

THE VALUE OF WOMEN: WOMEN IN MINISTRY  
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This is the second sermon in our short series entitled: "What the Bible says about..." Last Sunday we discussed what the Bible says about "Divorce and Remarriage." Next Sunday we will discuss what the Bible says about "Falling from Grace." Today we will look at what the Bible says about "The Role of Women in the Church."

WHY THE ONGOING BATTLE BETWEEN THE SEXES?

Genesis 1-3 revealed that God's original design for men and women was ideal companionship and dominion over God's creation.

Adam's and Eve's Fall into sin and disobedience decimated God's intention. God said to Eve: "Your desire will be for your husband, and he will rule over you" (Genesis 3:16).

ONE ASPECT OF CHRISTIANITY IS TO RESTORE THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN MEN AND WOMEN AS IT EXISTED BEFORE THE FALL.

The companionship between man and woman is broken all over the globe. Paul leaves no doubt that through Christ, God has every intention of bringing restoration to the male-female relationship.

"There is neither Jew nor Greek, slave nor free, male nor female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus" (Galatians 3:28).

"In the Lord, however, woman is not independent of man, nor is man independent of woman. For as woman came from man, so also man is born of woman..." (1 Corinthians 11:11-13).

FIVE LENSES HELP US UNDERSTAND THE BIBLE AND ITS MEANING CONCERNING THE ROLE AND MINISTRY OF WOMEN.

Scripture—Cultural—Historical—Traditional--Contemporary

The Scriptural Lens

National and Church Leaders

Miriam: the sister of Moses and one of the leader triumvirate during the Exodus (Micah 6:4)  
Phoebe: "the one who stands before, front rank, leader, chief, protector, champion"  
(Romans 12:1-2)

Military Generals

Deborah: "warrior, wise, judge, battle leader" (Judges 4:4-9)

International Saviors

Esther: "If I perish; I perish" (Esther 4:16)

Preachers

Priscilla: "pastor, church planter and preacher" (Romans 16:3)  
Phillip's four preacher daughters (Acts 21:8-9)

Evangelists

Mary Magdalene (John 20:17)

## Apostles

Junias (Romans 16:7)

“Everyday” women mentioned in Romans 16:1-16 (of the twenty-nine people, nine are women)

Tryphaena and Tryphosa

Persis

Rufus' Mother

Nereus Sister

## The Cultural Lens

In the cultural society of Paul's day women had little or no standing whatever.

Jesus defended women in a male-dominated culture (Matthew 19:3-10; Mark 10:11; Luke 7:11-17; 20:47). He publicly affirmed women in front of men. (Luke 7:44-50).

*Let's focus the scriptural and cultural lenses on some enigmatic passages.*

1 Corinthians 14:33-35

1 Corinthians 11:5

1 Timothy 2:11-15

The key New Testament passages which seem to restrict women's roles were culturally and historically specific, not necessarily universal principles for all time and places.

## The Historical Lens

Pentecost to 400 A.D.

400 to 1600 A.D.

1600 A.D. to the Present

## The Traditional Lens

Denominational Traditions

**WOMEN WERE GREAT ENCOURAGERS, HELPERS AND BLESSINGS TO THE LORD JESUS.**

Women accompanied Jesus on His ministry tours (Matthew 27:55; Mark 15:41; Luke 8:1).

Women financially supported Him and His ministry (Luke 8:1-3).

Women remained at the cross after the Disciples scattered and ran away (Mark 15:47; John 19:25).

Only Mary of Bethany grasped the significance of Jesus' mission (Matthew 26:10-13).

It is possible that Jesus acknowledged their faithfulness with a great privilege—women discovered the empty tomb (Mark 16:9-10; Luke 23:55-24:11; John 20:17).

So revolutionary was the power of Christian Women in the early church that Libanius, the heathen philosopher, exclaimed, "What women these Christians have!"