**Can a Woman Teach?**

**Part One of Women’s Role in the Church**

**Family Worship Center August 8, 2010**

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Text: I Cor. 14:34-35 Introduction: These and other verses that have caused a stir and confusion in the church and home. It can cause some to question the Gospel and even avoid it. Some fundamentalists use them to limit women’s roles. Let’s get to the truth about the role of women.

**Part One: Interpreting God’s Word**

1. Always put it in context.

A. Verses before and after.

B. Historical context~ what did it mean to the people it was written to?

C. Applying the true meaning to your life today.

1. Some of the common verses lifted out of context.

A. I Cor. 14:34-35.

B. I Timothy 2:11-12.

III. But if those by themselves are true then what about…

1. Galatians 3:23-28.

1. All these verses were written by Paul.
2. Paul’s writing easily sorts them out.
3. Lets study to show ourselves approved (II Timothy 2:15).

**Part Two: The Sitz em Leben**

1. The “sitz em leben” means “the situation in life” or cultural context. This is essential to understanding the meaning of the verses.

1. The Culture Concerning Women During the writing of the New Testament.

1. Please note I am reporting and not condoning!

1. Women were considered “property” and not “persons.” They could be bought and sold.

1. They had little to no legal rights and were not allowed to be educated.

1. The Jewish Rabbis were forbidden from speaking to women. It was stated that “The wise have said, each time that the man prolongs conversation with the woman he causes evil to himself and desists from the words of Torah and in the end inherits Gehinnom.” In other words, they taught that even talking to your own wife was considered a terrible thing that would lead you away from the Law and send you to hell.

1. One Rabbi stated that he would “rather burn the sayings of the Law than teach them to women.”

1. Jewish men prayed, “I thank you that I am not a Gentile, a slave or a woman.”

III. Jesus was totally different.

1. Jesus talked with women.
2. He offered them friendship and taught them.
3. He honored and respected them.
4. He healed them.
5. He treated them as persons and not property.
6. All of this totally violated both the teachings of the Rabbis and the cultural norms.

IV. Paul had to teach Christian truth of equality to a highly prejudice audience. He did not compromise as some think.

**Part Three: The Corinthian Questions**

1. I Corinthians chapters 1-6; Paul writes and head on fights against division.
2. I Corinthians 7:1-5.

1. Vs. 1 “Now concerning the things of which you wrote to me:” (plural)

1. ***Literary Context-*** Before answering their question or addressing their statement, Paul first RESTATES- REPRINTS THEIR STATEMENT. “It is good for a man not to touch a woman.” This is not Paul’s teaching, it is his restating their statement in question.

1. Jesus did this in the Sermon on the Mount.

1. Seven times He states “you have heard” and then restates their teaching following it up with “But I tell you…”

1. ***Scriptural Context-*** Chapter 6 and issue of adultery with prostitutes.

1. ***Cultural context-*** Corinth was a seaport where you came to “sin and sail.”

1. ***Cultural context-*** Temple of Aphrodite and between 1000 – 5000 prostitutes the Corinthian men frequented before getting saved.

1. ***Textual meaning-*** “It is good for a man not to touch a woman.” They were asserting that it is better to practice asceticism (even the married men having no sex) than struggle with sexual temptation.

III. Paul responds to their statement with God’s design and teaching…

1. Vs. 2 “2﻿Nevertheless, because of sexual immorality, let each man have his own wife, and let each woman have her own husband.”

1. Key word “Nevertheless”; Paul begins his answer contradictory to their statement.

1. Vs. 3-5 expounds on keeping purity and resisting the ungodly culture through a healthy sexual relationship in marriage.

IV. Other Corinthian “statements” “concerning the things of which you wrote to me:” continue from 8:1 to the rest of the letter.

V. I Corinthians 11:1-16. It seems Paul contradicts himself here; once again he is restating the Corinthians statement and contradicting their statement with God’s teaching.

 A. The issue of head coverings and long hair.

B. Vs. 1-2 are Paul’s statements.

C. Vs. 3-10,13b-15 ARE RESTATEMENTS OF THE CORINTHIAN STATEMENTS IN QUESTION.

 D. Vs. 11-13a and 16 are Paul’s response and correction of their false teaching.

 1. Vs. 11 **“Nevertheless”** Paul again starts his response.

2. Doesn’t it seem absurd when commentators or teachers wrongly assume 3-10, 13b-15 are Paul’s teaching?

 3. Paul clears it up…

 a. Man is not without the woman.

 b. All things of God

 1). Genesis 1:27-28.

 2). God made THEM male and female.

 3). God gave THEM dominion.

 4). Equality before the fall and in redemption.

 c. Judge in yourself = use some common sense.

 d. Vs. 16 Paul nails it down…

 f. WE HAVE NO SUCH CUSTOM (the whole head cover & hair issue).

 g. Neither do the churches of God.

 h. Contentious is from the Greek word φιλονεικία PHILONEIKIA

 1. Literally “Love Strife”.

 2. Some people love to fight and create contention.

 3. Watch out for those who create tension and controversy. Serving self.

VI. I Corinthians 14:34-35.

1. Remember Galatians 3:23-28- WE ARE NOT UNDER THE LAW.

B. Vs. 34-35 are restatements of the Corinthians.

C. Paul Answers in 36-39.

 1. KVJ “36﻿What? came the word of God out from you? or came it unto you only?

2. “What”- exclamation meaning “are you nuts?” “Where’d you get this stuff?”

3. “Or did the word of God come *originally* from you?” (Meaning they didn’t get this from God and no one else has this stupid teaching).

4. “Or *was* *it* you only that it reached?” They’re the only ones teaching this junk).

5. 37﻿If anyone thinks himself to be a prophet or spiritual, let him acknowledge that the things which I write to you are the commandments of the Lord. (Not the restated errors of vs. 34-35).

6. 38﻿But if anyone is ignorant, let him be ignorant. (Exasperation – because people who perpetrate such ignorant teaching are often unteachable).

**Closing…**

 The devil wanting to weaken the body of Christ found a great trick… cut the work force in half by prejudice against women.

 Next week we continue with can a woman be a deacon or a pastor, or can she teach men?

**Discussion Items and Questions for Home or Small Group**

1. Talk about the proper way to interpret God’s Word.

2. Have these verses every caused you confusion?

3. Name some of the ways Jesus was different in dealing with women.

4. How would now explain I Corinthians 7:1-3 to someone else?

5. How does this understanding of I Corinthians 11:1-16 affect you?

6. In your own words explain I Corinthians 14:34-39.

7. Share how this teaching has helped you.

8. Pray for each other.