

What Does the Bible Really Teach about Women Leading in the Church?

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Follow-up Bible Studies

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Day One: 2 Chronicles 34:14-33

- Summarize the rediscovery of the Book of the Law (14-15). What happened when Shaphan took it to the king (16-18)? How did King Josiah respond to the words of the Law (19-21)? How would you define the character of this king?
- Describe the person Hilkiah and the others went to in order to “inquire of the Lord” (22). What is your reaction to the fact that they sought out a woman? Summarize her prophecy (23-28). In church life, what opportunities are there for you to intentionally seek out women who can lead you and build you up in the Lord? How do you think God feels about this sort of intentionality?
- List everything the king did in response to the prophecy (29-33). What does this indicate about Huldah’s credibility as a prophet? Imagine if Josiah had rejected Huldah’s prophecy because she is a woman. Pray you would not make such a mistake; pray you’d submit to women leaders’ God-given authority and wisdom.

Day Two: Acts 18:18-28

- Set the scene of this text (18). Notice how “brothers and *sisters*” and an important married couple, with the wife’s name first, are mentioned. What does this say about the countercultural nature of early Christianity? Describe Paul’s many travels (19-23).
- After Paul departed, what happened in Ephesus (24-26)? How did Priscilla and Aquila respond to Apollos’ preaching (26)? Imagine that scene in your mind’s eye: setting, conversation, facial expressions, emotions, etc. In particular, how do you think Apollos felt to receive greater insight about Jesus from a woman?
- Describe Apollos’ experience in Achaia (27-28). His encounter with Priscilla likely aided him to be a “great help” to believers and successful in proving that Jesus was the Messiah. How does this make you feel? Expand your prayer from yesterday: pray that no one in your community would miss an opportunity for a woman to point them toward greater knowledge of Christ.

Day Three: Romans 16:1-16

- Read this passage then begin taking notes via three columns: one for every mention of a woman, one for every man and the final for every gender-neutral greeting. Fill in these columns, noting what Paul says about each person. Now, compare the columns. Which group received the greatest quantity and quality of personal greetings? Why do you think this is the case?
- Some claim that Christianity is a religion of oppressive patriarchy. What rebuttal do Paul’s personal greetings appear to offer? Spend a few minutes in silence asking the Lord to speak even more truth to you about the role he intends for women to play in his church.
- Conclude today’s reflection by preparing your own “personal greetings.” Include dear friends, those who work hard in the Lord, those who’ve been like a mother to you, etc. Read over your letter and pray a blessing for each person, especially the women.

Day Four: 1 Corinthians 12:1-11

- Why does Paul seem concerned that believers may be uninformed about spiritual gifts (1-2)? What example does he give to make plain the role the Holy Spirit plays in gifting and guiding people (3)? Ask the Lord to reveal any ways you are confused or uninformed about spiritual gifts. What do you sense him speaking, and how do you think you should respond?

- How does Paul contrast spiritual gifts with the giver (4-6)? How does this make you feel about expressing your own spiritual gifts? And what about observing and receiving the gifts of others?
- Why does the Holy Spirit manifest in people (7)? What are some examples of such (8-10)? Think of some ways that each of these gifts benefits “the common good.” What point from verses 4-6 does Paul then reiterate (11)? Meditate on the phrase “just as he determines.” It is the Holy Spirit, not people, who decides which spiritual gifts each person gets. What is one way to bless this work of the Spirit, particularly when he pours gifts into women?

Day Five: Colossians 3:1-17

- In relation to Christ, what is our status (1, 3)? Therefore, what should we do (1-2)? What will happen when Jesus returns (4)? What sins need to be put to death (5, 8-9)?
- What characterizes “the new self” (10-12)? What virtues encompass it (12-13)? What is the banner over it all (14)? What purpose does it serve (14)? What role does peace play (15)? How should we teach and admonish (16)? What drives all that we do (17)? While these commands are universally helpful, how do you think Paul’s female peers may have especially benefited from the type of environment he sought to create?
- Re-read all of Paul’s admonishments and identify one way you foster this environment today. What is one thing you do to hinder it? Repent and ask for the peace of Christ to direct your actions. Finally, pray for wisdom to nurture this environment in ways that will warmly invite more women into leadership.