

## **“Let Your Women Keep Silence in the Churches,” by D. Hewitt**

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Many sincere and honest souls have been very much perplexed respecting this declaration of the Apostle Paul. Many have inferred from this that women professing godliness should keep silent and not speak in prayer and social meetings for religious worship. But the candid reader of the sacred pages will find other declarations of the same apostle that must be brought to harmonize with this in order to get a clear understanding of the Apostle's meaning in 1 Cor. 14. It is a custom with all Bible students to find all the important texts that bear on any one subject, and compare them together until they come to a satisfactory understanding of what the inspired penman means. No one should found a theory on one single isolated passage, for this mode of proving things has produced many discordant theories in the world.

The reader will please turn over to 1 Cor. 11, and read carefully the first fifteen verses. He will there find that Christ is the head of every man, and the man the head of the woman; that the woman when praying or prophesying should have her head covered. We find by these texts that a woman can pray or prophesy in the church.

The next thing to ascertain is the meaning of the word “prophesy” in these chapters. See 1 Cor. 14:3. “But he that prophesieth speaketh unto men to edification and exhortation and comfort.” We know that all the church were not prophets like Isaiah and Daniel of old; yet we see from the 31st verse of said chapters that “all may prophesy one by one,” that all may learn, and all may be comforted. In verse 32 you will see that the spirits of the prophets are subject to the prophets; that is, in speaking and exhorting, we should not say anything contrary to what the prophets have said, but harmonize with, and be subject to them; otherwise it would make confusion, of which the Lord would not be the author. From verses 34 and 35, it appears to be a check on the women that were too forward in meeting in asking questions, &c., for they had better have talked over these things and asked questions at home instead of troubling the meeting about what did not concern them. Paul in 1 Tim. 2:12 says that he suffers not a woman to teach, nor to usurp authority over the man, but to be in silence. Hence we discover that simply praying, or singing, or speaking in meeting would not be usurping authority over the man, but edifying the man, and pleasing the Lord. Certainly a sister's telling in meeting what the Lord has done for her, and what she intends to do through grace, would not be teaching or usurping authority over the man. Philip the evangelist, had four daughters, virgins, which did prophesy; (Acts 21:8, 9) and if they were forbidden to exercise their gifts in meeting, their prophecies would have been circumscribed and very limited.

We all believe that we are living in the last days. See Acts 2:17, 18. “And it shall come to pass in the last days, saith God, I will pour out my Spirit upon all flesh; and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, and your young men shall see visions, and your old men shall dream dream.” These texts teach that daughters and hand-maidens shall prophesy. Please read on to the 21st verse, and you will ascertain that the point of chronology is just before the great and notable day of the Lord comes.

I hope that we shall all strive to square our lives and actions by the word of the Lord, each one occupy the place that the Lord would have us, and thereby preserve gospel order in the church.

—D. Hewitt.

*Battle Creek, Oct. 4th, 1857*