

# WOMEN: DEACONS, MINISTERS, PASTORS – DID PAUL SAY WHAT THEY SAY PAUL SAID?

**AIM:** The role of women in ministry remains a very controversial topic in many churches. Not only are there multiple views and opinions regarding what women can and cannot do in the church, many have developed their views and opinions from passages in the Bible – specifically Paul. In this lesson, we will examine Paul’s writings and discern if Paul actually said what we say Paul said.

## INTRODUCTION

A. Paul’s letters were written to individual churches and pastors in specific communities in response to individual and immediate questions, concerns and/or problems.

B. Examples:

1. The church in Corinth was in a very secular city
  - a. Major seaport between Italy and Asia
  - b. Outdoor theater to accommodate 20k
  - c. Athletic games second to the Olympics
  - d. Temple of Aphrodite (1000 prostitutes)
  - e. “To act the Corinthian”= to act in an immoral way
  - f. The city influenced the children of God /church
  - g. What were some of the problems in the church in Corinth?
    - i. Sexual immorality in the church
    - ii. Factions in the church
    - iii. Civic / legal concerns in the church
    - iv. Apostle worship
2. The church in Galatia was influenced by the Judaizers
  - a. Judaizers were people who continued to adhere to the Jewish customs and laws after receiving salvation through Jesus, the Christ.
  - b. The Judaizers came from the Jerusalem church to his churches in Galatia, stressing the need for Gentiles to be circumcised and keep the law.
  - c. Consequently, the Judaizers limited Christian freedom and caused divisions the church.
3. Philippi was supportive of Paul’s ministry
  - a. Paul had a special relationship with the Philippian church. In part, because the church supported Paul financially and emotionally during his ministry
  - b. Although Paul is writing to the church from prison, he encouraged the Philippians to remain steadfast in their faith and to persevere through trials.
  - c. Paul also expressed gratitude for the assistance brought to him by Epaphroditus.

C. Therefore, in each letter, it is important to discern between :

1. The individual and immediate questions, concerns and/or problems needing to be addressed in that church
2. The cultural and social norms and practices that were established in the individual communities where the churches were located. For example:
  - a. Head covering for women (1 Corinthians 11:5)
  - b. Master/Slave relationships (Ephesians 6:5-9)
3. The foundational Christian teachings that transcend time to form and shape our theological underpinning, doctrinal understanding and spiritual reinforcement. For example:

a. Grace	d. Salvation	g. Justification by Faith
b. Faith	e. The Resurrection	h. The Church as the Body of Christ
c. Love	f. The Holy Spirit	j. The Spiritual Gifts

## WHAT DID PAUL BELIEVE?

A. **1 Corinthians 9:19-**, <sup>19</sup> For though I am free with respect to all, I have made myself a slave to all, so that I might gain all the more. <sup>20</sup> To the Jews I became as a Jew, in order to gain Jews. To those under the law I became as

*one under the law (though I myself am not under the law) so that I might gain those under the law. <sup>21</sup> To those outside the law I became as one outside the law (though I am not outside God's law but am within Christ's law) so that I might gain those outside the law. <sup>22</sup> To the weak I became weak, so that I might gain the weak. I have become all things to all people, that I might by all means save some.*

- B. **Acts 16:22, 23,** <sup>22</sup> Then Paul stood in front of the Areopagus and said, "Athenians, I see how extremely spiritual you are in every way. <sup>23</sup> For as I went through the city and looked carefully at the objects of your worship, I found among them an altar with the inscription, 'To an unknown god.' What therefore you worship as unknown, this I proclaim to you.
- C. **Galatians 3:28, 29,** <sup>28</sup> There is no longer Jew or Greek; there is no longer slave or free; there is no longer male and female, for all of you are one in Christ Jesus. <sup>29</sup> And if you belong to Christ, then you are Abraham's offspring, heirs according to the promise.

#### WHAT DID PAUL SAY?

- A. **1 Corinthians 11:4, 5,** <sup>4</sup> Every man praying or prophesying, having his head covered, dishonors his head. <sup>5</sup> But every woman who prays or prophesies with her head uncovered dishonors her head, for that is one and the same as if her head were shaved.
- B. **1 Timothy 2:11, 12,** <sup>11</sup> Let a woman learn in silence with all submission. <sup>12</sup> And I do not permit a woman to teach or to have authority over a man, but to be in silence.
- C. **1 Corinthians 14:33-35,** <sup>33</sup> For God is not the author of confusion but of peace, as in all the churches of the saints. <sup>34</sup> Let your women keep silent in the churches, for they are not permitted to speak; but they are to be submissive, as the law also says. <sup>35</sup> And if they want to learn something, let them ask their own husbands at home; for it is shameful for women to speak in church.

#### WHAT DID PAUL DO?

- A. **Priscilla and Aquila – Romans 16:3-5a and Acts 18:18-26**
- <sup>3</sup> Greet Prisca and Aquila, my coworkers in Christ Jesus, <sup>4</sup> who risked their necks for my life, to whom not only I give thanks but also all the churches of the gentiles. <sup>5</sup> Greet also the church in their house.
  - <sup>18</sup> After staying there for a considerable time, Paul said farewell to the brothers and sisters and sailed for Syria, accompanied by Priscilla and Aquila. At Cenchreae he had his hair cut, for he was under a vow. <sup>19</sup> When they reached Ephesus, he left them there... <sup>24</sup> Now there came to Ephesus a Jew named Apollos from Alexandria... <sup>25</sup> He had been instructed in the Way of the Lord, and he spoke with burning enthusiasm and taught accurately the things concerning Jesus, though he knew only the baptism of John. <sup>26</sup> He began to speak boldly in the synagogue, but when Priscilla and Aquila heard him they took him aside and explained the Way of God to him more accurately.
- B. **Junia – Romans 16:7,** <sup>7</sup> Greet Andronicus and Junia, my fellow Israelites who were in prison with me; they are prominent among the apostles, and they were in Christ before I was.
- C. **Phoebe – Romans 16:1, 2,** I commend to you our sister Phoebe, a deacon [diakonos] of the church at Cenchreae, <sup>2</sup> so that you may welcome her in the Lord, as is fitting for the saints, and help her in whatever she may require from you, for she has been a benefactor of many and of myself as well.