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Does the Bible Make Women Second Class Citizens?

1 Timothy 2:11: (NASB) *A woman must quietly receive instruction with entire submissiveness.*

This is an age of liberation, an age of breaking down barriers that stood for generations, of finding equality where it never before existed and affirming the rights of those who previously had no voice. As we look at the progress made along these lines we feel a sense of justice and accomplishment. But what about the Bible - what about the Christian Church? Has it fallen behind on these issues regarding women and their roles? Should women be teaching in the church - essentially participating on a "same as the men" basis or does the Bible emphatically deny that opportunity to women?

What was God's original design for the man/woman relationship?

Genesis 2:20-25: God knew ahead of time that no helper would be found and created man and women in this context to accentuate the interconnected relationship that was to be between man and women...

So, Eve was created as a "helper" for Adam. What does that really mean?

- A helper, as in one less experienced? An apprentice maybe?
- A helper, as in one with less authority?
- A helper, as in one who is inferior?

Helpmate: Strong's #5828 ezer (ay'-zer); help, succour, one who helps

Psalms 121:1,2: ¹*I will lift up mine eyes unto the hills, from whence cometh my help <5828>.*
²*My help <5828> cometh from the LORD, which made heaven and earth.*

We see that God is our helpmate as well! The original human design was certainly not one of dominance or inferiority inferred by that word. Instead, it was complimentary...

Male and Female differences, Male Brain Function, *Animal Planet*



Men and women think differently.

- *The human brain is divided by two separate hemispheres. The way we use the left and right hemispheres influence the way we think. The male brain is structured so that the left brain is used for language and the right brain for emotion.*

Language and emotion are separate.

What happened? Sin!!!

Genesis 3:4-6: (NASB) ⁴*The serpent said to the woman, You surely will not die! ⁵For God knows that in the day you eat from it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil. ⁶When the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was a delight to the eyes, and that the tree was desirable to make one wise, she took from its fruit and ate; and she gave also to her husband with her, and he ate.*

The serpent deceived Eve. Part of the lie was true - they did begin to understand good and evil.



Male and Female differences, Female Brain Function, *Animal Planet*

- *In the female brain, fibers connecting the two sides are 23% thicker than in the male brain. Women are able to use both the right and left hemispheres for emotion and language, which may explain why women find it much easier to talk about their feelings.*

Everyone is found guilty in some way, and God responds with penalties for each - Adam, Eve, and even Satan. Notice that all of the rules for living were now changed. Adam and Eve were now to live under severe restrictions instead of the previously enjoyed freedom of the garden.

Genesis 3:16: (NASB) *To the woman He said, I will greatly multiply your pain in childbirth, in pain you will bring forth children; Yet your desire will be for your husband, and he will rule over you.*

Genesis 3:17-19: (NASB) ¹⁷*Then to Adam He said, Because you have listened to the voice of your wife, and have eaten from the tree about which I commanded you, saying, You shall not eat from it; Cursed is the ground because of you; In toil you will eat of it all the days of your life.*



¹⁸Both thorns and thistles it shall grow for you; and you will eat the plants of the field; ¹⁹By the sweat of your face you will eat bread, till you return to the ground, because from it you were taken; for you are dust, and to dust you shall return.

Curse on the man: Hard work to provide. What naturally would bring forth good would now bring forth thorns and thistles.

Curse on the woman: Bearing children in pain AND that her husband will rule over her. That wasn't part of the original design!

Rule: Strong's #4910, to rule, have dominion, to cause to rule, to exercise dominion

 **What submission is not, John Piper, DesiringGod.org**

- "Submission" does not mean leaving your brain and your will at the wedding altar. It is not inability or the unwillingness to think for yourself.

Were there any Old Testament exceptions to "the rule of men?"

Judges 4:1-3: (NASB) ¹Then the sons of Israel again did evil in the sight of the LORD, after Ehud died. ²And the LORD sold them into the hand of Jabin king of Canaan, who reigned in Hazor; and the commander of his army was Sisera, who lived in Harosheth-hagoyim. ³The sons of Israel cried to the LORD; for he had nine hundred iron chariots, and he oppressed the sons of Israel severely for twenty years.

(Source: Matthew Henry's Bible Commentary on the Whole Bible) That these Canaanites had formerly been conquered and subdued by Israel, were of old sentenced to be their servants (Genesis 9:25), and might now have been under their feet, and utterly incapable of giving them any disturbance, if their own slothfulness, cowardice, and unbelief, had not suffered them thus to get (a)head. To be oppressed by those whom their fathers had conquered, and whom they themselves had foolishly spared, could not but be very grievous.

The Hebrews had conquered these people once already, but because they lost sight of God's way, these other people were allowed to rise up and dominate Israel with twenty years of severe oppression.

Judges 4:4-9: (NASB) ⁴Now Deborah, a prophetess... was judging Israel at that time. ⁵She used to sit under the palm tree.. and the sons of Israel came up to her for judgment. ⁶Now she sent and summoned Barak...and said to him, Behold, the LORD, the God of Israel, has commanded, Go and march to Mount Tabor, and take with you ten thousand men...⁷I will draw out to you Sisera, the commander of Jabin's army, with his chariots and his many troops to the river Kishon, and I will give him into your hand. ⁸Then Barak said to her, If you will go with me, then I will go; but if you will not go with me, I will not go. ⁹She said, I will surely go with you; nevertheless, the honor shall not be yours on the journey that you are about to take, for the LORD will sell Sisera into the hands of a woman. Then Deborah arose and went with Barak to Kedesh.

The prophecy came from a woman! God was still with them. But Barak, a commander in Israel, refused to go fight unless Deborah came with the army! The men in Israel had lost all of their faith and it took this woman to bring them back to center.

The consequence was humiliation in spite of victory, for a woman had to lead them. This was an exception to the rule but it brought humiliation because it wasn't the way it was supposed to be. Was this an exception to the rule?

What was Jesus' reaction to and treatment of women?

Jesus taught women:

Luke 10:38-42: He taught women with purpose and focus, contrary to society at the time.

Jesus healed women: Mark 5:25-34: He didn't discriminate against women in terms of healing.

Jesus spoke to foreign women: This was unheard of! John 4:7-10: He not only speaks to her, but he offers her "living water," the Gospel! He stepped way outside of normal tradition.

Jesus treated women as respectfully as men: Luke 13:10-16: Did you know that the phrase "daughter of Abraham" is not found anywhere else in the Scriptures? This was a name of respect from Jesus. Is Jesus going against the punishment of the curse by doing all of this?



Jesus had women follow him: Luke 8:1-3: This was another shocking thing - true followers provided for him out of their resources. A lot of these followers were women, which was unheard of!

Is the Christian treatment of women different than the Law of the Old Testament?



Men's brains full of boxes, *Men's & Women's Brains, markgunor.com*

- *Men's brains are made up of little boxes. We have a box for everything...the car, the money, the job, for you, the kids, your mother somewhere in the basement...we have boxes everywhere. The rule is: The boxes don't touch.*
- *When a man discusses that particular subject, we go to that particular box, we pull that box out, we open the box, we discuss only what is in THAT box, and then we close the box and put it away being very, very careful not to touch any other boxes.*

Women were present at Jesus' death: Matthew 27:55-56:

Jesus appeared first to a woman after his resurrection: John 20:14-16: Jesus obviously respected women, yet did not call any women to be Apostles... why? Because Jesus honored women within the context of the curse and punishment of Genesis, that the men would rule over them. The adjustment he makes is that he lifted their status to as equal a basis as possible, supplying them dignity but still honoring the "thus saith the LORD."

This adjustment was carried through in the early church as well: 1 Peter 3:1-5

Clothed with humility and Godly purpose: Titus 2:3-5:



Women's brains a ball of wire, *Men's & Women's Brains, markgunor.com*

- *Women's brains are made up of a big ball of wire. Everything is connected to everything! It's like the internet superhighway and it's all driven by energy we call emotion.*
- *It's one of the reasons why women tend to remember everything. If you take an event and you connect it to an emotion, it burns in your memory and you can remember it forever.*

1 Timothy 2:9-12: (NASB) ⁹Likewise, I want women to adorn themselves with proper clothing, modestly and discreetly, not with braided hair and gold or pearls or costly garments, ¹⁰but rather by means of good works, as is proper for women making a claim to godliness. ¹¹A woman must **quietly <2271>** receive instruction with entire **submissiveness <5292>**. ¹²But I do not allow a woman to teach or exercise authority over a man, but to remain **quiet <2271>**.

Another use: 2 Thessalonians 3:10-12: (ASV) ¹⁰For even when we were with you, this we commanded you, If any will not work, neither let him eat. ¹¹For we hear of some that walk among you disorderly, that work not at all, but are busybodies. ¹²Now them that are such we command and exhort in the Lord Jesus Christ, that with **quietness <2271>** they work, and eat their own bread.

This shows an important contrast in behavior - a humble one is becoming to Christianity.

1 Corinthians 14:31-35: (YLT) ³¹for ye are able, one by one, all to prophesy, that all may learn, and all may be exhorted, ³²and the spiritual gift of prophets to prophets are subject, ³³for God is not a God of tumult, but of peace, as in all the assemblies of the saints. ³⁴Your women in the assemblies let them be **silent**, for it hath not been permitted to them to speak, but to be subject, as also the law saith; ³⁵and if they wish to learn anything, at home their own husbands let them question, for it is a shame to women to speak in an assembly.

Your women/silence/shame for women to speak (Corinth was a Greek society. The treatment of women was different from the Hebrews and the Roman society. The Greek Christian women were incredibly disruptive. They didn't know how to behave in public.)

Christian women are supposed to be humble and submissive. They are not supposed to be taking authority over men, which means they should not teach in the church. Their role was different but just as important.

All other admonitions towards the behavior of women are general.



Romans 16:1-2: (NASB) ¹*I commend to you our sister Phoebe, who is a servant of the church which is at Cenchrea; ²that you receive her in the Lord in a manner worthy of the saints, and that you help her in whatever matter she may have need of you; for she herself has also been a helper of many, and of myself as well.*

Was Phoebe a teacher? A Deaconess? First to note is that the Apostle Paul speaks about her with incredible respect. She was entrusted with carrying the letters of the Gospel.

Next note that the word for *servant* did not necessarily imply a person elected to an office.

Servant: Strong's #1249: one who executes the commands of another, especially of a master, a servant, attendant, minister

Deacons/servants are rarely an appointed title, but more often cover a breadth of responsibility.

Here is another use of this word: 2 Corinthians 11:15: *Therefore it is no great thing if his **ministers** <1249> also be transformed as the **ministers** <1249> of righteousness; whose end shall be according to their works.*

This is talking about Satan's ministers. This is the same word used for Phoebe. It means that they follow after their master in a trustworthy way.

Phoebe was a valuable servant within the church and had a great contribution.



Book - She just wanted to preach, AllNationsInPraise.com

- *Right now God is calling for all of us to do the will of God. He said in Acts 2 that in the last day He will pour His spirit upon all flesh and your sons and daughters will prophesy, will preach. We are in that day. God is calling for you to step out by faith and do what He is calling for you to do.*

Acts 2:17-18: (NASB) ¹⁷*And it shall be in the last days, God says, That I will pour forth of My Spirit on all mankind; And your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, And your young men shall see visions, And your old men shall dream dreams; ¹⁸Even on My bondslaves, both men and women, I will in those days pour forth of My spirit and they shall prophesy.*

There is a difference between prophesying and teaching. The teaching role within the church is the role of authority. Prophesying is expounded on a point or two, but it is not the teaching role. Note, the timing - God's spirit has not poured out over all men, yet. This is future timing.

1 Timothy 3:1-2: Was this just the culture at the time? We don't believe so. We believe this was an admonition for Christians throughout the age. Of course God knew that women's rights would flourish in our time. He wanted it this way. This provides a picture of Christ and the church. The church is pictured as a bride. It is the application of this picture.

Surely women are capable of teaching and have great spiritual knowledge. But should they be teaching from the pulpit? According to the Scriptures, we do not believe so.

1 Timothy 3:8-11: There is equality of opportunity and difference in responsibility at the same time.

Philippians 4:1-3: There is equal opportunity for an equal reward! The followers of Christ are all precious in his site. Each member is so important. God designed the organization of the true church to be a certain way and we need to respect that.

Galatians 3:28-29: We all have the same opportunity and reward, just in different roles.

***So...does the Bible make women second-class citizens?
For Jonathan and Rick and Christian Questions...
Think about it...!***