

Woman's Position in the Church
Bible Studies

ON

**Woman's Position
AND Work in the
Church.**



BY

Rev. James D. McLean.

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THE CHURCH.

BY
REV. JAMES D. McLEAN.

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BIBLE STUDIES
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WOMAN'S POSITION AND WORK.

CHAPTER I.
INTRODUCTION.

THERE is no more practical question before the church to-day than that concerning the position and work of women. Many branches of the Christian church have yielded, to a greater or less degree, to the demands of the spirit of the age—rationalism and utilitarianism—and have forsaken “the old paths,” and are following the broad road of “no distinction in the church.” While the immediate visible results of such a course may seem beneficial and encouraging, yet the principle of interpretation by which it is justified is destructive to a pure Bible, a happy family, and a harmonious church.

Let us then, with our Bibles in our hands, study this question, and ascertain from them the will of God on this subject. God's will alone should guide us in this, as in all matters of church polity and doctrine.

CHAPTER II.

ACCEPTABLE WORSHIP FULLY PRE-
SCRIBED IN THE BIBLE.

FROM the Bible, as preliminary to this study, we learn that God is "a jealous God" (Ex. xx. 5), that he is jealous not only of the *fact* of his being worshipped as the only God, but also of the *manner* of that worship. Worship to be acceptable to him, must be according to his command. See the instance of Cain and Abel in Gen. iv. 3-5. Cain was "a tiller of the ground, and brought of the fruit of the ground an offering unto the Lord." Abel was "a keeper of sheep," and "he also brought of the firstlings of his flock, and of the fat thereof." Each brought such as he had, and, from a human standpoint, each was alike worthy of reward. But we read, "the Lord had respect unto Abel and to his offering, but unto Cain and to his offering he had not respect." Now, why this difference? Paul answers this question in Hebrews, xi. 4. He says: "By faith Abel offered unto God a more excellent sacrifice than Cain, by which he obtained witness that he

was righteous, God testifying of his gifts," etc. Abel's faith in God led him to offer such a sacrifice as God had commanded, and in doing so, "he obtained witness that he was *righteous*." But "*righteousness*" is obedience to the commands of God. (See Deut. vi. 25.) Hence God must have commanded animal sacrifice when he drove man from the garden, and Cain, in offering of the fruits of the ground, presumed to dictate to God how he should be worshipped, therefore God did not have respect to his offering. But Abel, by faith, brought an animal in sacrifice, as God had commanded, and God accepts his offering. Another example of God's jealousy of the manner of his worship, is found in the history of Nadab and Abihu, in Lev. x. 1-3. They were priests, regularly and fully consecrated, and as such, authorized to offer sacrifice, etc. They also used the censers in the legitimate way, viz.: with fire and incense. But they offered "strange fire which he commanded them not." They went beyond the command in the matter of fire. Hence, as he had not commanded this, he is displeased with it, and "there went out fire from the presence of the Lord, and devoured them, and they died before the Lord." God thus teaches, as Moses says, that he "will be sanctified in them

that come nigh him," etc. (Verse 3.) Other examples of this jealousy on God's part of the manner of his worship, are seen in his dealings with Uzziah (2 Chron. xxvi. 16-19), and Uzzah (2 Sam. vi. 6, 7), each of whom presumed to do in God's worship that which he had expressly commanded them not. Hence we see the truth of the statement, that *worship to be acceptable to God must be such as he expressly commands.*

All extra service, even though honestly offered, is unacceptable to God; and is insulting to him. Jesus said of the extra services of the Scribes and Pharisees of his day, "In vain do they worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men." (Matt. xv. 9.) Compare also Isaiah i. 10-14.

Now God has fully prescribed the approved manner and matter of his worship in the Bible. The worshipper of God is with the Bible "thoroughly furnished unto all good works." (2 Tim. iii. 16, 17.) He is to add nothing thereto, nor is he to subtract anything therefrom. As God is about to close the canon of Scripture, he writes these words: "I Jesus have sent mine angel to testify unto you these things in the churches. . . . For I testify unto every man that heareth the prophecy of this book, *If any man shall add unto*

these things, God shall add unto him the plagues that are written in this book: and if any man shall take away from the words of this prophecy, God shall take away his part out of the book of life, and out of the holy city, and from the things which are written in this book." (Rev. xxii. 16-19.)

In view of these fearful statements and teachings of God's word, how careful should the church be that its *form of worship* be exactly in accord with the Bible. That alone should guide her in all matters of polity as well as of doctrine, for there is nothing "necessary for God's glory or man's salvation, faith, and life, but that is expressly set down in the Scripture, or by good and necessary consequence may be deduced from Scripture."

The Bible does not only tell us what to do in God's worship, but it also tells us *who shall do it*, and *how*, and *when*.

CHAPTER III.

WOMAN'S POSITION, AS SHOWN BY THE
CREATION AND FALL.

STUDYING the Bible on the subject of woman's position and work, we learn—

I. CONCERNING HER CREATION, AND ITS OBJECT.

(a), That woman was created "*after the man.*" (See Gen. ii. 21-24; 1 Tim. ii. 13.)

(b), That woman was created "*for the man.*" (See Gen. ii. 18-20; 1 Cor. xi. 9.)

(c), That woman was created "*of the man.*" (See Gen. ii. 21, 22; 1 Cor. xi. 12.)

(d), That woman was created to be "*a help-meet*" or "*companion*" for the man. (See Gen. ii. 18-20; Mal. ii. 14.)

(e), That woman was created in order that from the two God "*might seek a godly seed.*" (See Gen. i. 28; Mal. ii. 15; Ps. cxxvii. 3; cxxviii. 3, 4.)

From all of these Scriptures we learn that the *sphere of the woman* from the creation has been *in the home of man*, as man's companion

and help-meet, and the mother and nourisher, materially and spiritually, of his children. Consult also Prov. xii. 4; xiv. 1; xxxi. 27; Tit. ii. 3, 4; 1 Tim. v. 14, etc.

II. CONCERNING HER PART IN THE FALL OF MAN.

(a), That the woman was deceived by Satan. (Gen. iii. 6; 1 Tim. ii. 14; 2 Cor. xi. 3.)

(b), That the woman induced the man to sin. (Gen. iii. 6, 11, 12, 17.) That she who was made "*after man,*" "*for man,*" "*of man,*" as his "*companion*" and "*help-meet,*" thus proved to be his tempter and seducer.

(c), That for this she is cursed by God her Maker by being placed thereafter under subjection of the man. Man is to rule over the woman, then, by divine appointment. (Gen. iii. 15, 16.) God, and not man, is the originator of this relationship between man and woman.

CHAPTER IV.

WOMAN'S POSITION IN THE FAMILY.

FROM her place and object in creation, and especially as a curse pronounced upon her for tempting man to sin, she was made, as we have seen, subordinate to man by the positive decree of God. (Gen. iii. 15, 16; 1 Pet. iii. 5, 6.) Man is thus appointed by God himself the "head of the woman." (Consult 1 Cor. xi. 3; 1 Tim. ii. 11; 1 Pet. iii. 1-6; Eph. v. 22, 23; Col. iii. 18; Titus ii. 5, etc.)

Man's being the "head of the woman" does not mean that he is to act as if he were her master, and she his slave. By no means. On the contrary, man is commanded to "honor the woman," to love and protect her, even giving himself for her, as Christ, the head of the man, gave himself for the church. (See Eph. v. 25, 33; Col. iii. 19; 1 Pet. iii. 7.)

The headship of the man gives to him the authority over the family, so that the woman should defer to him in all matters of judgment, as to family affairs (matters of conscience ex-

cepted), he bearing the responsibility therefor. Someone must be the head, for if not, then there would be constant discord. God has appointed man the head, and woman's position is one of subordination. The losing sight of this divine order of things, and the failure to follow the Scripture injunction by each, is the cause of so many divorces to-day. Men have forgotten their duty to woman—to love, honor, and provide for her, etc.; and she in turn, influenced by the infidelity of the day, such as seen in this "woman's movement," which is beginning to trouble the church of God, has forgotten that God has made man "the head" of the family, consequently discord and trouble comes, which ends in divorce.

Man being the "head" of the family is responsible for his house, hence we find Joshua saying, "As for me and my house, we will serve the Lord." (Josh. xxiv. 15.)

God commends Abraham for his government of his house (Gen. xviii. 19), and punishes Eli for his failure to control his family. (1 Sam. iii. 13.)

Peter tells us that the "holy women of olden time who trusted in God were in subjection to their own husbands," and urges all of this time to follow their example. (1 Pet. iii. 5, 6.)

CHAPTER V.

WOMAN'S POSITION IN THE OLD TESTAMENT CHURCH.

WOMAN being created "after man," and "for man," as his "companion" and "help-meet," with the responsible privilege and duty of motherhood, and training of "a godly seed," and having been placed under subjection of man by her Maker, with a sphere peculiarly the home, man being appointed her "head" and representative, it follows that we would naturally expect her to have a similar position of modesty and subordination in the church.

Searching the Bible, *we find under the Old Testament Dispensation—*

(a), That all the covenants made between God and man, were made with *the man*, as the representative of his family. See covenants with Adam (Gen. ii. 16, 17; with Rom. v. 19; 1 Cor. xv. 22; Rom. v. 12, etc.); Noah (Gen. ix. 8, 9); Abraham (Gen. xvii. 2-4, etc).

(b), That *men only* were appointed and or-

dained by the authority of God to the office of *the priesthood*—both *before the law*, as Abel (Gen. iv. 4); Noah (Gen. viii. 20); Abraham (Gen. xii. 7, 8, etc.); Jacob (Gen. xxxv. 1-7, 22); etc.; and *under the law*, see Aaron and his sons (Ex. xxviii. 1, 40-43); and only the males of the Levites were to minister to them. (Numbers iii. 5-15.)

(c), That *only men* were inducted into the office of *elders* of the people. (Num. xi. 16, 24, 26, etc.)

(d), That *only men* were chosen by God to fill the regular office of *prophet*, viz.: to publicly prophesy before the people. See Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, Daniel, etc. True, there were *prophetesses* mentioned under the Old Testament dispensation, such as Miriam (Ex. xv. 25); Huldah (2 Chron. xxxiv. 22); Deborah (Judg. iv. 4), etc. But these were undoubtedly exceptional cases, and inspired for special occasions. None of them seemed to have filled a public position before men, except Deborah. When God makes an exception by special inspiration, then it is right.

(e), As the church and the state were so intimately connected under the Old Testament dispensation, it is significant to note also, that we

have no account of a woman sitting upon the throne of Israel, except the usurper and murderess Athaliah. (See 2 Kings, xi. 1-3.)

(f), But while we find woman occupying no public places in the Old Testament Church of God, yet she does engage in that worship with the congregation. She eats the passover with her family (Gen. xii. 3, 4, with 47); she, with the men, offers of her means and service for the building of the tabernacle (Ex. xxxv. 20-29); she goes up with her husband yearly to worship and to sacrifice unto the Lord at the appointed place (1 Sam. i. 3, 4, 7, 21); she is appointed to assist in the service of song (1 Chron. xxv. 3-6; Neh. vii. 67; Ezra, ii. 63; Ps. cxlviii. 12, 13); and Brown, in his "*Antiquities of the Jews*," referring to the synagogue worship, says that "the eighteen prayers of the synagogue, supposed to have been written by Ezra, were repeated three times a day by *all persons who were of age, of what sex or condition soever, either privately or in public*," and "at the end of each of the prayers all the people said amen, whether repeated in the synagogue, or in the family." (See Vol. I., pp. 541-42.)

CHAPTER VI.

WOMAN'S POSITION IN THE NEW TESTAMENT CHURCH.

COMING down to the times of the *New Testament church*, we find:

(a), That when our Saviour chose his apostles he chose twelve *men*. (See Luke vi. 13-16.)

(b), That they, in turn, ordained only *men* to the offices of *evangelist* (Acts xxi. 8; 1 Tim. iv. 14; 2 Tim. i. 6); and *elder and deacon* (1 Tim. iii. 1-13; Titus i. 6; Acts vi. 3-5); and instructed the church to continue to do this, in perpetuating these offices. (2 Tim. ii. 2.)

(c), That not only are *men* appointed to these offices, but women were actually forbidden the exercise of the functions thereof by Paul. (See 1 Cor. xiv. 34, 35; 1 Tim. ii. 8-15.) The reason given by him for this prohibition is her subordinate position to man, as shown in creation, and caused by the curse of the fall. (See 1 Tim. ii. 13, 14.)

(d), That women attended the public congre-

gation of the church, and doubtless engaged in the services of song with the rest of the congregation (Eph. v. 19; Col. iii. 16), and following the leader in prayer, entered into the spirit of worship. (1 Cor. xiv. 15, 16. Consult Acts i. 13, 1; ii. 4; v. 14, viii. 12.)

(e), That in addition to this modest part taken in public worship, she helped the Saviour and his apostles with her company, sympathy, and substance. (See Luke viii. 1-3; Matt. xxvii. 55, 56; Rom. xvi. 1, 2, 3, 6, 12, 13; Phil. iv. 3.)

(f), That she, in a private and unofficial way, lead men to Christ by her walk and conversation. (See John iv. 28, 30, 39; 1 Pet. iii. 1-4.)

(g), That she probably "served the church" in an official way, as deaconess, performing the same duties towards her own sex that the deacons did to theirs, viz., the care of the sick, poor, widows, attention to strangers and the practice of hospitality. (See 1 Tim. v. 9, 19, cf. Rom. xvi. 1; Acts ix. 36-39, etc.)

CHAPTER VII.

WOMAN'S POSITION IN THE NEW TESTAMENT CHURCH · PAUL'S INSTRUCTIONS EXAMINED.

WE saw in the last chapter that Paul wrote, concerning woman's position and work in the church: "*Let your women keep silence in the churches; for it is not permitted unto them to speak; but they are commanded to be under obedience, as also saith the law. And if they will learn anything, let them ask their husbands at home, for it is a shame for women to speak in the church.*" (1 Cor. xiv. 34, 35.) And "*I will therefore, that men pray everywhere, lifting up holy hands, without wrath and doubting. In like manner . . . let the woman learn in silence with all subjection. But I suffer not a woman to teach nor to usurp authority over the man, but to be in silence. For Adam was first formed, then Eve. And Adam was not deceived, but the woman being deceived was in the transgression.*" (1 Tim. ii. 8-15.) Let us study carefully these texts in the light of their context.

The first of these texts is addressed by Paul,

"Unto the church of God which is at Corinth, to them that are sanctified in Christ Jesus, called saints, with all that in every place call upon the name of Jesus Christ our Lord," etc. (See 1 Cor. i. 2.)

The second is addressed to Timothy, the evangelist, whom Paul had left at Ephesus in charge of the church at that place (See 1 Tim. i. 2-4), that in case of Paul's delay, he "*might know how to behave himself in the house of God, which is the church of the living God,*" etc., i. e., that he might know how to order the worship of the church, and to give him apostolic sanction in his work. (1 Tim. iii. 14, 15.)

Now we learn from the Acts of the Apostles, that Paul visited these prominent cities and made them centres, around which he worked and organized other churches (see Acts xix. 10; xviii. 18, with Rom. xvi. 1).

We learn also from the epistles, that it was Paul's custom and instruction to have his epistles to specific churches read by the neighboring churches. (See Col. iv. 16; 1 Thess. v. 27, etc.) And he distinctly tells the Corinthians, in this epistle (1 Cor. iv. 17; vii. 17; xiv. 33), that his "*ways,*" i. e., his teachings—were the same in every church—"so ordain I in all churches."

It is therefore evident that the instructions of these texts are not for these individual churches alone, but for all the churches everywhere, "that call upon the name of the Lord Jesus Christ," hence *for us to-day*. It will not be disputed that there were peculiar circumstances in these churches that called for peculiar instructions, applicable only to those who are under similar circumstances. But the *principles* upon which these instructions are based are universal in their application, viz., woman's subordination to man.

These apostolic churches were composed of converts from Judaism and heathenism alike, mainly the latter, a large percentage of the members being women. (See Acts xvii. 4, 12; xviii. 7, 8; 1 Cor. xii. 2; Eph. ii. 11; 1 Thess. i. 9, etc.) This being true, owing to the difference in education and ways of thinking, there arose differences of belief and practice among the members of these churches. To settle these differences they apply to Paul, who writes the 1st Epistle to the Corinthians in reply (see 1 Cor. vii. 1), in which are found instructions concerning marriage and social relations, things offered to idols, and *the right manner and methods of public worship*.

Under this last subject is found the instruction concerning women speaking in the churches. In

the immediate context, Paul is writing "*concerning spiritual gifts*," etc. (1 Cor. xii. 15.) Evidently there were some in this Corinthian church who abused the gifts of the Spirit, employing them in the congregation of the church so as to cause "*confusion*," several speaking at once. (See 1 Cor. xiv. 26-33.) Among them doubtless were some *women*, who, not being fully instructed in their work and sphere, having been but recently converted from heathenism, misinterpreting the freedom and liberty of the gospel, abused the gift of tongues and of prophecy, by taking upon themselves to instruct the men, and doing this too with their heads uncovered (chap. xi. 5), which at that time and in that city was the badge of looseness of character. All of this was not "unto edification of the church," but caused "confusion." Hence the apostle writes concerning the proper use of gifts, etc., and the proper *sphere of woman*. (See Cor. xiv.) He tells them that spiritual gifts are desirable, but only in order to "edification of the church" (vs. 1-5, 12, 26); that their object is "profit" (see Cor. xii. 7; xiv. 6); but profit can come only through the "understanding" (vs. 6-17); therefore we should all sing, pray, and prophesy so as to be understood (vs. 15, 19). He tells them further that

"tongues" are for a sign to the unbeliever, but "prophecy" for the church unto edification. (Vs. 3, 4, 22, 31.)

Then in reference to the using of these gifts for edification, he teaches that "if any man would speak with a tongue, let there be an interpreter," otherwise "let him keep silence in the church" (vs. 27, 28); and that the prophets should speak "one by one," the rest of the church quietly listening while any one is speaking, that "all may learn, and . . . be comforted" (vs. 29-33). Then to show them that these public parts of worship of which he had been writing were only for the men to perform, he writes concerning women, "*Let your women keep silence in the churches: for it is not permitted unto them to speak.*" (Vs. 34, 35.) This language is plain, positive and explicit. It forbids the speaking of women in the church as a part of public worship. By "*in the church*," is meant in the public congregation of the church. (See vs. 16, 19, 23, 26.) That is, "when the church has come together into one place." By "*keep silence*," here is meant, as shown by the apostle himself, "not to speak" (see vs. 34).

The text in Timothy is of a more general nature, and defines it to be the duty of "*men*" (males) to pray. "*I will, therefore, that men*

(*andras*) *pray everywhere*," etc. (vs. 8). Likewise enjoining upon "women" (*gynaiakas*), in contrast to men, to "*learn in silence with all subjection*," forbidding them to "*teach or usurp authority over the man, but to be in silence*" (vs. 11, 12).

Here, too, the apostle enjoins "silence" on the women, and interprets it to mean "not to teach nor to usurp authority over the man." Notice, too, he places the duty of public prayer upon the men (males); hence he thereby excludes the women from this part of service also, for in doing it they are assuming man's place, and leaving that in which God hath assigned them. Notice the reasons assigned by the apostle for this positive teaching is not woman's inferiority to man in mind or heart—not that she is not competent mentally or spiritually to edify the church—but solely her position as given her by her Maker at the creation and at the fall. (See 1 Tim. ii. 13, 14; Gen. iii. 16.) Notice, too, Paul here distinctly declares that these views are not his private views, but they are the "commandments of the Lord." (1 Cor. xiv. 37.)

Seeing these explicit, positive statements of God's word, as taught by Paul, which he claims "*are the commandments of the Lord*" (1 Cor. xiv. 37), and spoken "not in the words which

man's wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost teacheth" (ch. ii. 13), and that they are sustained by the other writers of the Bible, and followed by the women of the Bible, we are bound to believe that woman's position in the church, as taught in the Bible, should be one of silence and subordination to her brethren in the Lord, as regards public teaching, ruling, and praying.

CHAPTER VIII.

ARGUMENTS FOR WOMEN SPEAKING—
EXAMINED.

HAVING thus studied the position of woman as taught in the Bible, let us, that we may be certain of our position, examine closely the texts of Scripture and arguments that are relied on by those who give to woman a prominent position in the public services of the congregation, and see if they teach such a doctrine or lead to such a practice.

1. The most common argument for the public speaking of women in the congregation of the church, is *the good that she accomplishes, and the apparent smiles of God upon her work.*

In examining this claim it will not be denied that she accomplishes good, and that God apparently smiles upon her work. But this alone is no valid reason for the innovation, *if contrary to God's word.* Good has oftentimes been accomplished by bad men, who assumed the duties of the ministry for sinister ends, yet that fact does

not justify their intrusion into the sacred office. The sight of a murder, or of drunkenness, has often led to good, in keeping others from the same act. But does this good accomplished, render the murder or drunkenness less sinful in God's sight? Peter's fall into sin and denial of his Lord has been overruled to a great deal of good in keeping others from similar sins, but does that fact make Peter's denial justifiable? *By no means.* His sin is just as heinous in God's sight, though overruled for the good of the church. We have no right "*to do evil that good may come.*" (Rom. iii. 8.) If public speaking and praying is forbidden to women in the Bible, it is evident no amount of *seeming good* accomplished by their speaking can justify it in the sight of God. God demands of us to worship him only as prescribed in his word. He says all other worship is vain and unacceptable. "In vain do they worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men." (Matt. xv. 9; Isa. i. 10-14.) The question, then, is solely one of fact, *Does God forbid it?* and not, *Does good come of it?*

Moreover, no man can decide finally of the good results of an action until all its far-reaching effects are seen. But such cannot be seen until the Judgment. An action may be *apparently*

good, and yet set in motion influences that may be evil, and so in the Judgment it will be seen that the evil outbalances the good. If God has forbidden women the service of public speaking in the congregation, notwithstanding such may lead to good now, yet the allowing of it must be by denying or explaining away God's word, which is the foundation of all infidelity. Such an exegesis will destroy in many all faith in God's word, and thus the evil will far counterbalance whatever good may have been accomplished.

2. Some, admitting the positive prohibition of women to public speaking in the church by these texts, put them aside with the statement that "*they were written by Paul, who was a crusty old bachelor and woman hater, and who on that account was so severe upon woman.*"

In answer to this, need I remind such persons that Paul wrote the larger part of the New Testament, and that he was inspired of the Holy Spirit, and spake such words as the Holy Spirit dictated (see 1 Cor. ii. 4-13); and that he says in this same connection (verse 37) that "*the things that I write unto you are the commandments of the Lord.*" Some things which Paul wrote he says he had no direct commandment from the Lord for, further than the inspiration of

the Holy Spirit, which preserved him from all error, but *this teaching*, he distinctly declares, *he received by revelation from the Lord Jesus Christ.* (See also, Chs. xi. 23 and xiv. 37.)

Peter says that "Paul wrote some things hard to be understood, which they that are unlearned and unstable *wrest*, as they do the other Scriptures, unto their own destruction." (See 2 Pet. iii. 16.) Beware, cavilling brother or sister, lest this prophecy of Peter prove true of you.

3. Another evasion of the force of the texts under consideration, is that "*they were temporary, and their instruction was meant only for the Corinthians. And that Paul forbids these women speaking because they were 'lewd women,'*" etc.

But we saw, in the beginning of this study, that Paul addressed the letter to the Corinthians, "To the church at Corinth, to them that are sanctified in Christ Jesus, called saints, *with all that in every place call upon the name of Jesus Christ our Lord,*" etc. (See 1 Cor. i. 2.) Thus, his own address of the letter kills this statement. Moreover, he distinctly tells the Corinthians that his teachings were the same in all the churches. (See 1 Cor. iv. 17; vii. 17; xiv. 33; xvi. 1.) We know that they were in the churches of Corinth and of Ephesus.

But as to his forbidding these women speaking because they were "lewd women," it is sufficient to note that he expressly forbids all such characters remaining in the church. (See 1 Cor. v. 9-11.) If this claim were true, would he not likewise have forbidden the men from speaking also? Most assuredly so. But he does not. Therefore, we know that such could not have been his reason. Moreover, he bases his teaching on the fact of their being *women, and under subjection to the men*, and not in the fact claimed. (See 1 Cor. xiv. 34, and 1 Tim. ii. 11-14.)

4. Another evasion is to claim that "*what the apostle forbids was for the women to speak in a silly manner, or babble*," referring to the fact that the Greek word (*γαγγῆν*), here translated "speak," means also "to babble."

But an examination of the context will show that this word is used all through this chapter for *speaking* (see vs. 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 23, 27, etc.), and hence Paul does not refer to silly talk, for in verse 5 he says, "I would that ye all spake (*γαγγῆν*) with tongues," and in verse 18, "I thank my God I *speak* (*λάλῶν*) with tongues," etc. Did Paul babble, or does he desire others to do so? *No*, this is but an evasion, trying to get rid of God's word. But compare 1 Tim. ii. 11, 12, where he

forbids all "*teaching and ruling*," etc., and not babbling.

5. Another evasion, just as transparent, is "*that these texts refer to married women only. That Paul forbids such only as have husbands, speaking in the congregation.*"

But why was it worse for a married woman to speak than for one not married? No reason can be given except that this would still allow some women to speak. But notice, Paul says "*your women*" and "*women*." These are universal expressions, limited only by those interpreters of God's word who wish to bolster up a view previously conceived by them.

But in 1 Timothy ii. 11, 12, Paul says nothing about "husbands," but contrasts "*men*" with "*women*," and says: "*Let the woman*" (i. e., the female) "*learn in silence.*" And again, "*I suffer not a woman*" (i. e., a female) "*to teach or to usurp authority over the man*" (i. e., the male).

6. But it is argued that Paul virtually admits that woman prayed and prophesied in the Corinthian church when, in the eleventh chapter, 5th verse, he speaks of "*women praying or prophesying with their heads uncovered*," etc.

Paul does probably here admit the fact, but does he thereby sanction it? By no means. He

simply refers to this *here* to show the duty of women to veil themselves when engaged in public worship, reserving his condemnation of *the part they were taking in the public worship* for the place where he was going to talk of *order in worship*. Paul teaches that nature itself shows that a woman ought to be veiled when attending public worship.

But the word "*prophesieth*," is a comprehensive term, and may mean something else than speaking publicly, in the sense of teaching. In 2 Chron. xxv. 1, 2, it means "praising God" in song, or with music. This is the legitimate work of woman, so "praying and prophesying" may mean nothing more than engaging with, and following the leader in prayer and singing. (See 1 Cor. xiv. 16.) This is not only legitimate for woman to do, but her duty.

7. But an argument for women speaking is found in the text (Gal. iii. 28), which says: "*There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female: for ye are all one in Christ Jesus.*" (Cf. Col. iii. 11.)

But does Paul mean that all distinctions are obliterated after a person has become a Christian? If so, why does he write to husbands, wives,

fathers, children, masters, servants, etc.? (See Eph. v. 25; vi. 10; Col. iii. 18; iv. 1; Titus ii. 1-10; 1 Tim. vi. 1, 2.) No. Paul simply means that all classes are saved alike, and are the subjects of God's grace. (See Romans x. 12; Acts xv. 9.) The gospel has not yet removed the curse of sin from *man*, for the ground is still cursed; neither has it removed it from *woman*, hence she is still under subjection to the man. But the same apostle wrote this text that wrote the one forbidding women to speak, on the ground of their subjection to man. Would he have written this prohibition on woman if there were no distinctions in the gospel?

8. Again, it is argued from Acts i. 14: "*These all continued with one accord in prayer and supplication, with the women,*" etc., that the women prayed as well as the men.

Doubtless, this is true, that the women prayed as well as the men. But notice, it is not said that the *women prayed publicly*. They prayed silently as the men led the devotions, in accordance with 1 Cor. xiv. 16. This is all that the words teach.

9. Again, it is argued from Acts ii. 4: "*They were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them*

utterance," that as women were among the "all," therefore they spake on the day of Pentecost.

But if strictly, literally true, it proves nothing for us, for they had a special manifestation of the Holy Spirit, and we have not. But notice, it says they "spake as the Spirit gave them utterance." But we have no evidence from the context that the Holy Spirit gave the *women* utterance to anything but praise. For in verse 14 we are distinctly told, that "*Peter, with the eleven,*" did the authoritative public speaking on that day, and women were not among the eleven.

10. Again, much stress is laid on the statements of Acts ii. 17, 18, that "*your sons and your daughters shall prophesy,*" etc., and of Acts xxi. 9, that Philip "*had four daughters that did prophesy,*" as proving the right of females to speak in public meetings of the church.

But these texts do not say that these daughters shall or did prophesy, in sense of teaching, *in the congregation of the church*. Their prophecy may have been strictly of a private nature. Moreover, it may have been only praise or song. (See 1 Chron. xxv. 1, 2.) But if they did prophesy publicly, which is *not proven* at all, yet theirs was by direct and special influence of the Holy Spirit. That day is past. (See 1 Cor. xiii. 8.)

11. Again, we are referred to Acts viii. 3, 4, as proving the right of women to preach publicly in the church. This passage tells us that "*They* (the church at Jerusalem, see verse 1) *were all scattered abroad* throughout the region of Judea and Samaria, *except the apostles.*" "*Therefore, they that were scattered abroad, went everywhere preaching the word.*" Now, it is claimed from this passage that women preached.

Now, if it be a fact that this text asserts that *women* preached (it evidently was not intended to be taken literally as to individuals—that *each one* of those scattered abroad *went everywhere preaching*, etc.), it does not say anywhere that they preached in a public manner. It is the duty of every Christian to preach, viz., to tell others of Jesus, and that is all that is claimed here. For when, in the next verse, it tells us of Philip's preaching—he being an evangelist (see ch. xxi. 8)—the Spirit chose a different word for preaching, viz., that of *publicly heralding* the gospel. When speaking of the church, those scattered abroad, preaching, it uses the word (εὐαγγελίζω) "evangelizing," i. e., telling the good news of the gospel; when speaking of Philip's preaching, the word is (κηρύσσω) "heralding" the gospel. So, according to the text itself, it only states that the women (if they

are referred to at all) simply told of Jesus as a Saviour, which is their privilege and duty to do always. (See John iv. 28-30, 39.)

12. Again, reference is made to "*Aquila and Priscilla expounding the word of God to Apollos*," as evidence of women speaking in the Christian church in Bible times. (See Acts xviii. 26.)

There is no reason at all to believe that Aquila and Priscilla did more than expound the word to Apollos *in private*, for it is distinctly said that "*they took him unto them*," etc. (vs. 26). But if they did this in a public manner, what reason is there to believe that Priscilla did the public expounding of the word? Why not Aquila as well, Priscilla sanctioning? The whole argument is from the imagination of the person who would fain find something to bolster up the idea of woman's public preaching.

13. Again, we are pointed to Paul's statement that certain women were his "*helpers*" (see Rom. xvi. 3-12, and Phil. iv. 3), and "*labored in the Lord*."

There is not the slightest proof here of anything to show that the "help" which Paul received from these women was their publicly expounding the Scriptures. As to Aquila and Priscilla, we know it was not that, but of a so-

cial and private nature. (See Acts xviii. 2, 18, 26.)

14. We are confidently pointed to the case of *Phebe as the "servant of the church at Cenchrea,"* as settling the matter of women being in the service of the church. (Rom. xvi. 1.)

Undoubtedly the Bible teaches that women are "the servants of the church." But where does it teach that their service is of a *public* nature, and especially that of *teaching or ruling*? The service of Phebe is here distinctly pointed out in the second verse as "*being a succorer of many, and of Paul*." She was doubtless a deaconess of the church, and her business as such was to help the poor and succor those in need; and she goes to Rome on that "business" (see verse 2).

15. We are referred also to the case of the woman whom Christ healed, and who was led to "*declare before all the people*" her cure. (See Luke viii. 43-47.) Her testimony, they claim, was public.

Very true. But what was it, and to whom made? "She came trembling, and falling down before *him*, she declared unto *him* before all the people for what cause she had touched him, and how she was healed immediately." Her speaking was a confession of Christ, which he demands

mitted to engage in the services of the sanctuary with man, in a modest and private way, and to enjoy equally with him the blessings thereof. She is also charged with the duty and privilege, when she has attained a certain age and degree of piety, of hospitality, relieving the poor and afflicted, and other works of charity, and especially with instructing her younger sisters in their duties, so that they may give none occasion to the adversary to speak reproachfully. (1 Tim. v. 10-14.)

When woman leaves this, her God-given sphere, and attempts to enter that of man, she curtails her high opportunities for glorifying God, and renders herself displeasing to God, and less influential with man.

May she, since the Lord has placed her in this position for wise ends, say, with one of her sisters:—

“O Master dear! the tiniest work for thee
Finds recompense beyond our highest thought;
And feeble hands that worked but tremblingly,
The richest colors in the fabric wrought.
We are content to take what thou shalt give,
To work or suffer as thy choice shalt be,
Forsaking what thy wisdom bids us leave,
Glad in the thought that we are pleasing thee.”