

Women Teaching Over Men

If a woman can teach God's Word is a question that seems to never to be answered by man or woman. The answer is in the word of God and it is there that we must look to learn what God has commanded, not what is desired by people.

In Genesis 2:20-22 it says ²⁰ So the man gave names to all the livestock, the birds of the air and all the beasts of the field. But for Adam no suitable helper was found. ²¹ So the LORD God caused the man to fall into a deep sleep; and while he was sleeping, he took one of the man's ribs and closed up the place with flesh. ²² Then the LORD God made a woman from the rib he had taken out of the man, and he brought her to the man. (NIV) We are taught that Eve (woman) was created to be a helper to Adam (man). A helper does not lead or dominate. In the new covenant of God this is discussed further in 1 Timothy 2:12-14, ¹² But I permit not a woman to teach, nor to have dominion over a man, but to be in quietness. ¹³ For Adam was first formed, then Eve; ¹⁴ and Adam was not beguiled, but the woman being beguiled hath fallen into transgression: (ASV) Thus you can see that a woman is not to direct a discussion of God's word and in this way dominate over the man. She is not to lead the teaching of God's word having dominion over a man. She is not to dominate (usurp authority over) a man who is teaching the word of God. She is to participate with a gentle (quiet) attitude. Therefore a woman cannot, according to the word of God, teach or preach in a situation where she would be in charge of, leading, or teaching where men are present. For example to preach from a pulpit when men are present is to dominate. If she would be in charge of directing a discussion (teaching a Bible class) where men are present then she would be dominating over men.

However, the next question that is frequently asked is: Can a woman teach God's word at all? We must let the word of God show us what He has commanded. First, all are commanded to teach and pass on what they have received. 2 Timothy 2:2 ² And the things that you have heard from me among many witnesses, commit these to faithful men who will be able to teach others also. (NKJV) The Greek word used here for men is "anthropos" which means a human being or person. Therefore women are commanded to teach here as well as men.

There are a number of examples of women teachers in the New Testament.

Romans 16:1-2 Phebe was a helper to Paul.

Romans 16:6 Mary who labored with Paul

Romans 16:12 Tryphena and Tryphosa who labored in the Lord.

Philippians 4:2-3 Eudodias and Syntyche who labored with Paul in the gospel.

2 John 4 The lady who taught her children to walk in truth.

Another command is in Titus 2:3-4 ³ the older women likewise, that they be reverent in behavior, not slanderers, not given to much wine, teachers of good things -- ⁴ that they admonish the young women to love their husbands, to love their children, (NKJV) Thus the older woman is to teach the younger their responsibility to their husband and children.

2 Timothy 3:16-17 says ¹⁶ All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, ¹⁷ that the man of God may be complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work. (NKJV) God's will has been revealed to us and we are not to add to or take from it. Galatians 1:8-9 teaches ⁸ But even if we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel to you than what we have preached to you, let him be accursed. ⁹ As we have said before, so now I say again, if anyone preaches any other gospel to you than what you have received, let him be accursed. (NKJV) So why would any one want to teach something that is not in the Bible. God has given the responsibility to men to lead in public teaching and it is a sin for the man to neglect this responsibility as much as it is a sin for women to lead in public teaching.