

A STUDY OF
GENDER ROLES IN
“THE ASSEMBLY”

BACKGROUND

- Previous study
 - ~4 years ago the elders studied the role of women in “the assembly”
 - Presented the results here in the auditorium to you
 - Found that the Bible does not say women everywhere should be silent in the assembly
- Recently
 - Youth takeover
 - I stood here and told you that they were doing it with the approval of the elders
 - Some of our young ladies testified as to what God has done in their lives
 - Some have taken issue with both the findings of 4 years ago as well as that women spoke in “the assembly”

As A Result

- New Study
 - Jim & I, with Russell's help, have studied the subject anew
 - Lots of time, study, and prayer
 - Ensure our convictions are Biblically sound and have integrity
- Results
 - Shared the findings with the Deacons
 - Share findings with you now – at a high level
 - Give you passages to study and guidelines with which to do that
 - Start an in-depth study in the adult class as of next week
 - Discuss what it means to us, this family, at the end of the in-depth class

HOW WE WILL TREAT EACH OTHER

- In any study there will be differences of opinion:
 1. Some will agree with the findings and want to fully implement them
 2. Some will agree with the findings but be reluctant/uncomfortable to implement them
 3. Some won't agree with the findings
- How We Treat Each Other Is The Key:
 - Regardless of the category in which we find ourselves, we are all brothers and sisters, and we will treat each other with love
 - There will be no gossip, as that is a sin

GUIDELINES FOR BIBLE STUDY

1. No Contradictions:

- Scripture doesn't contradict itself
- If our understanding of a passage appears to be in conflict with another, we don't understand it or them correctly

2. Context & Consistency

- Understand the context of the passage
- Treat everything in the context consistently – don't pick and choose
- It has to fit with the rest of the chapter, book, testament, and bible

3. No Blinders:

- Don't read the Bible through our "traditional" lenses
- Read to understand how God intended for us to live our lives

ISSUES WE FOUND - Assembly

- “Assembly”:
 - Church of Christ code for “in the auditorium” or “worship”
 - Nothing in the Scriptures differentiates between our gatherings, such as those in the auditorium, those in classes, or those at camp
 - Our lives are to be worship
 - Matthew 18:20 says “For where two or three gather in my name, there am I with them.”
 - We must be consistent in the way we treat gender differences in our “gatherings”

ISSUES WE FOUND - Singing

- Singing:
 - In Colossians 3: 16 Paul says “Let the message of Christ dwell among you richly as you teach and admonish one another with all wisdom through psalms, hymns, and songs from the Spirit, singing to God with gratitude in your hearts.”
 - Singing is teaching
 - But in 1st Timothy 2:12 he says “I do not permit a woman to teach or to assume authority over a man; she must be quiet.”
 - We can’t have it both ways – if women can’t teach & must be quiet then they can’t sing. But, if they can sing then we can’t take 1st Timothy at face value.

WOMEN IN THE BIBLE - OT

- Old Testament

- I sent Moses to lead you, also Aaron and Miriam. (Micah 6:4)
- Now Deborah, a prophet, the wife of Lappidoth, was leading Israel at that time. (Judges 4:4)
- Huldah: 2nd Kings 22 explains that she was a prophet that the high priest of Israel sought out to discover what God had in store for the country

WOMEN IN THE BIBLE - NT

- New Testament

- Junia: In Rom. 16:7 Paul wrote that Junia was “outstanding among the apostles”
- Phoebe: In Romans 16:1 Paul said “I commend to you our sister Phoebe, a deacon of the church in Cenchreae.”
- Priscilla: In Acts 18:26 Luke wrote “When Priscilla and Aquila heard him, they invited him to their home and explained to him the way of God more adequately.”

DIFFICULT TEXTS – 1st Corinthians

- 1st Corinthians:
 - In 11:1-16 we read that women are praying and teaching (prophesying) – without condemnation
 - And in 14: 26 through 40, with the exception of verses 35 & 36, Paul said that everyone, both men and women, were singing, had a word of instruction, a revelation, a tongue or an interpretation
 - But in 14: 34 & 35 Paul says “Women should remain silent in the churches. They are not allowed to speak, but must be in submission, as the law says. If they want to inquire about something, they should ask their own husbands at home; for it is disgraceful for a woman to speak in the church.”

DIFFICULT TEXTS – 1st Timothy

- 1st Timothy 2: 8-12 gives us a list of seven commands:
 - Men should pray with their hands lifted up. 2:8
 - Men should pray without anger or disputing. 2:8
 - Women should dress modestly. 2:9
 - Women should not have elaborate hairstyles, wear gold, pearls or expensive clothing. 2:9
 - Women should have good deeds. 2:10
 - Women should be silent and quiet. 2:11 & 12
 - Women should not teach or have assume authority over man. 2:12

POSSIBLE APPROACHES

Guideline 1 No Contradictions	Guideline 2 Context & Consistency	Guideline 3 No Blinders
-------------------------------------	---	----------------------------

SPECIFIC ISSUES: The two difficult passages are dealing with specifics in the two churches – Ephesus & Corinth



PICK & CHOOSE: Out of a list of 7 things in only 5 verses we could choose to accept only 2 of them – the ones about women being silent & teaching



FACE VALUE: The difficult passages mean exactly what they appear to say, & women cannot speak or teach in any fashion in any assembly, men must pray with their hands raised, and women cannot wear gold, pearls, or expensive clothing



CONCLUSION

- The only answer that is consistent with the ground rules of studying Scripture is that Paul's statements in 1st Corinthians and 1st Timothy are to be understood as addressing issues specific to those churches – Corinth and Ephesus.
- In other words, Paul did not tell us that women everywhere must remain silent and cannot teach.
- We realize that this doesn't fit with our traditions. In fact, it doesn't fit with what we, Jim and I, have been taught for decades. But our aim as leaders of this church is to apply teachings in a way that is consistent, regardless of tradition.
- We are sure you will have questions. So please study the passages in this lesson, which is out on the website, and any other passages or writings you can find. And then come prepared to participate in the study starting next week.
- Then, at the end of the class, we will have a discussion of what this means to us, the church here in Skiatook. In other words, what do we want our assemblies, all of them, to look like?