

*Women*

# **WOMAN'S MINISTRY**

By

**Mrs. GEO. C. NEEDHAM**

**Price, Twenty Cents**

**CHARLES C. COOK**

**150 Nassau Street**

**New York, N. Y.**

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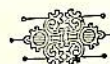
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### I.

#### POSITION AND RESPONSIBILITY.

THE woman question is one of the **prime** topics of the time. The present age may fitly be designated *woman's century*.

Within a comparatively brief period she has suddenly emerged from a state like that of childhood and minority to the privileges of full-fledged authority and possession. So rapid has been this transition that the thoughtful and conservative have scarcely had time to weigh the matter or decide in their consciences whether this new departure be right or wrong.

The fact, however, is present with us, demanding acknowledgment. Civilized women, the world over, are aspiring to co-equal recognition with men in all departments of activity, and the point for Christians to answer is: WHAT SCRIPTURE SANCTION IS THERE FOR ALL THIS?

Now, since we claim to make the Bible our sole rule of faith and practice, we must discuss the subject from this standpoint absolutely. All theories based on expediency, civilized sentiment or feminine capability are to be



ruled out, and one question alone to be considered: WHAT DOES GOD SAY ABOUT WOMAN?

The teachings of the Bible may be all grouped around four simple landmarks:

- I. WOMAN'S POSITION.
- II. HER RESPONSIBILITIES.
- III. HER PRIVILEGES.
- IV. HER TESTIMONY.

Briefly then let us consider:

I. WOMAN'S POSITION. This is unequivocally stated in two Scriptures:

But I permit not a woman to \*\*\* have dominion over a man, but to be in quietness. For Adam was first formed, then Eve; and Adam was not beguiled, but the woman being beguiled hath fallen into transgression. 1 Tim. ii. 14. R. V.

Unto the woman He said, I will greatly multiply thy sorrow, and thy conception; in sorrow thou shalt bring forth children; and thy desire shall be subject to thy husband (margin), and he shall rule over thee. Gen. iii. 16.

Two facts are thus made plain:

1. Woman was earliest in transgression.
2. In consequence she became subordinate.

This is her actual standing in her relative relation to man. She may be clever, quite as clever as he; as apt to learn, and far more humane to frame laws; but this signifies nothing to modify or neutralize the *moral disability* under which she starts out in life. Eve's transgression was a most serious transaction. Its humiliation will abide even upon the last woman to the end of the age. As reasonably might the *man* deny that he has to earn his bread by the bitterness of toil, for his part in the transgression, as for the *woman* to scorn or shrink from the destiny of subordination which sin has entailed upon her sex. Divine grace has, however, made provision for her, equally with man, and we shall presently learn what her exalted privileges are.

## II. HER RESPONSIBILITIES.

Having seen what is woman's *Position* in the divine economy, we are prepared to consider how Scripture defines her obligations.

All womankind fall under one of three domestic divisions:

1. *The unmarried.*
2. *The married.*
3. *The widowed.*



1. Special commands have been given suitable to each of these social conditions. The duty of unmarried women may be expressed in one sentence: *obedience to her nearest male relative*. The Jewish law in regard to a virgin was this:

"When a woman voweth a vow unto the Lord, and bindeth herself by a bond, being in her father's house, in her youth; and her father heareth her vow, and her bond wherewith she hath bound her soul, and her father holdeth his peace at her: then all her vows shall stand, and every bond wherewith she hath bound her soul shall stand. But if her father disallow her in the day that he heareth; none of her vows, or of her bonds wherewith she hath bound her soul, shall stand: and the Lord shall forgive her, because her father disallowed her." Num. xxx. 3-5.

Queen Esther furnishes a notable example of this kind of feminine obedience. Though without parents she did not assume to act in independence; but submitted to her uncle Mordecai, even *after* she became a wife and a queen; acting on the principle that God's laws are always higher than man's laws. For what her husband, the heathen king, commanded was certainly in opposition to Jehovah;

while Mordecai her uncle was in sympathy with God's laws.

That this old Jewish law continued to be honored in church times, and was endorsed by St. Paul, is quite plain:

"But if any man thinketh that he behaveth himself unseemly toward his virgin *daughter*, if she be past the flower of her age, and if need so requireth, let him do what he will; he sinneth not; let them marry. But he that standeth steadfast in his heart, having no necessity, but hath power as touching his own will, and hath determined this in his own heart, to keep his own virgin *daughter*, shall do well. So then both he that giveth his own virgin *daughter* in marriage doeth well; and he that giveth her not in marriage shall do better." 1 Cor. vii. 36. (R. V. see margin.)

We are well aware that these utterances of the Apostle have provoked bitter gainsaying. He has been declared "narrow," and "behind the times;" and his teaching explained away as "purely local," and "not binding under present conditions of civilization." But we do not see how such arguments can stand, when it is expressly stated in the beginning of his epistle that St. Paul was called to write,



not only to the converts of Corinth, but to "*all that in every place call upon the name of Jesus Christ our Lord.*" Hence, it must be understood from the start, that whatever commands bearing on woman we shall find in the epistles to the Corinthians, we are to receive them as of universal and continuous application. They are for all Christian women, in all places, both then and now.

2. *The Married.* Once more to refer to the Jewish law, the remainder of Numbers, chapter thirty, is occupied with the obligations of *married* women. A husband had power to establish or make void his wife's vows. "These were statutes which the Lord commanded Moses between a man and his wife; between the father and his daughter, being in her youth in her father's house" Num. xxx. 16. The commands of the New Testament are in perfect harmony with the teachings of the law.

"Wives, be in subjection unto your own husbands, as unto the Lord. For the husband is the head of the wife, as Christ also is the head of the church, *being* himself the saviour of the body. But as the church is subject to Christ, so let the wives also *be* to their husbands in everything." Eph. v. 22.

"In like manner, ye wives, *be* in subjection to your own husbands; that, even if any obey not the word, they may without the word be gained by the behavior of their wives; beholding your chaste behavior *coupled* with fear. Whose *adorning* let it not be the outward adorning of plaiting the hair, and of wearing jewels of gold, or of putting on apparel; but *let it be* the hidden man of the heart, in the incorruptible *apparel* of a meek and quiet spirit, which is in the sight of God of great price. For after this manner aforetime the holy women also, who hoped in God, adorned themselves, being in subjection to their own husbands: as Sarah obeyed Abraham, calling him lord: whose children ye now are, if ye do well, and are not put in fear by any terror." 1 Pet. iii. 1-7.

As *obedience* was to characterize the virgin, so *submission* was to pertain to the deportment of the wife. Sarah is cited as the typical example, the habit of her life being to acknowledge Abraham as her head.

Four English words are employed to express the duty of the wife to her husband. These are "submission," "subjection," "obedience," "reverence." Col. iii. 18; 1 Pet. iii. 1; Titus ii. 5; Eph. v. 33. The Greek reduces



these four English terms into two original words, which signify alike in sacred and secular usage "*to be put under the power of another.*" The second and last of these words, the term "reverence" found in the passage "Let the wife see that she reverence her husband," occurs ninety-two times in the New Testament. In ninety-one instances it is translated "fear." This is the only place where the rendering varies. But the Revised version has rectified this, and translated it "fear," uniform with the other cases. Thus it is plain that the whole New Testament teaching is, that a woman is to fear and obey her husband. It is not our business now to discuss whether such a command be arbitrary or unpractical. We are simply seeking at present to ascertain what are Scripture principles regarding woman.

3. *The Widowed.* Under the law much liberty was granted to widows; but great sanctity was expected from them. "The vow of a widow, or of her that is divorced, even everything wherewith she hath bound her soul, shall stand against her." Num. xxx. 9.

The New Testament deals with three classes of widows.

1. *Ordinary Widows.* These did no special public work in the church. They were usually the younger women whose Christian character was not settled. They appear to have sometimes been idle, gossipy, and dissatisfied with their single condition. We do not read that any honor was put upon them, or any church responsibility entrusted to them. They were exhorted to better behavior; and in their case the usual honor which attached itself to the widow's estate is set aside; and they were exhorted to *marry again* as the best cure for their carnal-mindedness. 1 Tim. v. 11-14.

2. *Widows indeed.* This term seems to specially designate those who had no relatives, but were childless and "desolate." It included a large class of those who from age and inability were disqualified to do church work. Such women primarily had a right to look to their own relatives for support. If these were unable or unwilling, then their needs became the church's duty. 1 Tim. v. 16.

The "widow indeed" was distinguished for faith, prayer, and loyalty to her dead husband. She was minded to always remain single. And this steadfastness of purpose marked her with peculiar honor. For it is plain that St. Paul



everywhere disapproved second marriages, except, as we have cited, in the cases of the unruly and discontented. 1 Tim.

v. 3, 5.

3. *The presbyter widow.* There were two orders of female ecclesiastics in the early church; the Presbyteresses and the Deaconesses. The former were *exclusively* widows. The latter *sometimes* included the unmarried. The presbyteresses could not be enrolled if less than 60 years old. The deaconesses were eligible at 40 years. The presbyteresses held rank and authority over the deaconesses. Deacons' wives or widows were not necessarily *deaconesses*. The presbyter widow was to have been once married, no more; to have been a mother of children; and to have been eminent for hospitality, sympathy, and Christian activity. Thus back of her personal inclination to be enlisted in public church work, it was necessary for her to furnish a high moral pedigree. It was not enough that these women desired to publicly serve, or felt themselves qualified; their age, domestic grade and record must also conform to distinct requirements. Alas! how far has the present church departed from the original ideal.

The presbyter widow was the counterpart of the masculine elder. The deaconess was the counterpart of the deacon. As in the case of the men, the one ministered in spiritual and the other in temporal matters, so in the case of these female workers. Gravity, faith, and moderation in the use of wine was common to both.

We see that in each instance *age* was considered a suitable requisite, both for the experience and the influence which it carried with it. Widows are specially types of the church, who now mourns her absent Lord. Anna is a notable ideal widow. She worshiped much. She was a student of prophecy. She spoke to all unreservedly of Jesus.

It is not necessary here to designate specifically what were the duties of ecclesiastic widows in the church, as that point will properly be considered in its order later on.



## II.

### WOMAN'S PRIVILEGES.

WE shall see that these stand in pleasant offset to the rigors of her *Responsibilities*.

It is the privilege of the unmarried woman in a very singular sense to be wholly devoted to the Lord and His service. Unincumbered by the obligations of wifehood, or the duties of motherhood, such are at liberty to attend continuously upon those things which advance God's Kingdom and glory. St. Paul has clearly stated this as a general principle. Exceptional cases of family care devolving upon some single women, do not disprove the leading truth herein declared: "And there is a difference also between the wife and the virgin. She that is unmarried is careful for the things of the Lord, that she may be holy both in body and in spirit: but she that is married is careful for the things of the world, how she may please her husband." (1 Cor. vii. 34.)

This, let it be observed, is a matter of *liberty* rather than *obligation*. What the maiden woman lacks in husband and children, God

graciously substitutes in paramount benefits and honors put within the grasp of her personal attainment. It is for herself to elect how excellent and useful as a Christian she may become. Thus, in the divine arrangement the unmarried woman is offered the pinnacle of privilege. While the worldly unmarried are wrestling with questions of social advancement or equality of wages, she may exercise her powers in a far better arena. Her Master is the Lord Jesus; her field is the world of perishing souls; her wages are the riches of eternal life; her present status, a child of the promises, waiting in hope. The position of none is more dignified and exalted than that of the single Christian woman.

The privileges of the married are likewise distinctly defined:

1. *She is to be the glory of the man.*
2. *To be honored because the weaker vessel.*
3. *Conjointly with the man an heir of grace.*  
(1 Cor. xi. 7; 1 Pet. iii. 7.)

The meaning of St. Peter's words is this: Be careful to respect her, since her weakness might incline you to dishonor her. There was need for this caution, so the men might be



reminded, that if it was the wife's duty to *submit*, it was equally that of the husband to *love and cherish*; both so doing in the fear of God. (Eph. v. 21.)

It is in this respect that the believing wife has been favored to become a type of the church; yearned over with a tender care, akin to that sympathy with which the Lord Jesus regards His ransomed saints.

For the married woman her estate suggests privileges prospective as well as present.

Though a transgressor, Eve was still Adam's helpmeet, bone of his bone, and flesh of his flesh. So believers, once united to Christ, are precious to His heart, and notwithstanding their failings are honored, shielded and supported by Him.

The wife, being one with her husband, is the partner of his privileges. The new name he bestowed upon her is the guarantee for this. Thus Christ and Christians are joint heirs of the glory which the Father hath given to the Son. (John xvii. 22.)

Apart from its typical teachings marriage is no mystery. But viewed in the light of future fulfilment, every stage is profundity. Two facts are made prominent always and every-

where—the ability of the man and the inability of the woman. The Rebekah for Isaac was loaded with precious things, for which she appears not to have returned anything save her emphatic willingness to “go with this man.” (Gen. xxiv. 58.) The Rachel for whom Jacob toiled so long, seemed herself unable to offer any recompense. While in Ruth, redeemed by the powerful Boaz, we are furnished a still more striking instance of helpless poverty raised to rank and plenty. These women shared their husband's position, and its honor reflected upon them as the moon shines in the light of the sun.

One passage often cited as teaching that, under the new dispensation, the principle of man's headship has been abrogated, needs here a brief notice. It is written, “There is neither Jew nor Greek; there is neither bond nor free; there is not male and female; for ye are all one in Christ Jesus.” (Gal. iii. 28.) This passage contains three equal clauses. What is affirmed in one clause, precisely the same is restated in the other clauses. Six classes, arranged in couples, are employed to teach one and the same truth. If we would understand what the passage means in reference to



women, we have to ascertain what it teaches in reference to Greeks and bond-servants.

1. The mention is made of Jews and Greeks, to show that under the gospel in the selection of grace, no preference was given to any nationality. This had not been so formerly. The Jews were the custodians of the promises, and the recipients of special divine favors. But now as a nation they were no longer to hold precedence. And this was the mirror to reflect the teaching that woman though first in the transgression, and meriting exclusion, was nevertheless to come in for the benefits of Christ's redemption equally with man.

2. Slaves held no rights of citizenship. Their masters represented them. This was the mirror to reflect the truth that women, who under the law could not receive the sign of the covenant, but were represented in the circumcision of the man, were now, equally with the man, the subjects for baptism upon faith.

3. Becoming a Christian did not necessarily make any change in the outward or social circumstances. The believing Jew did not lose his tell-tale physiognomy, nor could the converted heathen denationalize himself. Many bond-servants, like Onesimus, continued in

their degradation despite their conversion. (1 Cor. vii. 21, 22; Phile. 10, 14, 16.) And this was the mirror to reflect the truth that the gospel *does not* obliterate the restrictions of sex binding upon womankind. Did the gospel place her immediately upon the social platform of men? Then what need for all the tender New Testament exhortations to fathers, to husbands, and to male relatives on her behalf? Why enjoin the church to foster and provide for widows? Why did not St. Paul write Timothy and say, "Converted women are every whit equals of men. Turn them adrift; let them take care of themselves?" And why did he order them to be veiled or covered in the assembly, as a mark of special female decorum?

4. The adjective used in the passage is a masculine one—"Ye are all one (man) in Christ Jesus." It is an absorbent word, drawing everything into one FUTURE MAN contemplated when the church shall be completed. It explains why throughout the New Testament, (with one solitary exception which is an Old Testament quotation, 2 Cor. vi. 18), believers of both sexes are always addressed as SONS of God.

5. The true meaning of the passage under



consideration is inward and future. Greeks, servants and women are saved equally on faith. But Greeks, servants and women, they must remain throughout their earthly course. When the "one new man" is completed, then, in the next age, all present distinctions will be done away forever. All will be "Abraham's true seed." The saint who was a servant in life shall in glory be "a king and priest unto God." In the resurrection, distinction of sex will vanish entirely. All shall be like unto the angels; all virgins in the broadest sense of the term. (Luke xx. 35; Rev. xiv. 4.)

## III.

## WOMAN'S TESTIMONY.

**H**ER TESTIMONY. By this we mean *her* public utterance. The Old Testament shows three definite instances of women being employed to communicate the mind of the Lord to His people. We can only give these a passing mention, and hasten on to direct New Testament teaching and example. These cases are : (1.) MIRIAM; who is called a *prophetess*, though some raise a point of question whether on the shore of the Red Sea she sang in the presence of any but women. Let critics decide that as they may. Inspiration has written her down as a *prophetess*. Exo. xv. 20. (2.) DEBORAH; who was God's extraordinary instrument, employed at a time when to the shame of Israel, there seems not to have been a man in the land whose faith was equal to the emergency. Let it be noted that in Deborah we have two virtues beautifully blended; prophetic gift and womanly subordination. She sought to put Barak in the



first place of command, but he drew back in timidity. Jud. iv. 4-9. (3.) HULDAH; whose important prophecy bespeaks her authority. 2 Chron. xxxiv. 22. (4.) ANNA; who, since her career antedated the foundation of the Church, may properly be added to this group of women. Luke ii. 36. We are aware that some quibble over her as over Miriam, and deny that Anna spake otherwise than in a conversational manner to her companions in the Temple. But the Scripture calls her a *prophetess*, and this title evidently relates to public testimony that she had habitually given *long before* the occasion when she spake of the infant Messiah.

That these four women were not the only instances of the prophetic gift being thus bestowed is plain from a passage in the Psalms: "The Lord giveth the word. The women that publish the tidings are a great host." *Psa. lxxviii. 11.*

Three prime passages are found in the New Testament, which, however they may be interpreted, are universally recognized as directly bearing on the public testimony of believing women.

"I would have you know, that the head of

every man is Christ; and the head of the woman is man; and the head of Christ is God. Every man praying or prophesying, having his head covered, dishonoreth his head. But every woman praying or prophesying with her head unveiled dishonoreth her head: for it is one and the same thing as if she were shaven. For if a woman is not veiled, let her also be shorn; but if it is a shame to a woman to be shorn or shaven, let her be veiled. For a man indeed ought not to have his head veiled, forasmuch as he is the image and glory of God; but the woman is the glory of man. For the man is not of the woman; but the woman of the man: for neither was the man created for the woman; but the woman for the man: for this cause ought the woman to have a sign of authority on her head, because of the angels. Howbeit neither is the woman without the man, nor the man without the woman, in the Lord. For as the woman is of the man, so is the man also by the woman; but all things are of God. Judge ye in yourselves: is it seemly that a woman pray unto God unveiled? Doth not even nature itself teach you, that, if a man have long hair, it is a dishonor to him? But if a woman have long hair, it is a glory to



her: for her hair is given her for a covering. But if any man seemeth to be contentious, we have no such custom, neither the churches of God." 1 Cor. xi. 2-16.

"Let the women keep silence in the churches: for it is not permitted unto them to speak; but let them be in subjection, as also saith the law. And if they would learn anything, let them ask their own husbands at home; for it is shameful for a woman to speak in the church." 1 Cor. xiv. 34.

"Let a woman learn in quietness with all subjection. But I permit not a woman to teach, nor to have dominion over man, but to be in quietness. For Adam was first formed, then Eve." 1 Tim. ii. 11-14.

These Scriptures suggest four distinct points for consideration which we will discuss in their proper order in the following Chapters.

We may now inquire: What was the immediate occasion for such absolute teaching?

The question arises with pertinency what reason had Paul for writing such injunctions concerning Christian women? For while we know it is true that the commands of the New Testament are not restricted to merely local and temporary application, but reach

forward unto all believers, in all ages and conditions of the church; yet it is also certain, that throughout the Scriptures, a close intimacy is maintained between divine precepts and the immediate circumstances occasioning them. Hence, in the elucidation of difficult passages an appeal to the context becomes of immense value.

Now, it requires but a surface study of the two Corinthian letters to discover the fact that the church thus written to was in a startling demoralized condition. At the time of addressing them Paul had been absent three years, having, it appears, paid them but one short, sorrowful visit. During this interval there had crept in among them false teachers, whom he denominates "ministers of Satan." These had sought to undermine the Apostle's authority, and by philosophy destroy true faith. Nor was it the worst phase of Corinthian apostasy that they had substituted human wisdom for divine revelation, and brought doctrinal disorder into the assembly. The fruit was more black and bitter than its root. Their personal morals had become shockingly corrupt. A list of outrageous sins, of which no other New Testament church had been guilty, is laid to their charge.



And not alone had the *men* been offenders. The *women* also had conducted themselves shamefully in the church gatherings; interrupting the assembly, and setting at naught both decency and custom, by their improprieties in dress, in laying aside the veil, which, among all Eastern women, constituted the distinguishing mark of sex. So that in the exercise of their gifts, while the men denied their headship by praying and prophesying with heads covered—the women had outstepped the bounds of their subordination, and ventured to speak in the assembly *uncovered*. And as, according to a rigorous custom of the time, those women of loose morals who appeared in public unveiled, were punished by having their long hair cut short like men; it followed that those Corinthian women who prayed and prophesied uncovered, *seemed at least*, to be placing themselves in the category of avowedly sinful characters. Hence, the anxiety of the Apostle, that by due regard for outward proprieties, these believing women should avoid such disastrous scandal as they were provoking.

That very few were the exceptions to this condition of affairs appears from the fact that

in the first epistle where women are enjoined more at length than in any other New Testament letter, and where the word "woman" with its correlatives occurs more times than in all other epistles put together, the Apostle, always so courteous and exact to make honorable mention of any graceful trait existing in the church or persons whom he was addressing, finds no Christian woman in Corinth whom he can salute or commend. Only Chloe is mentioned, through whose family, he particularly informs the church, he had learned of those disorderly practices. Phebe, the deaconess, whom we should except as being untainted with the frightful impurity of those Grecian converts, was, however, not of Corinth, but of Cenchrea; while Priscilla, in the vicinity at the founding of the church, had, with her husband, left at the same time Paul did, and on the occasion of his writing this epistle they both were with the Apostle in Ephesus. Com. Acts xviii. 18; 1 Cor. xvi. 9.

These, then, in brief, were the aggravations which called forth from Paul his severe prohibitions concerning the deportment and testimony of women. So far as the circumstances themselves go, they were exclusively local.



No other church is similarly reproved by any New Testament writer; the word to Timothy being one for general caution.

Nevertheless, while the facts were thus limited to Corinth, it is expressly stated that the epistle is addressed to "all that in every place call upon the name of Jesus Christ our Lord, both theirs and ours" (1 Cor. i. 2), and we dare not assume that, in the intrinsic spirit of these commands, the Holy Spirit, by the hand of Paul, did not compass the behavior of all Christian women, throughout all time. Custom may change, and the outward tokens of subordination may be substituted by other externals as the European bonnet takes the place of the Oriental veil, but this principle of headship, founded in Eden, must remain of universal application.

Hence, an understanding of these facts about the women in the church of Corinth will help us materially to grasp the breadth of Paul's meaning, both here and in the letter to Timothy; yet it is most unfair to argue as some have, that because the Apostle wrote, "Let *your* women keep silence," the command was binding only on those Corinthians. Such a system of interpretation would soon nullify

the force of all New Testament commands. Besides, this reading may be questioned. According to earlier MSS. followed by some good modern translations, we have not "*your* women," but "THE WIVES," showing the generality of the exhortation; while Conybeare and Howson render it, "In your congregations, as in all congregations of Christ's people, the women must keep silence, for they are not permitted to speak in public, but to show submission as it is said also in the book of the law."

We believe that other reasons, more honorable to the inspired word, than merely local ones, can be adduced to prove, that if a Christian woman has the gift for public testimony, under proper restrictions, she can exercise it without disobedience. For be it noted, it is not the *act* of speaking that is condemned in the eleventh chapter of first Corinthians, but the *manner* of speaking.



#### IV.

##### THE MEANING OF PROPHECY.

This division of our subject brings us directly to the first of the three passages we are to consider. 1 Cor. xi. 3-16.

The primary matter of discourse in these verses is, the relative relationship between man and woman. From Gen. iii. 16, we learn that woman being first in the transgression, was made subordinate. "Unto the woman He said, I will greatly multiply thy sorrow, and thy conception; in sorrow thou shalt bring forth children; and thy desire shall be subject to thy husband (margin) and he shall rule over thee." Headship or rule was, thenceforth, the prerogative of man; and submission the requirement of woman. To these Old Testament facts Paul adds a third, viz., that the headship of the man was invested in Christ, who was of God, one in essential nature with the Father, as the head is one with the body.

(32)

Now, this relationship had been disgracefully ignored, and in the very exercise of those gifts with which that church was so richly endowed. But it is noticeable in this chapter, and pertinent to our argument, that the Apostle does not condemn these women for the *exercise* of their gifts; but for the *manner* of their using them. Whatever he may do elsewhere in the New Testament, in this place he plainly sanctions, *under proper restrictions*, the right of female prophesying. How else shall we understand him? For why should Paul waste time to explain about the *manner* of doing that, which was *not* to be done by any method, but utterly refrained from?

By the term prophecy, we are not to understand exclusively the revelation of future events. It of course bears this definition in many places in the Bible. For instance, in the New Testament:

"And as we tarried there many days, there came down from Judea a certain prophet, named Agabus. And when he was come unto us, he took Paul's girdle, and bound his own hands and feet, and said, Thus saith the Holy Ghost, So shall the Jews at Jerusalem bind the man that owneth this girdle, and shall deliver



him into the hands of the Gentiles." Acts xxi. 10, 11.

"And Enoch, also, the seventh from Adam, prophesied of these, saying, Behold the Lord cometh with ten thousand of his saints, to execute judgment upon all, and to convince all that are ungodly among them of all their ungodly deeds which they have ungodly committed, and of all their hard *speeches* which ungodly sinners have spoken against Him." Jude 14, 15.

But in Gen. xx. 7, Abimelech calls Abraham a prophet, because he was a man of prayer. In 1 Chron. xxv. 1, men skilled on musical instruments were said to prophesy. While in Titus i. 12, Paul mentions a heathen poet as a prophet. Thus we find that superior gifts of wisdom made a person worthy of the title of prophet. But the highest significance of the term, and that which we gather from its general New Testament usage, connects it with things divine. In this sense, God made Aaron a prophet to interpret what Moses should speak and do, directly inspired of the Lord.

"And the Lord said unto Moses, See, I have made thee a god to Pharaoh; and Aaron thy brother shall be thy prophet. Thou shalt

speak all that I command thee; and Aaron thy brother shall speak unto Pharaoh, that he send the children of Israel out of his land." Ex. vii. 1, 2.

In this meaning we are further confirmed by observing that in Scripture, a *false* prophet is one who handles the things of God deceitfully, and without authority. Mark xiii. 21, 22.

A true prophet, then, was one so in communication with God, as to be able to reveal His will to others. And it follows, since New Testament revelation is closed, that this last phase of prophesying has been suspended, until the latter day fulfillment of Joel be come in.

"And it shall come to pass in the last days, saith God, I will pour out my Spirit upon all flesh; and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, and your young men shall see visions, and your old men shall dream dreams: And on my servants and on my handmaidens I will pour out in those days of my Spirit; and they shall prophesy." Joel ii. 28; Acts ii. 17-21.

Teaching, then, or preaching, is now the prime gift in exercise in the church. By a teacher, we understand one who instructs in



the things of God already made known. It was, no doubt, this kind of prophecy that Philip's four daughters exercised, expounding Old Testament Scriptures to the ignorant. Acts xxi. 9.

One fact more about prophesying remains to be considered. In 1 Cor. xiv. 3, it is said, "He that prophesieth, speaketh unto men to edification, exhortation, and comfort," Now it is plain this is not a definition of what prophesying is, but of what it does; and is stated to distinguish it from the gift of tongues, which only ministered self-edification. This is a point to be marked; for since the office of the foretelling prophet has ceased, and preaching now accomplishes what prophecy then did, we may justly conclude that whatever commands regulated prophesying, with equal propriety they apply to the present forms of ministering the Word, observed in the assemblies of believers.

It seems apparent from the grouping of the facts, that in this eleventh chapter, Paul had before his mind the church gathered in a more private capacity than where he deals with it in the fourteenth chapter. We should judge there were no unbelievers in the assembly of the

eleventh chapter, but a meeting exclusively of saints to celebrate the Lord's death, in breaking of bread.

If this be so, then the appropriateness of mentioning the veiling of women in such connection is at once seen. Woman is the type of the church. Eph. v. 23-32. The church is required to be subject unto Christ, her Head. A woman's veil was the badge of her submission. To be uncovered suggested defiance, withdrawal from under authority, and suspicion. Gen. xx. 16; Num. v. 18.

But what immediate connection existed between the veiling of women and angels has been a point of some conjecture. Some think they find its clue in the architectural arrangement of those places of early worship. If these, like the synagogues of the Jews, were divided by a high partition, which separated the men from the women, it left the women in full view of those conducting the meeting. Such were supposed to be the "angels" of the congregation. And in support of this theory, Rev. i., ii., iii., is adduced, where the word angel is repeatedly used to signify the pastor of a church.

But some of the old fathers judged that *evil*



angels were meant. If, as they believed, these were in the congregation, stirring up sinful thoughts in the men who beheld the extraordinary display of female gifts, the veil would defeat their purpose. But another explanation seems more in accord with the dignity of the whole subject. Holy angels are intended. They are interested in the mysteries of salvation; and are represented as anxiously peering down to examine "the manifold wisdom of God," displayed through the church. 1 Pet. i. 12.

These angels veil their faces in the presence of the glory of God. And for their sakes, who love and observe humility and good order, ought the woman present in the church, and herself its earthly type, to wear a "power" or "permission" on her head; which thus becomes the token of her subordination to man, and illustrates the submission of the church unto Christ, its Head.

For this reason we would insist that every Christian woman praying, exhorting or singing before a public audience wear some covering upon her head. And further we would strongly recommend that all Christian women who may only be listeners in a public assembly be also

careful to have the head attired. Otherwise the divine type is violated, and that principle of headship of which the material covering is the token, is defied.

It is not difficult to conjecture how the practice of prophesying unveiled would have arisen. Ruth's veil, we are told, had the capacity of holding fifteen gallons of grain. Heavy garments like these, worn over the face, would seriously interfere with the freedom of public speech. And so, without intending to set propriety at defiance, the Corinthian women might have established the custom for convenience and comfort, judging it the privilege of Gospel liberty.

But Paul, foreseeing the consequences of such innovation, sharply reproves their self-appointed license, declaring: "If any one thinks to be contentious in defence of such a custom, let him know that it is disallowed by me, and by all the churches of God." 1 Cor. xi. 16.

At this point let us carefully distinguish between a *principle* which is unalterable, and a *custom* which as the expression of that principle may change. Thus a *bonnet* now answers the place a *veil* formerly occupied.



Briefly, then, to recapitulate this division of our subject, we find :

1. Paul has virtually authorized *the act*, since he has regulated *the manner* of female prophesying.

2. Prophesying in the sense of foretelling, or giving fresh revelations from God, has been suspended, till the complete fulfillment of Joel be come to pass. 2 Pet. i. 20, 21. Rev. xxii. 18, 19. Its equivalent can only be found now in the religious testimony of evangelists, pastors and teachers, who fulfill the intention of prophesying, viz. : "speaking to men to edification, exhortation and comfort."

3. Public praying has sustained no such change or interruption. Hence, were we entirely to waive the question of prophesying, it would remain evident that Paul did grant a sanction which has never been withdrawn, allowing a woman to *pray* in the church, provided she wore upon her head some covering as a suitable recognition of man's headship, and her official and personal subordination.

4. As prophesying was designed to edify believers (1 Cor. xiv. 5), we learn that women

publicly testified before such, as well as the unbelieving.

This fact should be observed by those who, with nice discrimination, claim that a woman may preach the Gospel to sinners, but may not expound the word to believers.



## V.

### WHAT IS IMPLIED BY SILENCE?

Let your women keep silence in the churches : for it is not permitted unto them to speak ; but to be under obedience, as also saith the law. 1 Cor. xiv. 34.

Three words in the New Testament are translated *silence*, or *to be silent*. The first of these, a term of some latitude, is used for rebuking the voice of a demon, for hushing the sea, for muzzling an ox, or for victory in controversy. The second, a word restricted to intelligent utterance, is employed in the passage before us. While the third, used by Paul, in his directions to Timothy concerning women (1 Tim. ii. 11), is also a term of diversified significance, expressive either of acquiescence, tranquility, attention or cessation from speech. With the first of these words, our subject requires no dealing ; but with the other two, *sigao* and *hee-suckazo*, we shall need to make acquaintance.

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The word in 1 Cor. xiv. 34 is *sigao*. In all its occurrences in the New Testament it bears the meaning of refraining from utterance. So it does here. Nevertheless, we must call attention to a fact worthy of note. The same silence which in verse 34 is enjoined upon women, in verses 28 and 30 is commanded to the men, also.

Now, it has never been claimed by expositors that in the case of the men Paul meant more than to impose temporary silence, such as the contingencies of the moment demanded. The substance of his command seems to be this : You Corinthian men must have order in your public gatherings. If two or more have the power of utterance coming upon them at the same time, give place to one, and for the time let all others be listeners, that there be no confusion in the assembly.

Upon what ground, then, we would ask, should the silence laid upon the women be distorted and elevated into so much greater prominence than it bears in reference to the men. Nobody argues that these commands enforced upon the Corinthian men everlasting cessation from public prayer, and praise, and preaching. And how do we know ? Because the Apostle



expressly guards his words from misapprehension by explaining, "Ye *all* may prophesy, ONE BY ONE."

And so, we think a careful examination of the context will reveal the fact that Paul's symmetric logic has likewise defended from misconstruction his injunction to the women. It is said they must keep silence because "it is not permitted unto them to speak." Now, such a statement, accepted in all the breadth of meaning which the English reading would imply, appears like a square contradiction of the permissions to pray and prophesy, which we found had been granted in chapter eleventh.

Had the two declarations been recorded at a wide interval of time, we might discover some reason for believing that Apostolic authority had good grounds for changing church regulations. But when we recollect that these two opposing statements are found in near contact, in one Epistle, penned at one time, it seems quite impossible that within so close compass, Paul would have canceled a former permission for this latter restriction. How, then, to find harmony in the two utterances becomes a question of intense interest to every lover of

the truth, and of vital importance to every Christian woman.

We must observe that at this stage of his letter, Paul is dealing with a condition of things untouched before. Sectarianism, divine authority, responsibility in service, morals, lawsuits, marriage, idols, charities, and the Lord's supper, had all in turn been discussed. Now the vision brought before the eye was the whole church gathered, with unbelievers also present, and the extraordinary and varied gifts of that favored assembly in free, yet discordant exercise. It is a scene of noisy turmoil, rather than solemn worship. One is singing, another teaching, another prophesying, another speaking in tongues, another trying to interpret, and all at the same moment. And to increase the general confusion, shameful enough in men, but more unbecoming in the women, they also were further interrupters of good order, asking questions and wrangling with a show of authority over points of disagreement. That this was the peculiarity of female misdemeanor in this connection, we learn from the immediate context: "Let your women keep silence . . . and if they will LEARN anything, let them ask their husbands at home." It is not the decorous



use of the divinely bestowed gift of prophecy that Paul is at all talking about here. He is simply reproving abuses; the habit of disorderly speech, to which both Corinthian men and women were alike addicted. He reprimands the men sharply enough, but lays "the rod" on heavier in the case of the women; for theirs was the more shameful conduct, inasmuch as the Scriptures, as well as nature, taught that theirs was the place of modesty and submission.

That this is the sense of the Apostle's expression about the women we shall find further confirmed, if we examine a word which he seems to have carefully chosen to use in this chapter. *Lalein*, the word translated, "to speak," means primarily, simply to use the voice, without reference to the words spoken. It differs from two other words in frequent use in the New Testament, *eipein*, "to speak," and *legein*, "to say," both of which imply a definite object, followed by express words uttered. *Lalein*, on the contrary, is sometimes most indefinite, so its true sense can only be determined by its connections.

Outside of the Scriptures *lalein* stands for  
The prattle of children;

The chattering of monkeys;  
The chirping of birds, and other inarticulate attempts at speech.

In the Scriptures *lalein* is used for  
Idle words. Matt. xii. 36.

For the teaching of the law. Rom. iii. 19.

For the wisdom of the spirit. 1 Cor. ii. 7, 13.

For the word of angels. Heb. ii. 2.

Of the testimony of Jesus' blood. Heb. xii.

24.  
Of the voices and thunders of the Apocalypse. Rev. iv. 1; x. 3, 4.

Of the sounds which the image of the beast shall utter. Rev. xiii. 15.

Standard lexicographers are agreed that where a word possesses such a range of signification as does *lalein*, its proper sense, in any connection, must be determined by the context. According to Bloomfield, its primary meaning is to babble or chatter. Archbishop Trench denies any contemptuous use of *lalein* in the New Testament, and this is cordially enough admitted. But certainly in Matt. xxvi. 73, and Mark xiv. 70, the noun *lalia* is used in its original sense, as describing Peter's Galilean dialect, the peculiarity of which in itself, apart from the words he spoke, was the occasion



of his being twice recognized by damsels. Manifestly enough, the circumstances under which *lalein* is found in 1 Cor. xiv. are directly in line with the thought of discordant, and so, practically, meaningless utterances. Hence, no word could have been chosen with nicer discrimination to make the abstract idea of speech prominent over what is usually the more important fact in Scripture, namely, the words spoken; no matter whether the case refer to the *interrupting men*, or the *indiscreet women*.

Was there nothing previous in this Epistle concerning women's testimony, we might be content to accept, in this place, the more ordinary meaning of the word *lalein*. But the best students are agreed that its shades of definition must be determined by its surroundings. And Paul's own attitude in regard to women drives us away from any loose rendering and compels us to find a harmony between his first and second statements.

Putting all the facts together, then, this is the sum. In chapter xi, the privilege of female praying and prophesying is recognized, honored, and regulated. In chapter xiv, it is declared that women shall not *interrupt* the assembly, even for the exercise of these lawful

gifts. "For God is not the author of confusion, but of peace." And He will have men and women preserve order in His holy assembly. For the justness of these commands Paul appeals to the law. To which authority let us also turn.



## VI.

### OBEDIENCE AND LEARNING AT HOME.

Let it be noticed, that it is not *silence* but *obedience* which the law enjoins. If any think to vindicate the complete silence of Christian women from the Old Testament Scriptures they will find themselves without argument. Miriam was an acknowledged prophetess of the Lord. Ex. xv. 30; Mic. vi. 4. So too was Deborah. Jud. iv. 4.

It would seem also that Jewish women were possessed of much social freedom. Their intercourse with men was less restricted than in the cases of Roman and Grecian women. We get illustrations of this in Jael receiving Sisera; in the Shunamite going to Elisha; in Abigail advancing to meet David; and the women of Galilee who ministered unto Jesus. Rebekah could not always have been veiled, since Isaac feared to have her beauty seen. And Hannah could not have been very closely covered, when Eli discerned her lips moving in silent prayer.

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### *Obedience and Learning at Home.* 51

It was not, then, exclusive silence or complete retirement that the law taught, but *subjection*. And this is just the point Paul was seeking to demonstrate in 1 Cor. xiv. Those women had defied nature's relationships, and ignored their husbands' authority. Go back to the law, teaches Paul, and there you will find "Sarah obeyed Abraham, calling him lord." 1 Pet. iii. 6. The subordination of women, with its direct occasion, is first mentioned in Gen. iii. 16, 17, and explained by Paul in 1 Tim. ii. 13, 14, "For Adam was first formed, then Eve. And Adam was not deceived, but the woman being deceived was in the transgression." In Num. xxx. the subject is fully treated, and man invested with authority over his household.

And though, subsequently, under grace, high privileges were granted to the woman, as being the glory of the man (1 Cor. xi. 7), and equally with him an heir of the grace of life, (1 Pet. iii. 7); yet Peter with Paul holds fast to the original principle, that she is honored because the "weaker vessel;" *i. e.* frailer or impotent.

This, then, is the fundamental teaching of the law, growing out of a necessity older than



the law itself, which the liberty of grace has not made void. As regards the subjects of salvation, both Jew and Gentile bond and free male and female may be its recipients; but in this life saintship no more obliterates the law of relative relationship, with its inseparable condition of subjection, then conversion changes a black man into a white one. And since womanhood, under the gospel, has acquired a new standing in God's economy, by becoming the grand type of the church in its relationship to Christ, nothing could be more suitable than that this same principle of intelligent submission be the central force around which every gift and service of the Christian woman revolve in harmonious attraction.

*Learning at Home.*—"And if they will learn anything, let them ask their husbands at home (*i. e.* their own particular husbands, not other men), for it is a shame for women to speak in the church." 1 Cor. xiv. 35.

*Inquiry* is the burden of this passage. It is a question of *learning* not of *imparting*. From our modern standpoint, it seems superfluous to exhort a Christian woman to refrain from public discussion or dictation in the church. The services of Christian assemblies have settled

into stereotyped, denominational programmes. Preaching has largely ceased to be expository, and so far become mere moral essaying, that doctrinal controversy is rarely aroused. No man thinks of contending with the preacher in public; much less any woman. Only on mission-fields, where the truth is newly combating heathenism and superstition are such scenes now enacted. But in the times of the primitive church, worship was informal, and not unlike the spontaneous exercises of a healthy prayer meeting of our day. The spirit of inquiry was in itself proper, and elsewhere approved. (Acts xvii. 11.) But when the practice degenerated into indecorous disputation, and the women, side by side with the men, contested points of doctrine or morals, as if the church were no better than a debating club, Paul interposed with stern authority, and insisted that women retire from such disgraceful notoriety. And if they truly desired to be instructed, they were to ask questions, not in public, of other men, but of their own husbands at home.

It is often urged by objectors, that no provision was made for widows, for the unmarried, and such as may have unbelieving husbands.



Whom shall these consult for advice, or teaching in the things of God?

We think the term husband may be taken representatively for other family relations. Marriage is recognized as the normal condition of the sexes. But under the law, in the absence of this relationship, a father, or he that was next of kin assumed a woman's guardianship. Mordecai was responsible for Esther. Only in the case of a widow, was there exception. Her vows were chargeable on her own head. She, in the church, was eligible to the office of deaconess, if in other respects approved. Such was Phebe, a servant of the church of Cenchrea, whom Paul commends to the brethren, on her law-errand to Rome. And this, her being a widow, may account for that independency which she appears to have exercised.

We cannot conceive that it will be at all difficult, in civilized communities, if a woman has a subject will and consecrated heart, for her, whatever her social relations, to find suitable opportunities of being instructed in spiritual matters. But for those whose unbelieving husbands would abridge their Christian liberty, express directions are given by Peter :

"Likewise, ye wives, be in subjection to your own husbands ; that, if any obey not the Word, they also may without the Word be won by the conversation of the wives. While they behold your chaste conversation coupled with fear." 1 Pet. iii. 1, 2."

Thus we learn that private submission is greater even than public gift. God often delayed Israel in their onward march to Canaan ; nor did He give any account of His purpose in this mysterious tax upon their patience. But when all progress was prohibited, one thing lay always at hand to do, "*To keep the charge of the Lord.*" In other words to quietly and joyfully wait, finding submission the sweetest of services. To Jehovah, the discipline of His people was of far more importance than their immediate possession of Canaan. To the Lord Jesus, a woman's meek and quiet spirit is greater glory to her as a personal Christian than the most edifying of public gifts. And to the case of such, whose unbelieving husbands stand in their way, St. Peter's rule applies.



## VII.

### WHAT IS MEANT BY "TEACHING."

"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." 1 Tim. ii. 11, 12.

The wording of this passage should be carefully remarked: "*I suffer not a woman . . . to usurp authority over the man.*" This is the very kernel of Paul's arguments about woman. She was first in the transgression, deluded through her weak judgment; and the stigma of that failure yet abides in its results. Nevertheless, we may conclude, that whatever a woman has a gift for which will not lead her outside this prescribed boundary, that she may do for Jesus, her Saviour and her Lord.

It is very noteworthy that the one word "man," which Paul uses all through these discussions, is the same as is commonly rendered "husband" in the New Testament. It might be uniformly translated husband in all these connections, and do no violation to the text.

We call attention to the fact, because it narrows the question of woman's submission down to her own husband, or near male relative, and does not give any promiscuous privilege to other men to lord it over her.

The word "silence" twice occurring in this passage, is in other places rendered quietness or peace. We get the adjective, in the second verse of this same chapter, used without reference to *speech*, but meaning tranquility. Pray "for all in authority . . . that we may lead a PEACEABLE life." In regard to woman, the word carries with it the thought of deportment, rather than utterance, and is just the term Paul would select to use, in explaining to Timothy that as he, Paul, had enjoined modesty and submission upon the women of Corinth, so must Timothy, upon all women coming under his pastoral care.

The masculine lawlessness of Greek and Roman female converts must have been a prevalent evil, since the Apostle was compelled to use such strenuous words to rectify it. We can only account for its existence, on the ground that Christianity had suddenly liberated those women from a bondage which legal and social custom had long rigorously imposed.



With one ultra bound, they had passed from the insignificance of childhood's estate, to the full-fledged importance of man's equality.

How refreshing is the contrast of our times! The orderly ministrations and teachings of our female missionaries, Bible readers, Sunday-school teachers, and deaconesses, float back over the centuries of church history, and form a tribute of honor, to that thoughtful apostolic care which built such a bulwark of defence about Christian woman's public life, saving her from contempt, and yet preserving to her the privilege of being man's fellow-helper in the gospel.

Among all the sayings of Paul about women, the words, "I suffer not a woman to teach," have been considered the most formidable. They have by some been adduced as proof positive that every woman's mouth was to be forever closed against all public religious testimony. But among the denominations of Christendom thus holding, whatever be their name, there is not one which has not violated the letter of their own text, in the privileges they have practically granted to believing women in their congregations. We do not complain of this; we only mention it to rejoice

in the fact that common sense has prevailed over dogmatism.

Our English brethren, especially, in theory and in writings, have denied public liberty to women; and yet constantly they tolerate it. Cultured Christian English women, as a rule, are more active in Bible teaching than their American sisters. Upon what basis, we should like to know, is silence measured by a church edifice rather than by a drawing room? Is not a man all the same a man, whether he be a costermonger or a merchant, if a woman goes to preach Jesus to him?

The word rendered "teach" in the passage under consideration, is *didaskkein*. A *didaskalos* was a teacher of authority. Such was the Lord Jesus, as Master or Rabbi. Such were the doctors in the temple. Such was Nicodemus, and Paul, and Timothy. It is a word of great dignity in the New Testament. The verb is applied to the Holy Ghost, the greatest of all teachers. The office, according to 1 Cor. xii. 28, was the third in rank in the church. The "teacher" exercised authority over men as well as women. There were many speakers and workers in the church, but all were not *didaskaloi*. Hence the passage only teaches



that a woman shall not usurp a place of rule in the church, or arrogate to herself any position which would involve leadership, such as accompanies the administration of the ordinances, and the enforcing of the discipline of the church.

How consistent and considerate are the apostolic teachings on this subject. Paul does not exhort all women to aspire to be preachers, for he well knew that according to their constitution and sphere as wives and mothers, women of proper endowment, leisure, and undivided consecration, would be always the exception, rather than the rule. Yet he commends Tryphena, and Tryphosa, and Persis, who did "labor much in the Lord." He offers no protest, though his intimate friend Priscilla performed the part of instructor to the eloquent and educated Apollos; but both he and Luke show plainly how they estimated that energetic "helper" by thrice mentioning her name before that of Aquila.

Nor does he hesitate to speak of the Gospel work of Euodias, and Syntyche, and honorably associate them with Clement, shortly after, Bishop of Rome, and the most eminent of the Fathers. Thus has Paul himself, as

taught by the Holy Spirit, opened the door of Christian liberty to all believing women who feel themselves bidden to enter.

To recapitulate the teaching of Scripture:

*First*—A woman may not forget her position in divine economy, as under headship through transgression.

*Second*—She may not, by any insubjection, dishonor the church, whose relation to Christ she typifies.

*Third*—She may not *lalein*, or interrupt the assembly by questions, disputations, or other disorderly address.

*Fourth*—By no means is she to usurp the position of the *didaskalos*, or ruling administrator in the church. Thus to accept the designation of "Reverend," or to become the pastor of a congregation is totally opposed to all apostolic teaching.

*Fifth*—She may, if the gifts be hers, and she observe due restrictions, pray, and speak to edification, exhortation and comfort in all suitable places except at the Lord's table, where it is quite evident silence is her bounden duty.

*Sixth*—Thus she may be a missionary, a Bible reader, a Scripture teacher of children,



an instructor of men, a deaconess, a helper, a servant in the church; in short, whatever she has ability for, except a pastoral head, with its accompanying responsibilities of administering the ordinances, laying on of hands, burying the dead and disciplining the disobedient. Sweet and fitting permission! Wise and honorable restriction! Every true woman has cause to magnify the Apostle Paul, as her courageous and faithful inspired friend; and every scripture-taught woman will joyfully recognize man's headship, whilst gratefully cognizant of her joint heirship with him in salvation.

We have sought to establish from God's Word the principles upon which woman's gospel liberty is grounded. There will always be found a large company of godly women who are absolutely private Christians and silent Christians. These, like the mother of the Wesleys and of Doddridge, will be only heard from through the renown of their sons.

God appointed that it should be so: and any woman must be out of this harmony who covets the glamor of public life more than she prizes the sanctity of the fireside. We know that the rigor of necessity drives many a

woman into public spheres of labor where she fills places of trust with joy and grace. Yet the readiness with which most such women marry when the opportunity offers, and gladly retire to the seclusion of a home, proves how strong is still that divine law founded in Eden, making man the head and father, and woman his helper, the nurturer of his children, and the comforter of his toil.

What the heathen man does naturally cannot be cited as a standard. He is all out of joint with God's purposes. He subjugates and degrades woman. The Christian man is commanded to honor and cherish her. When he understands his duty in this, all due and Scriptural rights will be accorded her.

For the comfort of such we remark that we do not understand the Scriptures to *command* all women to preach; nor do we read that the Bible *condemns* those who do not. There is a sense in which all believers of either sex are expected to make known unto all their fellowmen the glad tidings of the cross. But this form of ministry may not necessarily be *public prophesying*. In a variety of ways, by private conversation, by distribution of Bibles and tracts, or by silent godly



deportment, the truths of Christ may be announced.

While we claim for women the *right* to public testimony, we yet have a deep conviction that the *gift of prophesying* should be exercised with great circumspection. Even the *men* are cautioned in Scripture not to eagerly and hastily desire the office of instructor, since few are fit for it, and great are the responsibilities pertaining thereto. James iii. 1.

No woman need feel that she is inferior or useless because she has not the endowment of Philip's four daughters, or the ability of Aquila's wife to expound doctrine.

We, like Samuel when called to anoint a king for Israel, are accustomed to look upon that which is showy and manifest, and render honor thereto. But the Lord rebukes our superficial judgment by saying to us: "The Lord seeth not as man seeth: for man looketh upon the outward appearance, but the Lord looketh upon the heart." I Samuel xvi. 6, 7.

Martha has as honorable mention as Mary: for we are told Jesus loved both sisters. Anna, the prophetess, was privileged to touch the infant Christ, and speak of the redemption He brought. But Dorcas, who was only the silent,

sewing saint, was granted a resurrection from the dead. And who can affirm which was the greater in God's sight?

There are diversities of gifts, but the same Spirit.

And there are differences of administrations, but the same Lord.

And there are diversities of operations, but it is the same God which worketh all in all.

And the eye cannot say unto the hand, I have no need of thee; nor again the head to the feet, I have no need of you.

Nay, much more those members of the body, which seem to be more feeble, are necessary. I Cor. xii. 4-6, 21-23.





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