

# 23—Women in Ministry

“What We Believe”

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“The Great Commission calls for all the people of God, His sons and daughters, to engage the harvest using whatever gifts He has entrusted to them. Since women are redeemed, anointed, gifted, called, and loved by God in exactly the same way as men, we categorically affirm that they should be fully released to exercise their gifts for every facet of ministry in His church. Anyone called by God and verified through character, spiritual experience and preparation for service or leadership, is qualified for Foursquare Church ministry in any role or office, regardless of gender, age, or ethnicity.”—2005 Foursquare Position Statement

## 1. God called women to lead and prophesy from times of old.

- A. “Villagers in Israel would not fight; they held back until I, Deborah, arose, until I arose, a *mother* in Israel.” (Judges 5:7); Now Deborah, a *prophet*, the wife of Lappidoth, was *leading* Israel at that time. (Judges 4:4)
- B. “I sent Moses to *lead* you, also Aaron and Miriam.” (Micah 6:4); Then Miriam the *prophet*, Aaron’s sister, took a timbrel in her hand, and all the women followed her, with timbrels and dancing. (Exodus 15:20-21);
- C. They made the bronze basin and its bronze stand from the mirrors of the *women* who served at the entrance to the tent of meeting. (Exodus 38:8)
- D. Then I went to the *prophetess*, and she conceived and gave birth to a son. (Isaiah 8:3)
- E. Hilkiyah the priest, Ahikam, Akbor, Shaphan and Asaiah went to speak to the *prophet* Huldah . . . She said to them, “This is what the Lord, the God of Israel, says.” (2 Kings 22:14-15)
- F. So Queen Esther, daughter of Abihail, along with Mordecai the Jew, wrote with *full authority* to confirm this second letter concerning Purim. (Esther 9:29)
- G. And God gave to Heman fourteen sons and three *daughters*. All these were under the hands of their father for song in the house of the Lord, with cymbals, psalteries, and harps, for the service of the house of God, according to the king's order to Asaph, Jeduthun, and Heman. (1 Chronicles 25:5-6, KJV)
- H. Besides their 7,337 menservants and maidservants; and they also had 200 men and women singers. (Ezra 2:65)

2. **Joel's prophecy was confirmed by Peter on the Day of Pentecost.**
  - A. Then Peter stood up with the Eleven, raised his voice and addressed the crowd . . . "This is what was spoken by the prophet Joel." (Acts 2:14-16)
  - B. "And afterward, I will pour out my Spirit on all people. Your sons *and daughters* will *prophesy*, your old men will dream dreams, your young men will see visions. Even on my servants, both men *and women*, I will pour out my Spirit in those days." (Joel 2:28-29)
  
3. **Paul occasionally addressed the cultural conflicts of his day.**
  - A. Every man who prays or prophesies with his head covered dishonors his head. But every *woman who prays or prophesies* with her head uncovered dishonors her head—it is the same as having her head shaved. (1 Corinthians 11:4-6); Judge for yourselves: Is it proper for a woman to pray to God with her head uncovered? (1 Corinthians 11:13); If anyone wants to be contentious about this, we have no other *practice*—nor do the churches of God. (1 Corinthians 11:16)
  - B. Teach slaves to be subject to their masters in everything, to try to please them, not to talk back to them. (Titus 2:9)
  - C. Women should remain silent<sup>1</sup> in the churches. They are not allowed to speak, but must be in submission, as the law says. If they want to inquire about something, they should ask their own husbands at home; for it is disgraceful for a woman to speak in the church. (1 Corinthians 14:34-35)
    - 1) *sigáo*—keep silent, keep secret, hold peace
  - D. Have nothing to do with godless myths and old wives' tales; rather, train yourself to be godly. (1 Timothy 4:7-8); They are the kind who worm their way into homes and gain control over gullible women, who are loaded down with sins and are swayed by all kinds of evil desires. (2 Timothy 3:6)
  - E. A woman should learn in quietness<sup>1</sup> and full submission<sup>2</sup>. I do not permit a woman to teach or to assume authority<sup>3</sup> over a man; she must be quiet. (1 Timothy 2:11-12)
    - 1) *hesuchía*—seated, calm, peaceable
    - 2) *hupotagé*—subjection as a student
    - 3) *authentéo*—usurp authority, act of oneself (*autós*)
  
4. **Paul also exhorted the church to be egalitarian and respectful.**
  - A. So in Christ Jesus you are all children of God through faith, for all of you who were baptized into Christ have clothed yourselves with Christ. There is neither Jew nor Gentile, neither slave nor free, nor is there *male* and *female*, for you are all one in Christ Jesus. (Galatians 3:26-28)
  - B. Husbands, in the same way be considerate as you live with your wives, and treat them with respect as the weaker partner and as *heirs with you* of the gracious gift of life, so that nothing will hinder your prayers. (1 Pet 3:7)

## 5. Women continued to lead and prophesy in the early church.

- A. There was also a *prophet*, Anna, the daughter of Penuel, of the tribe of Asher. (Luke 2:36)
- B. Philip the evangelist, one of the Seven. He had four unmarried daughters who *prophesied*. (Acts 21:8)
- C. Give my greetings to the brothers and sisters at Laodicea, and to *Nympha* and the church in her house. (Colossians 4:15)
- D. I commend to you our sister Phoebe, a deacon<sup>1</sup> of the church in Cenchreae. I ask you to receive<sup>2</sup> her in the Lord in a way worthy of his people and to give her any help<sup>3</sup> she may need from you, for she has been the benefactor<sup>4</sup> of many people, including me. (Romans 16:1-2)
  - 1) *diákonos*—deacon, minister, servant
  - 2) *prosdéchomai*—receive, accept, give access
  - 3) *parístemi*—stand beside, assist, aid
  - 4) *prostátis*—female leader, ruler, manager, presider
- E. We have different gifts, according to the grace given to each of us. If your gift is *prophesying*, then prophesy in accordance with your faith; if it is serving, then serve; if it is *teaching*, then teach; if it is to encourage, then give encouragement; if it is giving, then give generously; if it is to lead, do it diligently. (Romans 12:6-8)
- F. Greet *Priscilla* and Aquila, my *co-workers* in Christ Jesus . . . Greet also the church that meets at their house. (Romans 16:3-5); When *Priscilla* and Aquila heard him (Apollos), they invited him to their home and *explained* to him the way of God more adequately. (Acts 18:26)
- G. Greet *Mary*, who worked very hard for you. Greet Andronicus and *Junia*, my fellow Jews who have been in prison with me. They are outstanding among the *apostles*, and they were in Christ before I was. (Romans 16:6-7)
- H. Greet *Tryphena* and *Tryphosa*, those women who work hard in the Lord. Greet my dear friend *Persis*, another woman who has worked very hard in the Lord. Greet Rufus, chosen in the Lord, and his *mother*, who has been a mother to me, too. Greet Asyncritus, Phlegon, Hermes, Patrobas, Hermas and the other brothers and sisters with them. Greet Philologus, *Julia*, Nereus and his *sister*, and Olympas and all the Lord's people who are with them. (Romans 16:12-15)
- I. Yes, and I ask you, my true companion, help these *women* since they have contended *at my side* in the cause of the gospel, along with Clement and the rest of my *co-workers*, whose names are in the book of life. (Philippians 4:3)