

sermon  SNAPSHOTS

Common Questions  
about  
**Godly Women**



*Fishers*  
Church of Christ



# Can a Woman Preach?

Because women have made many strides in modern culture, the role of women in the church has become a heated issue for many. Consequently, many are leaving behind the Bible in their quest for “equal rights for women” in the church. So we ask, “What does the Scripture say?” The bottom line is that the Bible clearly and explicitly forbids “women preachers” (in the sense of public proclamation of God’s word to men). No amount of sophistry can change what God said!

## First, let us identify some erroneous standards...

- Tradition or personal opinion cannot decide this issue for us (Matthew 15:7-9)
- Elders or “church councils” cannot decide this issue for us (James 4:12)
- Female ability or intelligence cannot decide this issue for us (that’s not the issue)
- *In truth, only the Bible is right!* We must appeal to book, chapter, and verse! (Col. 3:17)

## “Let your women keep silent in the churches” (1 Corinthians 14:34-35)

- In this context, “speak” and “keep silent” indicate *publicly addressing the group* (v.26-34)
- Kept in its proper context, there *could not be a stronger statement* against women preachers!
- Note: In v.35, “ask” involved *much more than “just” asking questions* (v.33, 34b, 35b, 40): E.g., *why ask husbands?* Why not ask a preacher, elder, or some other knowledgeable one? The answer is that the speaker’s “wives” were interrupting, or perhaps even openly disputing

## “I do not allow a woman to teach...but to be in silence” (1 Timothy 2:12)

- Context is not limited to a church building or church assembly, but applies “*everywhere*” (v.8)
- Indeed, this context refers to ANY TIME men and women are together (v.12; but compare Titus 2:3-5)
- Also, in this context, the word “teach” means “*to deliver didactic discourses*” (J.H. Thayer)
- Finally, the “silence” is not absolute, but is contrasted with *public proclamation* of the word. *Again, there could not be a stronger statement* against women preachers!

## This does NOT totally forbid women from ALL teaching (Acts 8:3-4)

- She may teach children (2 Timothy 1:5; 3:14-15)
- She may teach other women (Titus 2:3-5)
- She may teach individual men (Acts 18:26) – *by conversation vs. proclamation*
- But she *cannot preach, teach, lecture, or lead* ANY gathering where men are present!

## A quick analysis of arguments used to defend women preachers

- Women taught in the Old Testament (Exodus 15:20-21; Judges 4:4-5) – *true, but this was NOT public preaching!*
- Women taught in the New Testament (Acts 2:17-18; 21:9) – *true, but we must harmonize ALL verses*
- Women were “declared equal” to men (Galatians 3:26-28) – *true, but this refers to salvation, not preaching*
- Women were only limited by ancient culture – *yet 1 Timothy 2:13-14 ties it to creation, not culture!*

# What are the rights of Godly Women?

We often speak of what a woman “can’t” do, but we forget to address what she “can” do! Further, long-standing human tradition, as well as modern society, has brought much confusion to this issue. But we are only interested in what the Bible says about it. Let’s discuss some of the rights of women, according to the Bible. And since they are God-given rights, we had better think twice before we try to limit them! But there are also limitations placed upon women, which must be understood and respected (Corinthians 14:34; 1 Timothy 2:12); and we must not forget those, either!

## Domestic rights

- The right to be loved (put on a pedestal), protected, and provided for (Ephesians 5:25)
- The right to be “understood” and “honored” as a vessel of fine china (1 Peter 3:7)
- The right to “manage the house” -- after all, it’s THEIR domain! (1 Timothy 5:14)
- The right to make some decisions with regard to the home (Proverbs 31:16, 20, 27)

## Economic rights

- They have a right to work outside the home (Acts 16:14; 18:1-3; Proverbs 31:13, 16, 24)
- Of course, “home” should be their priority! (Proverbs 31:15, 21; Titus 2:5, “homemakers”)
- We offer no sympathy to those who abandon their domestic obligations for their career!
- If you’re too busy to take care of the home, you’re too busy! Quit, or adjust your schedule!

## Civic rights

- There is some evidence that women may exercise some “authority” in civil affairs
- Consider Esther, who was a queen (Esther 2:17); and Deborah, who was a judge (Judges 4:4; 5:7)
- Further, the Ethiopian was not told to quit working for Queen Candace! (Acts 8:27)
- “Leading” and “prominent” women were converted to Christ (Acts 17:4, 12)

## Spiritual rights

- They have a right to “learn” truth – even to “ask” some questions! (1 Timothy 2:11; 1 Corinthians 14:35)
- They may teach Bible classes composed of children or other women (2 Timothy 1:5; 3:14-15; Titus 2:3-5)
- They have a right “serve” in a local church; e.g., prepare communion, help needy, etc. (Romans 16:1-2)
- They have a right to help select the workers (elders, deacons, etc.) in a local church (Acts 6:1-7)



*-Lanny Smith*

## Times of Service

Sunday Worship: 10 am  
Sunday Bible Study: 5 pm  
Wednesday Bible Study: 7 pm

## Elders

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