ORDER IN THE CHURCH!

I Corinthians 14:23-40
1-7-2024

Introduction: v.33, 40

*** We must always maintain God's order in the Church assembly!**

How does God expect a church service to function?

I. God expects a church to deliver...
An <u>UNDERSTANDABLE MESSAGE</u> (v.23-25)
(Not Madness & Chaos)

II. God expects a church to tailor all activity to...
An <u>EDIFYING MINISTRY</u> (v.26)
(Not show-offs or self-entertainment)

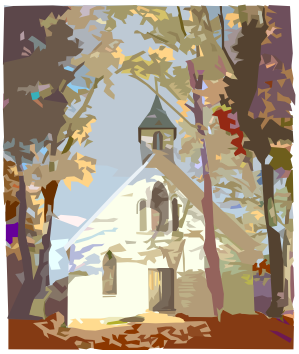
III. God expects a church to follow...
An <u>ORDERLY METHODOLOGY</u> (v.27-33)
(Not commotion & confusion)

IV. God expects a church to submit to...
<u>MALE LEADERSHIP</u> (v.34-35)
(Not women pastors)

Conclusion: v.36-40

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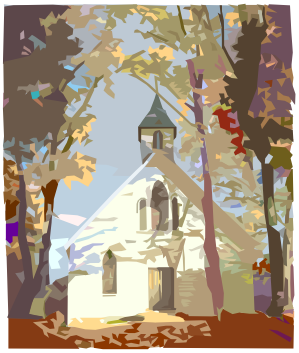
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ORDER IN THE CHURCH!

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1-14-2024 *(Part 2)*



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Note four Bible principles establishing <u>male leadership</u> in the church assembly.

A. **The distinct _____ in the family illustrate God's intention for male leadership** (both in domestic and ecclesiastical relationships)
I Cor. 11:3; Eph. 5:22-25; Col. 3:18-19

B. **The _____ of the pastor** (*"bishop"* = overseer) **demands male leadership in the church** I Timothy 3:1-7; Titus 1:5-6

C. **The _____ of I Timothy 2:11-15 prohibit female leadership in the church**
Paul gives two reasons for why women should not lead men in the church:
1. _____ (v. 13)
2. _____ (v. 14)

D. **The _____ of the New Testament pastor** (elders) **evidences male leadership in the church**

Conclusion: v.36-40

ORDER IN THE CHURCH!

I Corinthians 14:23-40
1-7-2024

Introduction: v.33, 40

Since the church is God's institution, He has the right to set the guidelines for how it is to function.

The Lord has allowed much Christian liberty when it comes to a church's "order of service" or "format of worship."

(He did not institute a regimented, ritualistic, "high church," liturgical order of service as some denominations practice--going through the same motions week after week. God didn't do it that way because Christian worship was never intended to be a boxed-in, outward conformity lacking in spontaneity or not allowing for cultural or stylistic variations.)

*** We must always maintain God's order in the Church assembly!**

How does God expect a church service to function?

I. God expects a church to deliver...
An UNDERSTANDABLE MESSAGE (v.23-25)
(Not Madness & Chaos)

V. 23

Some activities go on in churches that you wouldn't even find at a circus, carnival, or psycho ward!

Our testimony before immature believers or the unsaved is vitally important!

No doubt many have rejected Christianity on the basis that the Christians they met were inconsistent with the message they preached. If we preach that Christ changes people and gives light where there was darkness, peace where there was turmoil, order where there was confusion, grace where there was heathenism -- they expect to see a Godly distinctive.

***"Mad"* =** to be crazy; a raving maniac; a lunatic; out of one's mind.

V. 23-24
In many Pentecostal/Charismatic churches, the scene is one of chaos, confusion, and disorder (men and women speaking in false "tongues," being "slain in the Spirit," alleged direct revelations, "holy laughter," "holy barking," etc.).

V. 24

"Prophesy" - To proclaim God's truth in a clear, understandable, intelligible manner.

To give an understandable message, we must always:

1) Engage the brain before you engage the tongue

2) Plan your message; don't "shoot from the hip" (be diligent in preparation - II Tim. 2:15)

3) Speak up; speak out; speak clearly

"Convinced" - convicted by his sin

"Judged" - called into account for his sin

Before anyone gets saved, they must be convicted of sin and be aware of the holy judgment of God against sin - John 16:8.

V. 25

The clear proclamation of God's Word has the power to bring one's hidden sin and concealed wicked motives out in the open for him to clearly see.

"Let your light so shine before men. . ." (Mt. 5:16).

Do people recognize that ***"God is in you"***?

Do they see Him at work in and through your life and ministry?

Someone has said that if the Holy Spirit was removed totally from the average church, 99% of the activity would continue uninterrupted.

V. 23-25

Incidentally, the scenario Paul paints in vv. 23-25 teaches that the church assembly is supposed to be a place where believers congregate. The presence of many unbelievers is not the norm. The church generally scatters to evangelize and gathers to edify.

II. God expects a church to tailor all activity to...

An EDIFYING MINISTRY (v.26)

(Not show-offs or self-entertainment)

"Psalm" - a hymn or Scripture put to song

"Doctrine" - a teaching

"Tongue" - a particular language or dialect unknown to the speaker (a sign gift which ceased)

"Revelation" - a new truth unveiled by God via His Spirit during a time when the Church did not have God's completed written revelation.

"Interpretation" - to translate the meaning of a message

Verse 26 teaches:

--Layman participation in the service

--Diversified types of service

--All with a unified purpose of edifying the hearers

The Body unites each week to build itself up spiritually.

Every one of us needs the verbal encouragement received at a Biblical church service.

Don't *"Forsake the assembly"* (Heb. 10:25) or you may miss out on just what you needed to hear to strengthen you in the faith.

"All things" - All church ministry should have as its goal: edification. If it will not edify, it should not be part of a church service.

"I [Wiersbe] recall being in a testimony meeting where a woman took forty minutes telling a boring experience and, as a result, destroyed the spirit of the meeting. Evangelist D. L. Moody was leading a service and asked a man to pray. Taking advantage of his opportunity, the man prayed on and on. Sensing that the prayer was killing the meeting instead of blessing it, Moody spoke up and said, "While our brother finishes his prayer, let us sing a hymn!" (Wiersbe, p. 615)

III. God expects a church to follow...

An ORDERLY METHODOLOGY (v.27-33)

(Not commotion & confusion)

V. 27

In a day when tongues was operative, God set these rules:

--No more than three could speak in tongues in a service

--Each must take turns (go in order; one at a time)

--There must be a translator

V. 28

"Let him speak to himself, and to God" - Keep it to yourself and God.

Paul is not giving the purpose of tongues here, nor is he teaching that tongues was for self-edification, or a private prayer language. He was saying if there is no interpreter, keep your tongues to yourself!

V. 29

Two or three messages could be given by those who held the office of prophet at a church service (we give two each Sunday).

When they spoke, the people were not to simply soak it in without judging what was said (the listeners were to examine it, scrutinize it, or compare it with known Scripture).

God commands us: I Thes. 5:20-22 - *"Despise not prophesyings. Prove all things; hold fast that which is good. Abstain from all appearance of evil."*

The church at Corinth, being a new church, evidently did not yet have ordained elders, so prophets and others who prophesied shared the service.

V. 30

Only one speaker at a time. [Never talk when someone else is talking. It is rude (disrespectful) and disruptive (confusing).]

V. 31

"All prophesy" - A type of testimony service

"Learn" - intellectual benefit

"Comforted" - emotional benefit

V. 32

No speaker for God can ever say that he couldn't help saying what he said ("The Spirit just took over"). No! This may be true in demonism and spiritism where the speaker becomes absolutely passive, but it is not true of Bible Christianity. Every man of God must remain in full control of his mental and emotional faculties.

V. 33

Anything God does, He does with order and purpose. (the result being peace, not turmoil)

And He does not work one way in one church and another way in another! He is the Author of peace ***"in all the churches."***

IV. God expects a church to submit to...
MALE LEADERSHIP (v.34-35)
(Not women pastors)

V. 34

The RESTRICTION of I Corinthians 14:34-38 prohibits female leadership in the church.

V. 34

"Keep silent. . . not permitted to speak" -

--In the context this prohibition would definitely apply to speaking in tongues.

--It does not mean that women cannot pray in church or give testimonies (because I Cor. 11:5 speaks of women *"praying"* [not necessarily leading in prayer] and *"prophesying"* or uttering in plain language a truth God has revealed to her).

The *"speaking"* in this verse refers to an authoritative leadership role over men as evident by the qualifying phrase ***"but they are commanded to be under obedience*** (submission) (i.e. to male leadership)."

It is vitally important to note that God's restriction (given via the Apostle Paul) is not one that only applied to his time, generation or culture. He states: *"As also saith the Law"* (v. 34). This reference to the Old Testament shows this New Testament teaching to be an eternal principle [not one limited to Paul's day].

V. 35

The Apostle Paul further applies the *"speaking"* of women to questioning the male leadership in public worship. Such disruptive, divisive questions by women who were flaunting and abusing their Christian liberty would undermine the leadership and cause a divisive, disunited spirit in the church body.

God calls it a ***"shame for women to speak in church"*** (v. 35) (that is: it is a shame for a woman to verbally usurp or interrogate the male leadership of the Church). The women were to hold such questions to ask their husbands at home (v. 35).

*Can women lead a church in the position of elder (pastor or overseer)?

Note four Bible principles establishing male leadership in the church assembly.

A. The distinct ROLES in the family illustrate God's intention for male leadership (both in domestic and ecclesiastical relationships)

I Cor. 11:3 - *"But I would have you know, that the head of every man is Christ; and the head of the woman is the man; and the head of Christ is God."*

Eph. 5:22-25 - *"Wives, submit yourselves unto your own husbands, as unto the Lord. For the husbands is the head of the wife, even as Christ is the head of the church: and he is the savior of the body. Therefore as the church is subject unto Christ, so let the wives be to their own husbands in every thing. Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it."*

Col. 3:18-19 - *"Wives, submit yourselves unto your own husbands, as it is fit in the Lord. Husbands, love your wives, and be not bitter against them."*

Male leadership in the home and church is simply a difference in role (function) and responsibility for the sake of order and unity.

(Even the three Persons of the Triune Godhead have distinctive roles [a headship is seen in the Trinity - I Cor. 11:3] - Example: The Father planned creation, the Son performed Creation.)

With the erosion of male leadership in the home has come the erosion of male leadership in the church (what is happening in the church today is a mirror of what is happening in the home).

Leadership is a servant role; the man is to serve the woman in the home and church by providing unselfish, benevolent, sacrificial leadership.

A leader serves the ones led by providing:
--An example to follow
--Protection
--Direction
--Initiation
--Instruction

B. The QUALIFICATIONS of the pastor (*"bishop"* = overseer) demands male leadership in the church

1. I Timothy 3:1-7
In the New Testament God uses three words to describe the ministry of church leadership:

   1. Bishop (*"episcopos")* (I Tim. 3:1-7; Ti. 1:7)

   2. Elder (*"presbuteros")* (Acts 14:23; I Tim. 5:17; Ti. 1:5)

   3. Pastor (*"poimen")* (I Peter 5:2)

      These three words are used to describe three facets of the same office (three descriptions of the same person).

      In Acts 20, Paul called the *"elders"* ("*presbuteroi")* (v. 17) of the Ephesian Church. He refers to these same men as *"overseers" ("bishops - episcopoi")* (v. 28), and commands them to *"feed" ("poimaino - pastor")* the church of God (v. 28b).

      Peter exhorted the "*elders"* to *"shepherd"* (pastor) the flock by taking the *"oversight"* (I Peter 5:1-2).

      I Tim. 3:1-7 - *"This is a true saying, If a man desire the office of a bishop, he desireth a good work. A bishop then must be blameless, the husband of one wife, vigilant, sober, of good behavior, given to hospitality, apt to teach; Not given to wine, no striker, not greedy of filthy lucre; but patient, not a brawler, not covetous; One that ruleth well his own house, having his children in subjection with all gravity; (For if a man know not how to rule his own house, how shall he take care of the church of God?) Not a novice, lest being lifted up with pride he fall into the condemnation of the devil. Moreover he must have a good report of them which are without; lest he fall into reproach and the snare of the devil."*

      "If a man desires the office" (v. 1)
      "The husband of one wife" (v. 2)
      "He (v. 1). . . *he* (v. 5) . . . *he* (v. 6) . . . *he* (v. 7)"
      "If a man know not how to rule his own house..."

   2. Titus 1:5-6 - *"For this cause left I thee in Crete, that thou shouldest set in order the things that are wanting, and ordain elders in every city, as I had appointed thee: If any be blameless, the husband of one wife, having faithful children not accused of riot or unruly."*

      "Ordain elders (v. 5) . . . *the husband of one wife* (v. 6) . . ."
      "He . . . he . . ." (v. 9)

C. The COMMANDS of I Timothy 2:11-15 prohibit female leadership in the church

In the context, Paul is describing true Godliness (by men [v. 8] and women [v. 9-10]).

I Tim. 2:9-10 - *"In like manner also, that women adorn themselves in modest apparel, with shamefacedness and sobriety; not with braided hair, or gold, or pearls, or costly array; But (which becometh women professing godliness) with good works.*"

Paul now further delineates how a Godly woman will act in church in verse 11.

V. 11
"Learn in silence" - to be taught without opening her mouth to refute what was taught.

"With all subjection" - Her being taught requires a submissive heart toward the one doing the teaching (she is to have a submissive attitude both toward her reception of truth and in her response or obedience to it).

V. 12
"I suffer not (do not allow or permit) *a woman to teach" –*

The teaching in view is that of teaching *"men"*.
--Women can teach women (Ti. 2:4-5)
--Women can teach children (Lois and Eunice to Timothy - II Tim. 1:5)
--But women are not to teach men

The Bible does not specifically prohibit a woman from *"preaching"* (per se) but from pastoring (or leading an assembly [church] with men present).

Example: In the Great Commission, we are all (male and female) commanded to *"preach* [proclaim] *the Gospel to every creature"* (Mk. 16:15).

Example: Christian women are exhorted to *"teach"* the younger women (Ti. 2:4-5 - *"That they may teach the young women to be sober, to love their husbands, to love their children, To be discreet, chaste, keepers at home, good, obedient to their own husbands, that the word of God be not blasphemed"*).

--A woman may [with her husband] be involved in the personal discipleship of a man (EX: Priscilla with her husband Aquila - Acts 18:26 - *"And he began to speak boldly in the synagogue: whom when Aquila and Priscilla had heard, they took him unto them, and expounded unto him the way of God more perfectly.")*.

--A woman can serve in many capacities in the church like Phoebe did (Rom. 16:1).

--It is proper for women to teach children and other women in a church setting.

V. 12 - ***"Usurp authority"*** - lit. Does not mean to seize authority (as if, on the other hand, she can have that authority if it is given to her). It means to exercise her own authority over the man (in terms of giving direction or instruction in the church context - 3:15).

It is interesting how many Evangelical Feminists are quick to interpret these verses based on first-century Jewish culture, when the writer himself by-passes his own culture and goes back to the beginning of time (Gen. 2 & 3) to prove his point.

Paul gives two reasons for why women should not lead men in the church:

1) Creation order (v. 13)

"Adam was first formed, then Eve."

By creation order, God is showing which gender was the leader (head) and which was the helper.

Paul's reference to creation order shows that his teaching is not based on temporary cultural norms, but on permanent facts of creation.

2. The Fall (v. 14)
(A woman's proneness to certain deceptions)

Women--being generally more emotional (more feeling oriented), responding with her heart more than her head, responding more to emotion than to reason, to feeling than to fact, to the subjective rather than the objective--are easier victims to Satan's temptations.

--Many cults were founded by women (Ex: Mary Baker Eddy - Christian Science; Ellen G. White - Seventh Day Adventists)

--Many extra-Biblical revelations which have brought so much confusion and chaos to Christianity came about by women seeing apparitions of Mary or receiving the supposed gift of tongues.

D. The EXAMPLES of the New Testament pastor (elders) evidences male leadership in the church

--There is not one example of a woman leading a New Testament assembly.

--Every reference to an *"elder"* is to men in the Bible (Old Testament and New Testament)

--The 70 Elders Moses chose to assist in the leadership of Israel were men (Num. 11:16).

--The 12 Apostles, who also functioned as elders, were men (Lk. 6:13).

--Those who led along with the Apostles were men (Barnabas, Silas, Luke, Timothy, Titus).

--Every elder selected by the local churches was a man (Acts 14:23, 20:17; I Tim. 5:17; Ti. 1:5; Ja. 5:14; I Pet. 5:1).

Didn't God use Deborah to lead Israel (Judges 4)? Yes.

1. Israel was not a "church" and she was not a "pastor" (she was a judge)

2. She lived at a time when *"every man did that which was right in his own eyes"* (Jud. 17:6, 21:25)

The book of Judges is filled with examples of people whose roles and behavior was not necessarily normative.

Note: Deborah prophesied privately, not in public forum.

Doesn't Paul say in Gal. 3:28 that in Christ *"there is neither male nor female"*? Yes, but Paul is not denying the differences of sexuality, he is saying that there is no distinction between how God saves each (the context is soteriological; not describing functional differences).

The issue is not one of ability, but does one fit the qualifications of the New Testament (some women may be very articulate speakers, but this does not decide the issue).

The issue is not one of public acceptance, but does God accept female rule in the church as revealed in His Word (society may say it is okay, but the Bible does not).

The issue is not cultural but Biblical (times and societies may change, but God's principles do not).

The issue is not popularity (many may be filling ecclesiastical positions now though it was never intended by God; but the prevalence of something has never been used as a measuring stick of its rightness).

The issue is not what is traditional but what is Biblical.

The issue is not male chauvinism nor male ego abut being faithful to God established without feelings of superiority.

God's will never contradicts God's Word. He will never lead someone to violate His Holy Scripture. (God

has never called one woman to pastor a church! How do I know? Because His Word prohibits such) (Jer. 23:32 -*"Behold, I am against them that prophesy false dreams, saith the Lord, and do tell them, and cause my people to err by their lies, and by their lightness; yet I sent them not, nor commanded them: therefore they shall not profit this people at all, saith the Lord."*)
May God give us Christian women who have the inner qualities of humility, gentleness, holiness, Spirit control, and contentment so that each willingly and gladly submits to her God-given role and utilizes her great God-given gifts and abilities in His way and His will.

Recommended Book: **Recovering Biblical Manhood and Womanhood (A Response to Evangelical Feminism)** (Edited by John Piper and Wayne Grudem; Crossway Books, Wheaton, IL, 1991)

Conclusion: v.36-40

V. 36
To the Corinthians, who thought they knew it all and were the only source of truth, Paul asks two questions:

1) Did God's Word (the Bible) originate with you?
(implied: No it did not!)

2) Are you the only ones who know God's Word? (No)

As your Pastor, I did not write this information; I'm simply reading it and applying it to us today. If we didn't author it, we have no right to change it! But because God did author it, we must submit to it!

V. 37
This book and chapter is not merely the opinions of Paul, but ***"the commandments of the Lord."***

V. 38
If people want to stay in the dark, God says let them!

But for those who want the light, they ought to come to the truth of God's ways.

V. 39
Prophesy is desired because all may benefit by it.

Tongues were not to be forbidden because they were a gift of the Holy Spirit for that time and God's purpose.

V. 40
The summary: Everything in church ought to be done properly and in an orderly manner.

Will you do your part to see that such order is always maintained in every classroom and ministry of this church?

God wants "Order in the church"!