

In light of 1 Pet. 3:15 which says to give an answer to everyone for the faith that lies within you, I am asking that the Church to respond to the topic of why it allows female pastors and/or elders in light of what the Bible says.

1 Tim. 2:12-13 says, "*But I do not allow a woman to teach or exercise authority over a man, but remain quiet. 13 For it was Adam who was first created, and then Eve.*" First of all, Paul clearly states that he does not allow a woman to teach or exercise authority over a man – because Adam was created first. **Therefore, this is not a culture issue. It is doctrinal.**

Furthermore, in the next chapter, Paul instructs us in 1 Tim. 3:15 that he is teaching Christians how to conduct themselves in the Church, which means that Christians are obligated to follow what he is saying. It is not just Paul's "opinion". In the Church, when a woman is a pastor and/or elder, she is in a place of teaching authority over men and in violation of the command in 1 Tim. 2:12-13.

Second, note that Paul wants women to remain quiet. The Greek word used here is *hesuchia*, which means to "keep it down," to not be absolutely silent (*sigao*). Therefore, women are to remain quiet and not teach men in an authoritative context – which is exactly what being a pastor and preaching is about.

Titus 1:5-6 says, "*For this reason I left you in Crete, that you might set in order what remains, and appoint elders in every city as I directed you, 6 namely, if any man be above reproach, the husband of one wife, having children who believe, not accused of dissipation or rebellion.*" The phrase "the husband of one wife," in Greek is literally "man of one woman." This same phrase is used of the Bishop in 1 Tim. 3:2 and the deacon in 1 Tim. 3:12. Remember, Paul is speaking of church officers, not those who serve (*diakonos*) in homes (Rom. 16:1,27). A female elder and/or pastor cannot meet this requirement of being a "man of one woman." Remember, this is not a culturally-based issue in light of what Paul said in 1 Tim. 2:13, "*For it was Adam who was created first.*" Finally, bibles generally translate "man of one woman" as "husband of one wife" because the context is dealing with family (i.e., children, v. 6).

1 Tim. 5:17 says, "Let the elders who rule well be considered worthy of double honor, especially those who work hard at preaching and teaching." This tells us that the elders are to receive honor, especially those who preach and teach. Therefore, in the Church, the preacher, the pastor, is an elder by definition – who is supposed to be a "man of one woman." According to Scripture, this cannot be a woman. Whether anyone likes it or not is irrelevant. What does God's word SAY?

Objections Answered - briefly

Gal. 3:28 says, "*There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free man, there is neither male nor female; for you are all one in Christ Jesus.*" This verse is not about women pastors and elders. It is speaking about salvation. Those who are "in Christ" are saved (Rom. 6:11; 8:1).

Deborah (Judges 4,5) was an Old Testament Judge, not a New Testament elder/pastor in the Church. **Prophecy women** (Acts 21:8,9) are not elders/pastors. **Priscilla** (Rom. 16:3,4), a fellow worker in Christ is not said to be an elder/pastor. **Phoebe** (Rom. 16:1) is a servant (*diakonos*) of the Church, not an elder/pastor. Note that Jesus came not to be served, but to serve (*diakonos*), (Mark 10:45). The government is called a minister (*diakonos*) of God (Rom. 13:4). **Junia** (Rom. 16:7, see www.carm.org/junia) may have been a female apostle (not one of the 12), though this is debated. There were different kinds of apostles. Jesus is called an apostle in Heb. 3:1. Some apostles had the authority to write Scripture, and others did not. Still, even if Junia were an apostle, they are not for today since one of the qualifications of being an apostle is having seen the risen Lord (1 Cor. 9:1). The **Chosen Lady** of 2 John 1 is an honored woman, not a pastor/elder.

What about a woman who says she is called by God to minister? Women ministering are fine – to other women (Titus 2:3-4). But, they are not to be in places of teaching authority over men in

the Church, as the Bible clearly states in 1 Tim. 2:12-13; 3:15. Still, some say that it is okay for women to be pastors and elders because they claim to be called by God and also show fruit of that calling. So what? Having ability doesn't equal calling. **First** of all, the teaching contradicts God's word. God will not call a woman to teach and exercise authority over men – in the Church -- when He has taught otherwise (1 Tim. 2:12-13; 3:15). Remember, he says the elder (pastor/teacher per 1 Tim. 5:17) is to be a MAN of one woman! (Titus 1:6, "husband of one wife" is literally "man of one woman"). **Second**, appealing to a "calling" and manifested "fruit" is equivalent to making doctrine based on experience. Since when does experience dictate biblical truth? All "feelings" and "callings" and "experiences" must be submitted to Scripture, not Scripture to your "feelings" and "callings" and "experiences"! Otherwise, you will end up in error (See 2 Thess. 2:3). Again, how can a woman be in a place of authority as a pastor/elder in the Church and not violate the non-cultural command of 1 Tim. 2:12-13 where Paul clearly says he does *"not allow a woman to teach or exercise authority over a man...for it was Adam who was created first, then Eve"*? She cannot! Remember, Paul says it is because of the created order of Adam before Eve – before there was any culture. Again, he is giving instruction to the Christian Church on how it is to operate (1 Tim. 3:15)! Furthermore, it doesn't matter if a woman pastor and/or elder are under the authority of their husbands who might be a pastor or even some other male pastor when she "preaches" and "teaches". She is still in a place of teach authority over men in the Church which, again, contradicts what Paul clearly teaches in 1 Tim. 2:12-13. Think about it. What does the Bible say? **Third**, people often cite other verses out of context and in opposition to 1 Tim. 2:12-13 and Titus 1:5-7 and thereby set Scripture against itself. The result is getting 1 Tim. 2:12-13 to say the opposite of what it actually says. Essentially, they use other scriptures to justify a change of the meaning of the text from *"I do **not** allow a woman to teach or exercise authority over a man..."* to, *"I **do** allow a woman to teach or exercise authority over a man..."* Why do people do this? Is it for political correctness, feelings, or a push for equality? Who knows? But it is sinful when it contradicts God's word. Christians need to believe God's word and not put their personal preferences, sensibilities, and indoctrination from the world before it. Don't be politically correct; be biblically correct.

If the Christian Church does not adhere to God's word, then apostasy is guaranteed. **A little leaven eventually leavens the whole lump** (Gal. 5:9).

In light of what the Bible says, we ask that Christians check the verses for themselves. Examine the context, examine God's word: *"...examine everything carefully; hold fast to that which is good,"* (1 Thess. 5:21). Be like the Bereans who checked even what the Apostle Paul taught with Scripture, and Paul praised them for it (Acts 17:11). Christians are not to abdicate their responsibility of examining God's word so they can comfortably sit under the teaching of someone who "makes sense" and does the spiritual homework for them. Don't put your affections and appreciations for a woman pastor or elder above God's word – no matter how great you think she is. And finally, pray for your pastor that he might stand on the word of God even if it means he stands alone!

Do we follow Scripture or culture?