

Women in the Church Assembly

Outline of I Cor. 14:34-35

Definitions of Greek Words:

- Kittel, Freidrick, ed., Bromiley, Translating ed., Theological Dictionary of the New Testament. Grand Rapids, Mich.: Wm B. Eerdmann's , 1967 – 1974
- Strong, James The New Strong's Exhaustive Concordance of the Bible. Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 1984.
- Vine, W.E. An Expository Dictionary of New Testament Words. Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 1985.

Context

v. 29-35 are all about prophecy that edifies under two headings

Heading 1 – v. 29-33 “Let the prophets speak two or three” Taking turns in humility.

After a 4 verse digression to elaborate on “Let the prophets speak two or three...” Paul resumes his teaching to elaborate on “let the others judge...”

Heading 2 – v. 34-35 “and let the others judge” Forbidding the public judging of prophecy.

- Paul is not starting an entirely new subject in v. 34.
- The connection between v. 29b (“let the others judge”) and v. 34-35 must not be lost.
- These verses are a practical demonstration of I Cor. 13:7, “love bears (*stego* = quietly protects by covering) all things”

Verse 34

Let your... Not in the Greek text, ignore it. Wrongly implies ownership.

- “your” = “you” women

women... *gune* can mean “wife” or “woman”

- Context identifies whether it means “woman” or “wife”.
- Context in v. 34-35 identifies *gune* as “wives”, not all women.

keep silence... *sigao* = “to keep secret; a voluntary refusal to speak; indisposition to speak” - Luke 9:36 - Peter, John and James

- Rom. 16:25 - God Himself

- Acts 12:17 and 15:12-13 church members

Sigao (a voluntary refusal to speak) is always voluntary and only under specific situations, for the sake of others.

- I Cor. 14:28 - speaking with tongues

14:30 – prophesying

- I Cor. 13:7 “love bears (*stego*) all things” “to cover with silence”

- James 5:20; I Pet. 4:8 “love covers (with silence) a multitude of sins.” (missing the mark; not having done what one ought to have done)

in the churches... *ekklesia* “called out” of their homes to meeting places; public assemblies. Not synagogue-style assembly.

for it is not permitted unto them... *epitrepo* “to give opportunity”

- Wives are not given the opportunity that others have, under certain, specific circumstances.

- Voluntary, no one can make them be silent. How would they do it?

to speak... *laleo* “to tell; to speak about something” (as opposed to silence)

- Never means chatter, babble or interrupt in the NT.

- What is that specific “something” that wives are not given opportunity to tell?

but they are commanded to be... Ignore “they are commanded”. It is not in the Greek text. - It is an irresponsible addition of words to the scriptures.

-It implies that speaking is a violation of the commandments of God or Paul.

If not God or Paul, who would be commanding them? What would they do to them?

The words that are left are “but to be”.

under obedience...

Hupotasso has been seriously damaged by both secular institutions and the church.

- *Hupo* has 17 Greek meanings.
- *Hupo* cannot mean “inferior”
 - Acts 1:14-15 ‘in one accord’
 - Gal. 3:26-28 “you are all one in Christ”
 - *hupo* = beneath the surface; behind the scenes; foundation
- *tasso* cannot mean forced subjugation
 - Eph. 5:21 “submitting (*hupotasso*) yourselves to one another in the fear of God”
 - I Pet. 5:5 “all of you be subject (*hupotasso*) one to another, and be clothed with humility”
 - Phil. 2:3 “let each esteem the other better than themselves”

hupo = “to take a strong position in support under”

tasso = “to organize and arrange details in an orderly manner”

Acts 13:48 – “as many as were ordained (*tasso*) to eternal life believed”

Matt. 28:16 – “the disciples...went away...into a mountain where Jesus had appointed (*tasso*) them.”

Wives are to be like “administrative managers” in their marriages to support their husband’s spiritual responsibilities.

- Eph.5:22-24; Col.3:18; Titus 1:3

Hupotasso = “readiness to renounce one’s own will in support of others”

- *Agape* love is the motivation for *hupotasso*.

as also saith the law.

No such “law” in the OT that says the women must be silent in the public assembly.

- Gen. 3:16 “rule over” is the consequences of sin working in Adam.
- Gen. 2:15 “Adam created first” Immature logic. “I was here first so you must do what I say”.

If a wife is to “take a strong position in support of” her husband (*hupotasso*) then Gen. 2:18 is the passage in the “law” that confirms it.

Gen.2:18 - “help meet” = *ayzer* = “one who rescues, surrounds and protects”

- God Himself is an *ayzer* (“help meet”) Deut. 33:26,29; Ps. 121:2; Ez. 12:14; Dan. 11:34

- The way she rescues, surrounds and protects her husband is by not “telling” what she knows of her husband’s short-comings.

- She has intimate knowledge of her husband’s strengths, weaknesses and sins.

- She may be embarrassed by her husband’s less-than-perfect speaking style.

- I Cor. 13:7 “Love bears (*stego* covers all things quietly) all things.”

This is not a suppression of the truth.

- This also applies to husbands concerning their wife’s prophecies. Eph. 5:21 and I Pet. 5:5

Verse 35

And if... in case...; supposing that... Voluntary. Her choice to investigate or not **if they will learn anything...** Does not say “...if they can learn anything...”

- “will” = *thelo* = “to desire; to intend”, “determination and purpose”. Strong word.

learn... Compare ICor. 14:35 with 14:29. “judge” and “learn”.

14:35 - learn = “to examine closely”; “to find out for oneself”; “to learn by inquiry”

14:29 – judge = “to carefully evaluate”; “to learn by discriminating”

Both have the same goal; to understand the true intent of the prophecy that was spoken.

anything... *ti* = “a certain thing” Not just “anything”.

Matt. 20:20 James’s and John’s mother desired “a certain thing” (*ti*)

Unfavorable interpretations of “anything”:

- Synagogue arrangement: fiction

- Women ignorant of everything; fiction

The evidence supports a Greek *ekklesea* arrangement because the congregation was predominantly Gentile.

What is that “certain thing”? A very specific thing.

let them ask... *eperotao* = “to interrogate or demand of a person”

“to investigate; to counter-question”

“the more intensive character of “asking”

Husbands may be reluctant to prophecy for fear of their wife’s evaluation.

- Wives, “Love and honor” are still required regardless of his short-comings.
- Husbands, be as lovely and as honorable as the Holy Spirit requires you to be.

their husbands... *aner* = “a man or a husband”

A wife is to ask only her own husband about his prophecies because he is the “expert” on what he has spoken.

A husband is to ask only his own wife about her prophecies because she is the “expert” on what she has spoken.

If she wants to ask about her husband’s prophecies, ask him. If she wants to ask about other people’s prophecies, ask them.

No other women are prohibited from verbally judging a man’s prophecies in the assembly.

at home... *oikos* = house/home/family

She does not “ask” her husband about his prophecies in the presence of their family, so *oikos* means house/home and could be any private setting out of sight and hearing of anyone else

for... *gar* “for this reason; because”

gar “signals a reason for what has preceded”

A good reason for what seems to be an unreasonable command.

Paul’s reason meets the criterion “let all things be done unto edification”. (v. 26)

it is a shame... *aischron* “in poor taste; inappropriate; that which is disgraceful in the judgment of other people”

Wives judging publicly is in poor taste and inappropriate in the judgment of other people.

I Cor. 10:32-33 “Give no offense...to the church of God...not seeking my own profit but the profit of the many.”

- She may be right, but she must pursue something greater than being right. “love covers/hides a multitude of sins” (James 5:20 and I Pet. 4:8) Sin = “not having done what one ought to have done”

By not speaking of that which her husband “ought to have done”, she is pursuing something greater than being “right”.

Wives, do not ‘throw your husband under the bus’.

Husbands, do not ‘throw your wife under the bus’ either. “Love covers a multitude of sins” applies to husbands as well.

Three reasons:

- She knows things that could easily hurt and embarrass him.
- Her frustrations or impatience concerning his delivery could be sensed by those who hear her.
- Even if supportive, she could be perceived as colluding with her husband for wrong motives.

Wives will be a “strong support under” (*hypotasso*) their husbands by being calmly silent about his prophecies while in public.

for women to speak... *laleo* “to tell; to speak of something”

She is not to publically “tell” of:

- his inconsistencies

I Pet. 3:1 Husbands who “obey not the word”

Wives win them “without a word” (calmly silent)

3:5 subjection = (*hupotasso*) “a strong support under” because they “trusted in God”.

3:6 Sarah as an example.

- His less-than-perfect speaking abilities.
- His passivity or stubbornness.

in the church. *ekklesia* “a calling out of”

Christians being “called out of” their homes to a place of assembly.

- Wives are prohibited from evaluating their husband’s prophecies in the public assembly and limited to evaluating their husband’s prophecies to a private place with him alone.