



The Value of Women

When God liberated the human race through the crucifixion and resurrection of Jesus the Christ, he did so without prejudice. All ethnicities, genders, and nationalities can avail themselves of the blood of Christ and join his body. Paul states *"There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is no male and female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus"* (Gal. 3:28 ESV).

Women played a key role in the ministry of Jesus, Mary Magdalene being the first person to see him resurrected (John 20:11-18). The gospel was spread through the help of Lydia (Acts 16:14-15) and Priscilla (Acts 18:26). The book of Proverbs shows us that the glory of men lies in the hands of women (Prov. 9:1-6; 31:10-31). Women are not second-class citizens in God's eyes.

Yet critics of the Bible, and even some who claim to be Christians, often state that the Bible encourages the suppression of women by not allowing them leadership roles in the church. Since our age is "more enlightened," we should "move forward" by having women take on the same roles as men. This, they declare, is a sign of true equality. But the assumption that equality of gender means embracing the same roles is invalid and unbiblical.

Different Role ≠ Different Value

Just because women are equal in their value before God (Gal. 3:28) doesn't mean that they serve in the same role as men. To ignore the distinction of gender roles is to ignore the functions God created from the beginning. It's often assumed that since women aren't in the same positions as men they are less valuable. While many people do erroneously hold to this view and reject women from certain positions as a statement of their value, this abuse shouldn't dictate our view of a woman's worth or function.

For example, tools are made to function for different tasks. There's not one tool that can fix all problems. Sometimes a hammer is needed, sometimes a wrench. Just because we don't use hammers to turn screws doesn't mean the hammer is less valuable. The hammer has great value when applied to its intended use. Likewise, women and men have different functions in God's creation. The idea that women should serve a different function than men doesn't degrade their value. In fact, it enhances their value.

Different Roles in the Church

Paul tells Timothy to *"Let a woman learn quietly with all submissiveness. I do not permit a woman to teach or to exercise authority over a man; rather, she is to remain quiet. For Adam was formed first, then Eve; and Adam was not deceived, but the woman was deceived and became a transgressor"* (1 Tim. 2:11-14).

This is not a statement about the value of women, but about their role in the church. The fact that Paul appeals to Adam and Eve means that he's appealing to the fundamental roles God has given men and women since creation. Eve was not deceived because she was less valuable than Adam, but because she was functioning in a way she wasn't designed to.

Paul commands the same thing to the Corinthian congregation: *"As in all the churches of the saints, the women should keep silent in the churches. For they are not permitted to speak, but should be in submission, as the Law also says. If there is anything they desire to learn, let them ask their husbands at home. For it is shameful for a woman to speak in church"* (1 Cor. 14:33-35).

Again, this is not a misogynistic statement, but a statement that respects the roles God created us for. Therefore, as those who believe in the authority of the apostles to speak God's word, we submit to this in our congregational practices. Women do not take a leading role in our public worship or adult Bible classes. We respect that God as our Creator knows what is best for us, and we praise him for the unique ways in which we can all show the glory of creation through the church.

"in the Lord woman is not independent of man nor man of woman; for as woman was made from man, so man is now born of woman. And all things are from God" (1 Cor. 11:11-12)

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