

Why Can't a Woman Speak During Worship?

1 Timothy 2:11-14

Introduction: Along with the women's movement comes the notion that women are equal and should be permitted to do everything a man can do. Therefore, women desire an active part during worship services.

The denominational world has already embraced such a notion. Reading from the April 21, 1994, Guardian of Truth article entitled, Church of England Ordains First Group of Female Priests... Obviously, that church never had women in such a role before this date for some good reason. Did God's word change or is this indicative of apostasy? What is the women's role in worship?

I. 1 Cor. 14:34-35

- A. "It is **not permitted** unto them to speak." (KJV)
- B. "They are **commanded** to be **under obedience**." (KJV) "They are to be submissive, as the law also says." (NKJV)
- C. "It is a **shame** for a woman **to speak** in the church." (KJV)
- D. Don't assume the absence of a husband somehow negates these commands or makes it less shameful.
- E. During a church service, women are not permitted (scripturally authorized) to speak!

II. "They are not permitted to speak."

- A. The verb "speak" refers to **public speaking** throughout 1 Corinthians 14. Sixteen verses in all (1 Cor. 14:2, 3-6, 9, 11, 13, 18, 19, 21, 23, 27-29, 39).
- B. The Greek words for public speakers are always masculine.
- C. There are no words for a female preacher, speaker or evangelist in the New Testament.
- D. There are no examples of women performing these functions in the scriptures.
- E. Women are excluded from any leadership position in the church as per the qualification of Elders (1 Tim. 3; Titus 1).
- F. There are no provisions in the New Testament for women to have authority over the church or for their leadership over men (1 Tim. 2:11-15).

III. "They are commanded to be under obedience."

- A. Paul instructs women to be in subjection / submission (Eph. 5:22-24).
- B. Paul reminds us of God's original law (Gen. 3:16). He indicates women's speaking is a violation of the spirit and principle of that law.

IV. “It is shameful for women to **speak in the church.**”

A. Why? Because it is a violation of being submissive and in subjection as noted and it is against her nature (1 Pet. 3:1-5).

B. Clearly in 1 Cor. 14:35, it is against God’s will for the church.

C. The same relationship exists between God, man and women (1 Cor. 11:3-12). Would it be wrong for a man to be disrespectful toward God? It would likewise be disrespectful for women to speak in church in violation of God’s command!

V. “To be in silence.”

A. It does not mean muteness in 1 Cor. 14:34 or 1 Tim. 2:11-12.

B. It means to be quiet, at peace or peaceable as opposed to speaking.

C. How silent is this silence? Paul spoke to a crowd that was already silent (Acts 21:40). This silence is even more silent than a quiet crowd that wants to hear every word being spoken by a public speaker without the aid of amplification (Acts 22:2). If you were in that crowd, you would not want anyone around you to say a word so you could hear every word!

VI. What can a woman do?

A. She can perform good works (Acts 9:36; 1 Tim. 5:10; Mark 14:3-9).

B. She can be hospitable as Lydia (Acts 16:14-15).

C. She can be fellow laborers in the Lord (Phil. 4:3).

D. She can teach (Acts 18:24-26; Titus 2:3); to include participation in a Bible study outside a worship service. Teaching is not just the men’s job!

E. However, she can do none of these things in church (1 Tim. 2:11-12). This does not say she can speak as long as she is not usurping authority over a man. It says she can not teach, speak **or** usurp authority over a man in the church.

Conclusion: Throughout the New Testament, women were never in the forefront as preachers or leaders. For a woman to inject herself into any positions over men would go against commands, examples and principles laid out for us in scriptures. Simply, it is sinful.