

Opening Question:

When, and in what context, did you first learn about speaking in tongues?

Women in Leadership

1 Read Timothy 3:1-13 (see also Titus 1:5-9).

- Do you think this passage **assumes** a male pastor/teacher/overseer given the current context or **teaches** towards a male pastor/teacher/overseer regardless of the context?

Note: The term (pastor/teacher/overseer) is usually used pointing to one in a pastor/teacher role over one or many churches. Interestingly this seems to look more like a modern day Pastor than a modern day Elder. Most modern day Elders (sessions) look more like a leadership committee or board of directors than a group of “Overseers” in the way 1 Timothy uses the term.

Note: In verse 11 the word translated *women* could also be translated *wives* or *women deacons*.

Note: Romans 16:1 mentions a female deacon.

2. Read 1 Timothy 2:8-12.

- Is verse 9 prohibiting women to have expensive hair styles etc. in this particular time/culture/church or is this in some way an instruction for all women throughout time?
- Is verse 11 teaching that women in this particular time/culture/church are to learn in quietness and submission or that women through all time in all church contexts are to learn in quietness and submission?
- Does one assume these instructions in the context of Church government only or in the context of Christian life in general? If, in Christian life in general, does this extend into the business world? If so, why? If not, why not?
- How might we explain the positions of authority held by Deborah (Prophet and Leader - Judges 4:4), Huldah (Prophet - 2 Kings 22:14) and Anna (Prophet – Luke 2:36)?

3. The reasoning for the instructions in verses 11-12 are founded in the explanation given verses 13-15. How do verses 13-15 help you understand/interpret verses 11-12?

Note: Verses 13-15 are notoriously difficult for scholars to interpret. Perhaps the strength of our interpretation of verses 11-12 should be measured with this in mind.

4. More questions related to the 1 Timothy 2:11 call for women to learn in quietness and submission:

- Acts 18: 24-26 – Is Priscilla helping to teach Apollos or is she learning in quietness and submission?
- Colossians 3:16 – Believers called to teach and admonish one another with all wisdom – Is this all believers or just men?
- Matthew 28:18 – Believers called to a sort of evangelism and teaching – Is this all believers or just men?
- Titus 2:3-5 – Example of Women teaching women – Does this contradict 1 Timothy 2:11 or is it an exception? Given that 1 Timothy 2:11 doesn't mention exceptions, on what grounds might one call Titus 2:3-5 an exception?

5. Read 1 Corinthians 14:33-35. This takes things a step further: it clearly states that women should remain silent in church.

- Is this for particular women in a particular time/place/culture or is this for all women through all time? On what grounds do you make that conclusion?
- Does this mean that when women do teach (as in the examples above) that it must be outside the context of a worship service?
- 1 Corinthians 11:5 mentions (without condemnation) women speaking in the context of a worship service. What do we make of this?

6. Critical question regarding 1 Timothy 2:11 & 1 Corinthians 14:33: **Is this for all (women) through all time or is this for a specific group (of women) in a specific time and context?** As you consider this question for these passages practice applying it to the below passages as well. What do you learn about applying this question?

- Ephesians 6:5-9, Colossians 3:22, Titus 2:9-10, 1 Timothy 6:1
- 1 Corinthians 11:3-16

7. Read Ephesians 5:21-33. Husband & wife roles give illustration of Christ & Church roles. This passage is speaking specifically of husband & wife roles in a household. It is not directly speaking about men's & women's roles in church government. However, this can be linked to some other mysterious connections between authority and design. What sense (if any) can you make of the connection between authority and design in these passages?

- 1 Timothy 2:12-15 – speaking of authority in church and childbearing

- 1 Corinthians 11:3-16 – speaking of authority, headcoverings, and design
- 1 Corinthians 14:34 & Gen 3:16 – speaking of authority, design, and curse

Pulling it all together:

Many of these passages lean towards limits for women in church leadership. However, all of the passages that do so sit on very shaky footing in regards to the question: **Is this for all women through all time or is this for a specific group of women in a specific time and context?**

Recommendation: Study well and land softly. Extend liberty to those who land differently.

Close in prayer. Praise God for the incredible clarity He brings in scripture on salvation issues. Pray that He would grant wisdom, patience and humility as you study the less clear parts of His Word.

In Essentials... Unity
IN Non-Essentials... Liberty
In All Things... Charity