement, and Origin, we find that women were never in positions of leadership. Around the third century orders arose of "deaconesses," but they were not women in leadership. Rather, they were orders that ministered to the sick and needy, went on visitation, and taught other women. Although not permitted to baptize, they helped the women who were being baptized. Thus, the early church was in divine order regarding the public ministry of women.

This situation did not change much until we approach the era in which we are now living. Satan, of course, has always attempted to destroy God's order, but as long as the word of God is held as the guide, there never has been a problem with women in authority. In approximately the last hundred years, the word of God has been under the most vicious attack since the early church, and that from within the ranks of the "organized" church. Leading this attack are men of supposed scholarship who profess to be Christians, but are only "wolves in sheep's clothing" (Mt. 7:15-29).

They systematically destroy in the minds of nominal or immature Christians the authenticity and inspiration of the Word of God (I Tim. 4:1-3; II Tim. 3:1-17; Eph. 4:14). Their followers have degenerated into men who not only follow their pernicious ways, but deny the abundance of scientific and archeological evidence continually being found to prove them wrong, evidence which supports the scriptures as the inspired Word of God (II Pet. 1:20 - 3:18). Many are the writers of the scripture who have warned us about them and the days in which we live (Jude).

It is in this atmosphere, then, that false cults have so rapidly sprung into being. We find that many such cults originated from deceived women: Christian Science from Mary Baker Glover Patterson Eddy; Unity School of Christianity from Myrtle Fillmore; the revival of spiritism from the Fox sisters, Margaret and Katie; and Theosophy from Helen Blavatsky and Annie Besant.

Today, we must compare these cults with many sects of Christianity. These sects are the existing divisions which were established with orthodox doctrines concerning the person of Jesus Christ, some of which are rapidly becoming false cults due to "the apostasy." Women are no more prone to carnality than men! However, being the weaker vessel, they are often less able to withstand spiritual pressure (I Pet. 3:7).

Now, we come to more recent years. After the outpouring of the Holy Spirit in the early 1900's, there arose a very gifted woman to a most prominent ministry. Had she obeyed the men who had spiritual authority over her, her career would not have ended in such deception and disrepute. In more recent years, other women have received gifts of healings and miracles which have enabled them to rise to respected positions. Because of the lukewarmness of the churches and their primary interest in their immediate physical condition, rather than their eternal riches, it is quite easy to exalt these God given ministries above the three more important ones, those of apostle, prophet, and teacher (I Cor. 12:28). These three ministries not only exercise gifts ministering to the physical body, but also minister toward the perfection of the saints in spirit and soul (Eph. 4:7-16). Many persons are still too carnal and selfish to appreciate these three types of ministry. They are used together with the evangelist and pastor to

bring the church to maturity; that is, a conforming to the image of Christ, which means dying out completely to self and living wholly unto God. The church needs more preaching of the gospel and the cross in the life of the believers to accomplish this. The gospel is still:

“the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek. For therein is the righteousness of God revealed from [Greek: *ek*, out of] faith to [Greek: *eis*, into] faith: as it is written ‘The just shall live by [out of] faith.’ ”

(Rom. 1:16-17; Heb. 2:4)

And again,

“For the preaching [Greek: *logos*, word] of the cross is to them that perish foolishness; but unto us which are saved [Greek: being saved] it is the power of God.”

(I Cor. 1:18)

Notice the Greek has a present passive participle, meaning we are being saved. Salvation means wholeness. No Christian is completely whole until he comes to a **“perfect [full grown] man, unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ”** (Eph. 4:13). Notice, also, that our life in Christ is Christ being completely formed in us (Gal. 4:19). We grow out of one level of faith into a higher level (Rom. 1:17). Our faith changes as we mature and become more holy. We experience **“faith working [operating] through love”** (Gal. 5:6). Therefore, love increases faith. It comes by revelation, and it is our righteousness being worked out in us (Phil. 3:15; 2:12-13). Salvation, righteousness, and sanctification are all imparted to us positionally in Christ, but must be worked out and perfected experientially (Rom. 4:6, 11; I Cor. 1:30; I Thes. 5:23; II Tim. 2:22).

In the cross, we find that, first, Christ is crucified for us to pay for our sins.

“Christ died for our sins.”

(I Cor. 15:3)

Second, following our acceptance of this truth and our repentance, we are to recognize our place with Him on the cross, that is, that we have been crucified with Him.

“I have been crucified with Christ; and it is no longer I who live but Christ lives in me.”

(Gal. 2:20 NAS)

This realization is accomplished after repentance and after we receive the Holy Spirit and are, therefore, **“born of the Spirit”** (Jn. 3:1-8; Rom. 6:4). Also, this spiritual birth may occur before or after being **“born of water”** (Acts 8:12-17; 10:43-48). Also,

“one died for all, therefore all died; and that He died for all, that from now on they which live should not live unto themselves, but unto Him which died for them, and rose again.”

(II Cor. 5:14-15 rev.)

Every true believer should see this because that is why he is buried in baptism. We do not bury a live person, but we bury our “old man” that was crucified with Christ (Rom. 6:4-6). Hallelujah!

Third, one work of the cross very few believers accept and understand is the daily dying on our cross, with Christ working this in us from within (Phil. 2:13; 4:13). To Him be all the glory. Jesus said,

“If any man will come after Me, let him deny himself [unselfishness], and take up his cross daily [we must willfully do this each day], and follow Me.”
(Lk. 9:23)

This is the life of:

“Not My will, but Thine, be done.” (Jn. 6:38; Lk. 22:42)

Again,

“Except a grain of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone: but if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit.” (Jn. 12:24 rev)

This, my dear friends, is not the dying and burying of our “old man.” The old nature cannot bear good fruit. Like begets like. God said, “**Let the earth bring forth the living creature after its kind**” (Gen. 1:24 rev.). This applies also to us human beings. We must die to our own life, our own good desires, or sinless life, if you will, and through the resurrection power of the Spirit of the indwelling Christ, much fruit will come forth. Jesus went on to say,

“He that loveth his life, [Greek: *psyche*, meaning soul, ourself, our intellects, emotion, and will] shall lose it; and he that hateth his life in this world shall keep it unto life eternal.” (Jn. 12:25)

Again it is written,

“and they loved not their lives [souls] unto the death.” (Rev. 12:11)

And again in reference to the discipline of our bodies,

“I keep under [Greek: *upopiazo*, literally to strike under the eye, therefore treat with rough discipline, buffet] my body, and bring it into subjection.”
(I Cor. 9:27)

You cannot grow out of carnality unless you “**present your body as a living sacrifice**” (Rom. 12:1 rev.). God says this is the only reasonable thing to do and, in the light of eternal judgment, it most assuredly is (II Cor. 5:10-11). This is imperative in order to know “**the good and acceptable and perfect will of God**” (Rom. 12:2). This is why most Christians have not even begun to know the will of God for their lives. It is one of non-conformity to the world. This is

why in this age of conformity, few have experienced this abundant and fruitful life with all its fullness. Some have in part, but we only get the fullness according to the degree of sacrificing our lives for Him.

Whether you have ears to hear the messages in this book and are able to receive God's truth will be determined for many of you by whether you have presented your bodies a living sacrifice and are "dying" on your cross daily. Some after starting have found it did not appeal to their selfishness and put their cross back down.

We can see the backslidden condition of the church and the rebellious state of the world by looking at the significant positions that are of importance today.

First, let us look at the true church, the body of Christ. One of the most widely known ministries of healing of our generation and certainly one of outstanding power was a woman with gifts of faith, healings, miracles, the word of knowledge, and others not usually publicly manifested. When this woman functioned with her God-given charismata (gifts of God's grace), the moving of the Spirit was simply beautiful. However, because she did function out of divine order by preaching and teaching, and because of the misunderstanding of the various charismata given to her by God, which are for women as well as men, there was often confusion, rejection, and lack of kindness and love toward her and these gifts. What is needed is the knowledge of the truth, for Jesus said concerning sin, and these attitudes are sin, "**If you abide in My word, then you are truly disciples of Mine; and you shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free. . . . [and, if] the Son shall make you free, you shall be free indeed**" (Jn. 8:31-36 NAS). The first truth we must understand is that we are one body in Christ and are commanded to love one another and maintain the unity of the Spirit. Until we do this, we will never understand correct doctrine in all areas and come to the unity of the faith (Eph. 4:3, 13). We must first be willing to love one another and accept one another as Christ accepted us, without murmuring and complaining about one another or our beliefs (Col. 3:13).

More truth that we will come to understand is that there are many different charismata given. For too long, many have been lumped together under the title of "preacher," resulting in confusion. Every ministry that requires speaking is not the same. One may be called as an apostle, prophet, evangelist, preacher, or teacher, all of which are different ministries. However, a person may have more than one ministry (I Tim. 2:7). These are all gifts for men only, but a woman when functioning in a ministry such as prophecy or prayer or gifts of healings or miracles or word of knowledge must also of necessity speak out under the anointing of the Holy Spirit.

The problem today as well as in the recent past has been that gifted women in the body of Christ often act as pastors and teachers, totally out of divine order. When this occurs, deception always results, especially in doctrine or through revelations. Those women who follow their example will likewise be deceived and also usually lack "**the imperishable quality of a gentle and quiet spirit, which is precious in the sight of God**" (I Pet. 3:4 NAS).

Secondly, let us look at the professing church, that great ecclesiastical Babylonian Empire. During the period of 1969-1973 when this book was originally drafted, the first woman was elected President of the National Council of Churches in the United States. Now more and more women are being elected to eldership and other positions of authority throughout the daughters of Babylon, the denominations or sects of this vast, worldwide, idolatrous system.

Third, let us look at the physical descendants of Abraham. The nation of Israel from 1969-1974 was under the leadership of a woman, a grandmother born in Russia and once a schoolteacher in the United States.

Fourth, let us look at Judaism in the United States. In 1972 Reformed Judaism ordained their first woman rabbi, meaning teacher.

And fifth, let us look at the one-world government being organized by man without even a word of prayer allowed. The President of the United Nations General Assembly in 1969 was another woman, this time from the continent of Africa, a previous one having come from the subcontinent of India. Now, nations of the world are beginning to elect women as their leaders or into high positions of leadership as never before. In fact, it is remarkable that the very week this book was being typed in its final draft, the first woman was elected to head the government in Great Britain, making her Europe's first woman prime minister.

We see, beloved, just as it was foretold by the apostles and prophets of old, God's order is being inverted by Satan in every area; and the world is in chaos, fear, and confusion as never before, and there are very few men of God in national prominence to speak for God on matters of urgent importance. But, just wait, God is preparing His spokesmen, and if judgment must start at the house of God, with whom do you think He starts in the church? (I Pet. 4:17). Yes, the leaders (Eze. 9:6; Mal. 3:3-5).

So, beloved, to summarize this topic very briefly, we find that God created man first and created him differently from the woman, who was made to be his helpmate and to be under his command. When she functions in this manner, she will enjoy the true freedom of the Holy Spirit as well as divine rest in her spirit, soul, and body. The teachings of the entire Old and New Testament scriptures confirm this, even to the detail of the root meaning of the words themselves. Also, the history of the people of God before Christ as well as the total history of the first century church confirms this summary. There are no exceptions or contradictions. Only when God's people are backslidden and rebellious against the ways of the Lord is their order perverted and Satan able to bring destruction and division and heresy into the church.

The women are to grow in all respects in the Spirit, produce all the fruit of the Spirit, and be clothed upon with the Spirit. In regard to the different gifts of the Spirit, the ones involving authority such as apostles, pastors, teachers, and so forth, are limited to the few men God chooses and qualifies. The woman's role in the assembly is, therefore, different. Here, also, she is to be a real helpmate to

the man in bringing forth a life of ministry in which the two together can then truly be the salt of the earth.

In conclusion, let me say that the motivating factor in all ministry should be the Spirit of love. Without love, revelation is not complete. It is love for God that will restore the church to proper order and, therefore, to its rightful place in the world. It is love for our neighbor, as we must be willing to put others first and lay down our own lives, that will bring forth His life in all its beauty and fullness. Jesus said,

“Why do you call me ‘Lord, Lord,’ and do not the things which I say?”
(Lk. 6:46 rev.)

And,

“He that findeth his life [soul] shall lose it: and he that loseth his life [soul] for my sake shall find it.”
(Mt. 10:39)

Are we willing to love others first? Jesus said,

“Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life [soul] for his friends.”
(Jn. 15:13)

It is love for the Lord and the Lord in His body, the church, the bride of Christ, that will cause us to love, submit to, and appreciate both one another and the different ministries that each of us has been given sovereignly by God for the purpose of protecting us, and perfecting and bringing us into the practical expression of **“one body in Christ”** that we **“may grow up into Him in all things, who is the head even Christ”** (Rom. 12:3-16; Eph. 4:11-16 rev.).

I pray that God will grant us the grace to fulfill His purposes, the desire to know Him and His ways whatever the cost, to obey His Word even though we may not fully understand, the peace that binds us together in our diligence always to preserve the unity of the Spirit, and the love that binds us together unto our perfection.

In Jesus name and for His sake, Amen.

John P. Rothacker

About The Author



A native of Fremont, Ohio, John Philip Rothacker graduated from the College of Dentistry at Ohio State University. After completing an internship in pedodontics at Children's Hospital a year later, he was dramatically converted.

He then practiced dentistry for two years, dividing his time between private practice and working with mentally retarded children at Columbus State School. In 1966 John left to do missionary dentistry for three months in the summer program of Project Compassion in the West Indies. Following this project, while traveling and working with other missionaries, John entered into the gifts of the Holy Spirit and experienced the power of God in many exciting and miraculous ways.

Then in 1967 he was ordained "by prophecy, with the laying on of the hands of the presbytery." (I Tim. 4:14) Although continuing his public speaking he began his many years of home ministry. (Acts 20:20)

In 1976 the Lord Jesus led John out of eight years of part-time dental practice (this "tent-making" helped to support his life and ministry, which has included the mental and nutritional health of God's people) and into a radio ministry where he is "on call" five nights a week teaching and discussing the scriptures over the air. (Acts 19:9)

He is also active with other ministers promoting unity, holiness, righteousness, and restoration in the Body of Christ. He is called to celibacy as part of his ministry of love and truth.

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