

Women as PASTORS/PREACHERS? - What Does the Bible say?

By: Rob Perez

After having a little bit of a loving debate with a dear female friend and sister in the Lord about the issue of women as pastors, I decided to put the following together to further explain my position and what I believe to be God's plan as to why it should never be allowed in any church I don't care how "liberal" or "progressive minded" they claim or want to be to have a women in a spiritual position of authority over men.

We need to realize that God isn't sitting up in heaven watching for how progressive we become or how we can "forward think" ourselves into higher and higher levels of artificial over-educated "biblical consciousness" in order to impress Him. LOL

On the contrary, His desire is that we persevere and progress in our becoming more Christ-like and to submit fully to OBEYING and following to the letter His plan and structure for our lives individually and for the church collectively. Period.

Before I get into scripture... Let me just say... before all of you women folk reading this get all fired up at the messenger, the following has NOTHING to do with women being inferior or less educated or not being as qualified as a man for pastoral positions of authority.

However, if you want to get mad at anyone, get mad at Eve... read the biblical passages below and you will find out why. :)

Lets now proceed into God's TRUTH.

Get out your bible and read:

1 Timothy 2:11-15

1 Timothy all of chapter 3

Titus 1:6-9

Where do you see in the above passages any ref to a women being put in a pastoral position of authority over men? There is none...

Now before any of you reply in objection with the names of Miriam, Deborah, and Huldah in the Old Testament as examples of women being put in the position of preachers, you would be incorrect for they were not. Nor should you mention Athaliah and Jezebel. Both of them were less than Godly women in the Old Testament. Disqualified.

As far as the New Testament, Priscilla, Aquilla and Phoebe were mentioned but none of them were given a position of authority over men as a preacher/pastor in a church. Priscilla & Aquilla invited Apollos into their home to better explain the "way of God" to him. (Acts 18:26) but that is far from the reality of being in authority over Apollos in as far as an official church position. Notice they invited him into their home after listening to him get all fired up in church but they were not in a position of authority over him to adequately explain the "way of God" in that church.

Phoebe on the other hand was entrusted by Paul to deliver the epistle to the Romans to the church in Rome. She was a valued servant and could possibly be considered a deacon. Even though the bible doesn't clearly restrain women from being deacons, it certainly doesn't outline the qualifications for what kind of women should be granted that position as it clearly does over and over again for men.

In Romans 16:1, even if Phoebe is considered a "deaconess" instead of a "servant," that does not indicate that Phoebe was a teacher in the church. "Able to teach" is given as a qualification for elders, but not deacons (1 Timothy 3:1-13; Titus 1:6-9). Elders/bishops/deacons are described as the "husband of one wife," "a man whose children believe," and "men worthy of respect." Clearly the indication is that these qualifications refer to men. In addition, in 1 Timothy 3:1-13 and Titus 1:6-9, masculine pronouns are used exclusively to refer to elders/bishops/deacons.

Women according to scripture have a very defined and focused role in serving the body of Christ. They are called to:

- 1) Teach other women
- 2) Teach children
- 3) Minister to others

- 4) Proclaim the gospel to the lost
- 5) Demonstrate the fruits of the spirit
- 6) Demonstrate their gifts of hospitality, mercy, teaching, and helps
- 7) Pray publically

The only area that God has ordained as off limits for women is serving in positions of spiritual teaching authority in the church over men. God has ordained that men are to be the spiritual leaders in both the church and their homes. Women are assigned to a less authoritative role. This is God's design and it does not make women less important, by any means, but rather gives them a ministry focus more in agreement with God's plan and His gifting of them.

What's the bottom line? - All leadership is to be in submission to the church authority structure outlined in the scriptures and ultimately to our supreme authority, Christ Jesus.

~ Additional thoughts from: **David Michael**

Well-said Rob. I'm gonna chime in here, if that's ok.

I think the issue of Women Pastors stem from a bigger reason outside of church and a misunderstanding of biblical roles.

There is a lot of controversy and struggle over the issue of women and men and their equality. There's the old-school idea that perhaps women should just be pregnant and barefoot in the kitchen. Now, there's the new-school idea that perhaps MEN should be pregnant and barefoot in the kitchen. LOL!! Ok... well... maybe not to that extreme. Seriously though, there is a lot of controversy and struggle over the issue... Are they equal? Or is one above the other? What's their place in the church or for that matter, in society.. Let's see what the Bible says about it...

First of all, In spite of what skeptics claim, the Bible is clear that both men and women are EQUAL IN CHRIST. [Gal. 3:28 There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is NEITHER MALE NOR FEMALE; for you are ALL ONE in Christ Jesus.]

[1 Peter 3:7 Husbands, likewise, dwell with them with understanding, giving honor to the wife,and as BEING HEIRS TOGETHER of the grace of life...]

So... Who is more important in Christ? No one.. We are all equal!

Matthew Henry said this about women: "The woman was made out of Adam's side. She was not made out of his head to rule over him, nor out of his feet to be trampled upon by him, but out of his side to be equal with him, under his arm to be protected, and near his heart to be loved."

At anyrate.. As you can see.. In a very important sense, men and women are equal. They are equally powerless to free themselves from their slavery to sin. Both need the covering of Christ as their atonement to come before the Holy God. Therefore, again, In Christ, both men and women are fellow heirs to the grace eternal life, in Jesus. HOWEVER – We need to understand that EQUALITY DOES NOT EXCLUDE A DISTINCTION IN ROLES. Let's take a look at Jesus to understand this better.

[John 6:38 For I have come down from heaven, not to do My own will, but the will of Him who sent Me.]

[Philippians 2:6-8 ... Christ Jesus, who, being in the form of God, did not consider it robbery to be equal with God, 7 butHe humbled Himself and became obedient..., even to the death of the cross.]

In those passages, what attitude is Jesus displaying toward the Father? Jesus say's He is here to do the will of the Father. But note— even though Jesus was completely submissive to the Father's will, He also remained equal to the Father.

Do you see equality yet a difference in roles?

That's the key to understanding those passages that make a distinction in men and women. It's not about equality, it's about a distinction in roles.

The truth is... Most cultures and societies for thousands of years have mistreated women. They have treated women as second-class citizens or even worse... Man was certainly the leader but in a VERY UNbiblical sense. They not only decided they were the leader but they also decided they were the only one's that had brains. Only they could conduct business, go to college, etc.. and so on.

Treating women this way is NOT God's design. Nevertheless, that's how it was for many years in almost every culture. It still is in some areas in our own country but certainly much worse in some parts of the world.....

As a result of women being treated this way... The women's liberation movement came into effect. The idea?—To get equal rights for women! Is that a bad idea? Absolutely not! That's actually very biblical.. HOWEVER—The problem is the movement took it to another level that once again went outside of God's design.. It went from trying to get equal rights to convincing women that they should basically be the man! In other words—Ignore your natural instincts as a women, take control of your man, and.. I dunno...go grow a beard. lol

Seriously though, This is the agenda being pushed and it's wrong because women are only robbing themselves by trying to act and feel a way contrary to their design...It's just going from one extreme to another. If the idea is equal rights then the concept should be acceptance for who they are, not by pretending to be something they're not..

Look, the biblical concept of a women's role is by no means demeaning.. Quite the opposite.. In fact—We need to look at something quickly before I wrap this up..

The bible was the only literature for thousands of years that actually called women to a position of honor and insisted and she use their brains and skills.. The Biblical woman is also known as the Proverbs 31 Woman. Or the 'Proverbial Woman'... Read Proverbs 31:10-31

According to scripture a woman should be: trustworthy, kind, hard worker but works joyfully, goes extra mile to get choicest goods, disciplined, enterprising, prudent with money, can deal in business matters, energetic, good steward, diligent, compassionate, generous, provident, elegant, influential in goodness and kindness, industrious, composed, wise, cares for her home, praiseworthy, distinguished, God-fearing, and honored by people.

Does that sound like a woman whose is dumb and should have no input?

People say religion demeans women and that may be true for most cases, but the truth is, True Biblical Christianity has always protected women rights long before the Women's Lib movement.....

Men and women are very different, both with pros and cons and strengths and weaknesses. One is not smarter or better than the other, it just makes them different and thus each role given fits those differences perfectly. This is God's design, because combined the two differences make an amazing team. When embraced, the church can flourish in amazing ways. So, instead of fighting for the roles that we cannot have, let's embrace our God given roles, with respect to each other's and make a difference in this world!

~ Additional Thoughts by **Rob Perez**

Well, since posting this piece I have been lit up by a few of my Christian Brothers calling me sexist, sad and ignorant. I have likewise been applauded by some female sisters in the Lord. I found the women's POV in some of the responses very inspired and full of God's truth. I have to tell you my fellow brothers the women folk want us to LEAD. Lead with integrity, lead with spiritual conviction and courage. They are looking for that in us. It's also what God expects. So those themes are automatically in harmony with each other as most things are when we are in full submission to God's instructions.

I found the criticisms to be very insightful as well.... How you ask..... it's interesting that the same argument for cultural context is used for both arguments... one for the argument that allows for throwing out a whole bunch of scriptures as nothing more than an authors dated opinion and the other for how current culture is now more seemingly relevant than straight forward biblical instruction for defined male & female roles.

May I offer the following:

Authority has become the feeling of what is right to do. But this is not just a matter of disobedient Christianity, because truth and authority are not just presuppositions held by the human authors of Scripture. Truth and authority are basic to Scripture because they have their origin in God himself.

The word is truth because God is truth, Jesus is the truth, the Holy Spirit is the Spirit of truth. The Bible is authoritative because God is almighty, Jesus is Lord, the Holy Spirit is sovereign. Take away or reinterpret truth and authority as religious concepts and you abolish God, you replace him with another false and lesser god, an idol whose very existence is a lie and a sham. Many who say 'Our Father', who call Christ 'Lord' with their mouths, who

speak of the presence and gifts of the Holy Spirit, are not worshipping the true Trinitarian God of the Bible but the false god of liberalism.

We need to have scripture interpreted by itself. This is the correct and biblical way to come to the truth. I do agree that this involves doctrinal, historical and linguistic study of the text. But,,,It involves reading Scripture in the light of Scripture, allowing clearer passages to shed light on less clear ones, allowing central teachings to shed light on more peripheral ones. This is the right approach to Scripture when we say that no outside force will shape our thinking or understanding. If only the church shapes our understanding of scripture we have accepted catholic heresy; if our own thinking or the world shapes our understanding of Scripture we have accepted liberal heresy. We need to submit ourselves to scripture, to fill ourselves with Scripture so much that it is the Bible alone which enables us to understand the Bible.

The message of the Bible cuts to the core,,, and I mean to the VERY CORE of each of us. For some of us that is a glorious and embraced reality. For those of us that appreciate the sifting and refining that a true and honest pursuit for a deeper intimacy with Jesus can bring, wisdom will abound. Unfortunately there are Christians that tremble and shake at the thought of having every ounce of their flesh broken down and stripped away for fear that they may end up standing alone against the tide of public opinion and being cast outside of the "group think" pack.

May real spiritual courage come back into vogue and may we all embrace His refining hands and let the Spirit of truth according to God's word fill us.