

The Role of Women in the Church

(1 Timothy 2:9-13)

Introduction:

1. It is unfortunate, but many people are confused today about "the role of women in the church."
2. Perhaps Mother's Day is a good time for us to study this important subject.
3. By "*rightly dividing the word of truth*" (2 Timothy 2:15), we can know God's will on this issue, and we can overcome any confusion that exists.
4. Let us begin by pointing out . . .

Discussion:

I. SOME WAYS IN WHICH WOMEN MAY SERVE

- A. (1 Timothy 2:9-10) Christian women are to adorn themselves with "good works."
 1. "Good works" include a great variety of good activities, especially acts of service.
 2. The Bible tells us about many women who did good works.
 - a. (Acts 9:36) Dorcas "*was full of good works and almsdeeds which she did*" [vs.39 -- she had made coats and garments for the widows in Joppa].
 - b. (Acts 12:12) Mary, the mother of John Mark, allowed her home to be used as a gathering place for Christians to pray.
 - c. (Romans 16:1-2) Phebe was a servant of the church in Cenchrea.
 - 1) It seems that she delivered this letter to the church in Rome.
 - 2) She had assisted many people, including Paul.
- B. Women may be of great assistance to preachers (Philippians 4:3).
- C. Women are to teach.
 1. Women are to teach children, especially their own (2 Timothy 1:5; 3:15).
 2. Older women are to teach younger women (Titus 2:3-5).
 3. Women may teach with their husbands in private settings (Acts 18:26).
- D. By examining these few Scriptures, we see that women play a vital role in the church; however, . . .

II. THE BIBLE PLACES CERTAIN RESTRICTIONS ON THE ROLE OF WOMEN IN THE CHURCH

- A. These restrictions do not mean that women are inferior to men.
 1. Concerning salvation in Christ, we are all one (Galatians 3:26-28).
 2. Even though we are one in Christ, God has given men and women different responsibilities that each is to fulfill.
 3. As we examine these responsibilities, we see that women are given certain restrictions.

- B. According to 1 Timothy 3:1-2, women may not be appointed as "elders."
- C. We learn from 1 Timothy 3:12 that women may not be appointed as "deaconesses."
- D. Women may not serve as teachers in a "mixed" assembly [consisting of men and women].
 - 1. Some are surprised to learn this, but there were "women prophets" [prophetesses] in the early church.
 - a. (Acts 21:8-9) Philip the evangelist had 4 daughters who prophesied.
 - b. "Prophecy" was one of the 9 spiritual gifts listed in 1 Corinthians 12:8-10.
 - c. Prophets taught God's Word through the guidance of the Holy Spirit.
 - 2. Women who prophesied were given certain restrictions.
 - a. (1 Corinthians 11:5) Women could not pray or prophesy with their heads uncovered [see vs.3 for the significance of this].
 - b. (1 Corinthians 14:29-35) In "the church" [the assembly], women are to *"keep silence."*
 - c. (1 Timothy 2:11-12) A woman may not teach or usurp authority over the man.
 - 3. (Revelation 2:18-22) The Lord rebuked the church in Thyatira because Jezebel, who called herself a prophetess, was teaching His servants to sin.
 - a. The things she taught were wrong.
 - b. A relevant question is: "Why was she allowed to teach?"
 - 4. To summarize,:
 - a. women may teach children
 - b. women may teach other women
 - c. women may teach with their husbands in private settings
 - d. women are forbidden to teach audiences consisting of men and women.

Conclusion:

- 1. According to the Bible, women play a vital role in the church.
- 2. Without women, many congregations would cease to exist.
- 3. We must observe the restrictions that God has given to women in His Word.
- 4. See Matthew 7:13-14