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WHAT ARE WE PREACHING TODAY?

By Jared Williams

The Bible is full of examples of men who taught God's word as it was given to them. On the other hand, there are examples of those who evidently felt that change, addition or subtraction was necessary. Perhaps too many have overlooked what Paul said to the churches of Galatia, "I marvel that ye are so soon removed from him that called you into the grace of Christ unto another gospel: which is not another; but there be some that trouble you and would pervert the gospel of Christ. **BUT THOUGH WE, OR AN ANGEL FROM HEAVEN, PREACH ANY OTHER GOSPEL UNTO YOU THAN THAT WHICH WE HAVE PREACHED UNTO YOU, LET HIM BE ACCURSED**" (Galatians 1:6-8). The great apostle Paul was a gospel preacher, he preached the gospel of Christ to the Galatians and as a result many became Christians (Galatians 1:19-23). However, it wasn't long until some felt that portions of the Mosaic law should be added to the gospel of Christ. The Judazing teachers were successful with their additions. Paul said, "Christ is become of no effect unto you, whosoever of you are justified by the law: ye are fallen from grace" (Galatians 5:4). Some who became Christians were led astray by false teaching. They turned their backs on the grace of Christ for the ceremonies of the Mosaic law. Their souls were in danger because of these false teachers. Now, who is willing to say it doesn't matter what is preached in the pulpit? Who can truthfully say it doesn't matter what is received in the name of Christianity? Have we already forgot what Paul said? "But though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be **ACCURSED**." We want to notice some things Paul says about preaching the gospel of Christ.

1. Paul said, ". . . preach any other gospel unto you than that which WE (apostles) (insert mine, J.W.) have preached unto you . . ." (v.8). Of this gospel he

further stated, "but I certify you, brethren that the gospel which was preached of **ME IS NOT AFTER MEN**. For I neither received it of men, neither was I taught it, but by the **REVELATION OF JESUS CHRIST**" (Galatians 1:11, 12). Paul says the gospel he preached is authoritative, he received it from Christ. That means he had no right to change any of it, that means no one today has any right to change it. We are dealing with Heaven's message. The gospel of Christ is the good message, the glad tidings of the Kingdom of God and Salvation through Christ. One can enjoy God's blessing as a result of hearing, believing and obeying the steps of salvation. (Acts 2:37-48). As a Christian one can enjoy citizenship, fellowship and hope by abiding in the gospel of Christ (Ephesians 2:12-22; John 15:1-10). If you are saved of past sins, if you are saved in heaven at last, it will be because you have heard and obeying **THE GOSPEL OF CHRIST** and not a perverted gospel.

2. Paul speaks of "any other gospel" (Gal. 1:9) This tells us there are other gospels. Of course, there is only one true message from God (Ephesians 4:5). But there have always been those who claimed to be true prophets, yet are found to be liars (Revelations 2:2). The Bible teaches Satan has his preachers who are deceitful workers, who transform themselves into ministers of righteousness (II Corinthians 11:12-15).

What are some of these other gospels? Perhaps one of the most comforting doctrines of man is salvation by faith only. I have not found such a doctrine in the gospel of Christ. On the contrary, James says, "Ye see then how that by works a man in justified, **AND NOT BY FAITH ONLY?**" (James 2:24) Works here refers to obedience to the commandments of the Lord. This is clear as the writer uses Abraham and Rahab as examples of those who were justified by works. Those who have faith only, have a dead faith and a dead

faith cannot save (James 2:26). Do you want to place your soul in the hands of those who preach, "just believe on the Lord Jesus or just accept Him as your personal Savior?" Do you realize that when you follow this course, you are no better off than the devils? Again, James said, ". . . the devils also believe and tremble" (James 2:19). If belief is all it takes to be saved, then the devils are saved. Surely, you are not ready to receive such a doctrine as this.

"Another gospel" is praying through for salvation or to receive the baptism of the Holy Ghost. Some preachers in the religious world, after preaching their sermon give the altar call, that is, invite those in the assembly to come to the altar and pray through or pray for the baptism of the Holy Ghost. We do not deny the power of prayer; and the Bible gives a full detail of prayer. Abraham, Moses, David, Elias, Hannah, Isaiah, Nehemiah and others were people of the Old Testament who prayed much. However, none of these used prayer as a means to replace obedience to God. Jesus prayed to the Father; but where is the example that He "prayed through" or used prayer to replace doing the Father's will? Paul was a praying man. In (Acts 9:11) Paul had been praying for three days. Yet, Anaias was sent to him to tell him what to do to be saved (Acts 9:18). Again, when he rehearsed his conversion to the Jews in the temple he said he was baptized to wash away sins (Acts 22:16). Cornelius was a devout man, one that feared God, he gave alms to the people, **AND PRAYED TO GOD ALWAYS** (Acts 10:2). Yet, Peter was sent to him to tell him what to do to be saved (Acts 10:32, 47, 48). The truth is, no one in the New Testament was told by the Lord, the apostles or anyone who preached the gospel of Christ to pray through. This is "another gospel". Prayer is a privilege for one who is obedient to the Father's will and is not a substitute for obedience to the plan of salvation (John 9:31; James 5:16). One who has not obeyed the plan of salvation, that is, believed (John 8:24), repented (Luke 13:3), confessed that Christ is the Son of God (Matthew 10:32), and been baptized for the remission of sins (Acts 2:38; 22:16) can pray from now to eternity and will be lost. You must obey (Matthew 7:21; Hebrews 5:9) to become a Christ, not pray through. (continued on page 2)

FULTON COUNTY GOSPEL NEWS

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WHAT ARE WE . . . ?

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Another way to avoid preaching the gospel of Christ is "story telling." I receive letters telling how some of our brethren are more interested in telling stories, not related to the Grand Old Story, than preaching the Bible. There is nothing wrong with using an illustration occasionally, but when we have more story telling than Bible preaching we have forsaken the gospel of Christ. We need to develop Paul's attitude. He said, "And I, brethren, when I came to you, came not with excellency of speech or of wisdom, declaring unto you the testimony of God. For I determined not to know any thing among you, save Jesus Christ, and him crucified" (I Corinthians 2:1,2). Those who feel "story telling" is the way to go need to read and study (I Timothy 1:4; 4:7). Let us not be guilty of perverting the gospel of Christ. Let's not be guilty of substituting "STORIES" for the plan gospel of Christ.

"Another gospel" is that one can be saved outside the church of Christ. The good and honest Bible student knows that redemption is IN CHRIST (Ephesians 1:7), which is IN THE CHURCH, which is HIS BODY (I Corinthians 1:1,2; Ephesians 1:22,23). When you are scripturally baptized you are baptized INTO THE ONE BODY OF CHRIST (I Corinthians 12:13). This is what the gospel of Christ teaches. A perverted gospel teaches the church nor baptism has anything to do with salvation.

A perverted gospel will cost you your soul. God has given us the one gospel of Christ and He accepts no substitutes. Are you hearing and believing "another gospel?"



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CONGREGATIONS**

- Agnos Church of Christ 15.00
- Garfield Church of Christ 25.00
- Sitka Church of Christ 20.00
- Dellhalf Church of Christ 20.00
- Banner Church of Christ 30.00
- Church of Christ 10.00
(Elizabeth, AR)
- Gamaliel Church of Christ 10.00
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- Pilot Church of Christ 20.00
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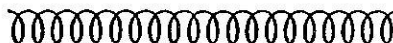
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We thank all for your good support and kind comments.

**SIN WOULD HAVE FEW TAKERS
IF THE CONSEQUENCES
OCCURED IMMEDIATELY.**

**STRONG MEDICINE AND
STRONG SERMONS MAY BE
EASIER TO TAKE IF THEY ARE
WATERED DOWN -- AND DO
LESS GOOD!**

**A WELFARE STATE IS ONE RUN
FOR THE BENEFIT OF EVERY-
ONE BUT THE TAXPAYER.**



**THE ROLE OF
WOMEN IN
PUBLIC WORSHIP
1 Timothy 2**

By Larry D. Mathis

Over the past few years we have witnessed a growing interest relative to a woman's role in society and in religion. To be more specific, an interest in the role of females in public worship. While, no doubt, some of this is the result of a healthy desire to know what the Scriptures teach, we suspect that part of the interest has been generated by the Women's Liberation Movement.

Recently we read that some eighty or more Protestant groups, around the world, are "ordaining" women. We are made to wonder what influence all of this will have on our people. Will the pressure be applied for us to conform? Will we, in the near future, hear demands to allow women to fill our pulpits; to be appointed to serve as elders and deacons?

It is disturbing to occasionally hear members of the church express the view that they see nothing wrong with a female leading singing, leading prayers, waiting on the Lord's Table, or teaching Bible classes where both men and women are present.

Historically, our brethren have honored the Bible relative to a woman's role in public worship. Will it continue? We would certainly like to think so but obviously we do not know. Here is one area that presently needs attention. Therefore, we must teach, pray, and hope that our people will continue to respect and obey God's word in this matter.

FEMALE TEACHERS NEEDED

The first century church of Christ needed (and had) female teachers and the twentieth century church of Christ needs (and has) female teachers. One striking difference to be seen is that back then some sisters evidently possessed miraculous gifts of the Holy Spirit (at least the gift of prophecy), and none of our women possess miraculous gifts today to assist them in teaching God's word.

Hundreds of years before the New Testament church was established the prophet said, "YOUR DAUGHTERS SHALL PROPHECY . . . AND UPON THE HANDMAIDS IN THOSE DAYS WILL I POUR OUT MY SPIRIT" (Joel 2:28,29). The apostle Peter quoted Joel's prophecy and

applied its beginning to the great day of Pentecost (Acts 2:16-21). This is significant for prophecy was one of the miraculous gifts of the Spirit (1 Corinthians 12:8-10). The gift of prophecy was given for the purpose of edifying, exhorting, and consoling people (1 Corinthians 14:3). To "edify" means to build one up in knowledge, to teach. So, God qualified certain females in the first century to teach his word to others.

We must bear in mind the fact that in that age miraculous gifts were absolutely essential to the spread of the gospel of Christ. At first, there was no written New Testament to guide teachers of the word (whether males or females). Since prophecy was primarily a teaching gift (it did not always have reference to predicting the future), men and women alike needed it in order to accurately teach the will of God to others.

Luke informs us that Philip the evangelist "had four daughters, virgins WHICH DID PROPHECY" (Acts 21:8-9). And, we learn from Paul that certain females in the church at Corinth also possessed this gift (1 Corinthians 11:5). Inasmuch as all spiritual gifts were bestowed through the "laying on of apostles' hands" (Acts 8:14-19; 2 Timothy 1:6), we conclude that the Lord approved of female teachers in the first century church. The New Testament very plainly says that God set teachers in the church (1 Corinthians 12:28). And, since women are commanded to teach it follows that women were set in the church, by God Almighty, as teachers of the gospel. And, obviously, they were fully equipped for their task by the Holy Spirit (even in the absence of the written New Testament).

There was (and is) definitely a place for women teachers in the Lord's church. We learn from the New Testament that women, in some capacity, labored in mission work with the Apostle Paul, "in the gospel" (Philippians 4:3). Evidently, this was a teaching role. Females were authorized to teach children (2 Timothy 1:5-6; 3:15); other females (Titus 2:3-4); and a woman could assist a man in "expounding" the Scriptures to a man, as in the case of Priscilla and Aquilla teaching Apollos (Acts 18:26). While it is the case that women were fellow-laborers in the gospel, and had teaching roles, and even the gift of prophecy, we must never assume nor conclude that they could teach anywhere Paul was authorized to teach! Their work was limited to such places and situations as would not cause them to exercise dominion over man. One thing we are absolutely sure of -- **WOMEN WERE NOT AUTHORIZED BY GOD TO TAKE A LEADING ROLE IN WORSHIP, IN A MIXED ASSEMBLY, WHERE BOTH**

MALES AND FEMALES WERE PRESENT. This will be seen from our discussion of 1 Timothy 2.

1 TIMOTHY CHAPTER TWO DEALS WITH PUBLIC WORSHIP

That this chapter concerns the worship assembly and the conduct of both males and females in the assembly is beyond dispute. This is easily seen from the following:

(1) Paul states his purpose for writing this epistle -- it concerned proper Christian conduct or behavior in the church (1 Timothy 3:14-15).

(2) In 1 Timothy 2, Paul begins by mentioning all types of prayers for all men. As an inspired apostle of Christ, Paul addressed the church at Ephesus, through their evangelist Timothy, to pray for all men (1 Timothy 2:7; 1:2-3; 2 Timothy 4:5; 1 Timothy 2:1-3).

(3) Carefully observe that in 1 Timothy 2, "prayer" (verses 1,2,8) and "teaching" (verses 11,12) are the primary topics.

(4) This context plainly shows that a GATHERING where males and females would both be present is under consideration (verses 8, 11, 12).

(5) There is a contrast between men and women in verses 8-15.

(6) In such a gathering "men" (males) are to "pray" (2:8), and "teach" (2:12).

(7) In such a gathering "women" (females) are to "listen quietly" and "learn" (2:11).

(8) In a mixed religious assembly women (females) are to learn from men, not teach them (2:11-12).

(9) In a mixed religious assembly women (females) are to be in a role of subjection not authority or dominion (2:11-12).

(10) "Subjection" (submission) is a key word (2:11). It means "to rank under." Females are to "rank under" man in a leadership role and not "teach over the man" having dominion over him.

(11) Paul states that woman will be saved working in the domestic sphere and not as a public leader or teacher in worship (2:15).

THE ROLE OF MALES IN WORSHIP

Here is a most significant point -- Paul, through inspiration, used two different

Greek words for "men" in 1 Timothy chapter two. This must not go unnoticed.

In 2:1, Paul said to pray for all "men". The word "men" comes from the Greek word "anthropos" and simply means mankind; it is used generally of a human being, male and female, without reference to sex or nationality. This word includes both sexes.

However, in 2:8, Paul uses another Greek word for "men" (andras), which specifically means the "male" of the species. This word is never used of the female sex, and it stands in distinction from a woman (Acts 8:12).

The point is this, prayer is to be made for all "men" (mankind), but in an assembly where both men and women are present the males (only) are to do the praying -- that is, the males only are authorized to take the lead.

This context (chapter 2), shows that the right of offering up or leading public prayer and teaching in worship pertains to the male members of the church. Furthermore, according to Paul, all male members of the congregation have an equal right to officiate in this capacity (obviously if they are able, capable and qualified to do so), and are expected to exercise this right.

When Paul says, "in every place," he simply means that public worship is not limited to any one geographical location. Wherever saints assemble males are to take the lead, not females.

THE ROLE OF FEMALES IN WORSHIP

We deem it necessary to press the point that Paul writes with all of the authority of an apostle of Christ (1 Timothy 2:7). He wrote the commandments of the Lord (1 Corinthians 14:37). Therefore, what he writes, in this epistle, has nothing to do with his own personal preferences but is inspired truth. In view of this observe the contrast between the roles of males and females in worship:

In 2:8, he commands, "I will therefore that men"

In 2:12, he commands, "But I suffer not a woman to"

When Paul says that he "suffers not a woman to teach" he has reference to the gospel and not to secular studies. He means that a female is not to deliver a didactic discourse in a mixed assembly. Paul absolutely forbids females to preach God's word under such circumstances.

(continued on page four)

THE ROLE OF WOMEN . . .

(continued from page three)

Preaching, by its very nature is an authoritative function. Preachers are to preach, speaking as the oracles of God (1 Peter 4:11), reproving, rebuking, and exhorting (2 Timothy 4:2), with "ALL AUTHORITY" (Titus 2:15). This is the very thing that a woman is forbidden to do! She must not exercise authority or dominion over the man (1 Timothy 2:9-11). Therefore, a female cannot publicly preach and at the same time be pleasing to God.

WHAT IF THE WOMAN IS GIVEN PERMISSION BY MALES?

Someone is bound to ask, "But, what if the male gives the female permission to preach, to pray, to lead singing, or to officiate at the Lord's Table?" "Suppose an elder or the woman's husband authorizes her to take a leading role in worship when males are present?" First, we must realize that God does not give her permission even if men do. Second, no male (not even her own husband), has a right to ask any female to do anything that is contrary to the law of God. Third, no male has the right to place any female in a situation in which she would even come close to exercising dominion over a man. Fourth, no female can step into the place of a male without violating the very word of God she would try to teach.

CONCLUSION

It is our deep conviction that females are most important as teachers of the gospel and we have the highest regard for sisters in the Lord. And that, we need faithful, dedicated, godly and true teachers of the word. Females may scripturally share in this great work. However, they must not take the leading role in any religious gathering when males are present. In other words, men, not women, are to take the lead.

It is not a matter of what we "think" or what we "want" or "like" or "we can't see anything wrong with it." The issue is - what has God said about it? (cf. Isaiah 55:8-9).

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IT IS BETTER TO OFFER A HAND
THAN TO POINT A FINGER



THE CHURCH OF CHRIST

1. The Bible is its only guide (Romans 1:16; I Thess. 2:13).
2. Wears a Biblical Name (Romans 16:16).
3. Established at the right place (Isaiah 2:2, 3; Acts 2).
4. Established at the right time (Joel 2:28-32; Acts 2).
5. Established on the right person (Matthew 16:18; Acts 2:36).
6. Saved are in it (Ephesians 5:23; Acts 2:47).
7. Its members are enrolled in heaven (Hebrews 12:23).
8. Membership in it is obtained by obedience to God's commands including baptism (Acts 2:41-47; I Corinthians 12:13).

GOD'S PLAN OF SALVATION

1. Hearing the word of God (Romans 10:17; Acts 16:32).
2. Believing what is taught (Mark 16:16; Hebrews 11:6).
3. Repentance (Acts 2:38; Luke 13:3; Acts 17:30).
4. Confession (Romans 10:9, 10; Acts 8:37).
5. Baptism (Acts 2:38; Mark 16:16; I Peter 3:21; Romans 6:3, 4).
6. After the above five steps, faithful Christian Living (I Peter 2:11, 12; Revelation 2:10).

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