

*D GROUP – Life on Life Discipleship for Women of FBC

OUTLINE for Fall 07

Titus 2 for women, Introduction part 3

THE ROLE OF WOMEN opening DISCUSSION: #1 Why are men so weak in their role as leaders in the church and why are women typically so strong? #2 What role are women to fulfill in the church #3 Is there any excuse that removes the command obligation for a woman to minister her giftedness in the church family?

The CONTEXT of Titus 2... The Curriculum for older women to train the younger

4 that they may encourage the young women to love their husband, to love their children, 5 to be sensible, pure, workers at home, kind, being subject to their own husbands, that the word of God may not be dishonored.

Today is part THREE of what the entire Bible says about the Role of Women, an introduction.

#5 THE ROLE OF WOMEN IN WORSHIP

Paul's teaching about the role of women in corporate worship is particularly challenging in view of modern culture. To understand it, you must understand God's call for all Christians, both male and female, to submit. God commands Christians to submit to governmental leaders (1 Peter 2:13-14) and to pay our taxes (Romans 13:1-7). God commands children to submit to their parents (Colossians 3:20). God commands all Christians to submit to the qualified elders who lead the church they attend (Hebrews 13:7 & 17 and 1 Peter 5:5). God commands Christians to submit to one another, out of reverence for Christ (Ephesians 5:21). Why is authority and submission so important? Because they reflect who God is!

The three persons of the Trinity are all equally God, but each plays a different role, involving authority and submission. Jesus submits to the Father, and the Holy Spirit submits to the Father and to Jesus. **1 Corinthians 11:3 READ** Paul uses the example of Christ's submission to the Father to address a problem involving women in the Corinthian church. An abuse of the woman's role in that church was bringing dishonor to God. The problem Paul is addressing in 1 Corinthians 11 was something like a women's liberation movement. In the culture of Corinth, women were trying to look and act like men (there is nothing new under the sun). History records, in the Greek culture of this time, women would sometimes dress like men and even act like men, going out bare-chested to hunt wild pigs with spears. Apparently there were women in the church at Corinth who were swept up in this movement to emulate men, and their behavior was bringing a reproach to the name of Christ. So Paul was writing to the church to address this problem. This trend was a deviation from Greek tradition. In Corinth, one of the symbols of a woman's submissiveness and modesty was the wearing of a veil. Only two categories of Corinthian women would remove their veils. Prostitutes took off their veils so men could get a good look at them. Feminists took off their veils as a protest. So in the church at Corinth, only **protesting** or **prostituting** women would be seen without a veil. Paul is telling the church at Corinth a woman should not violate her role of submission. His letter to them says: "Ladies, keep your veils on! Live in such a way that Christ is honored." *Should women be wearing veils discussion for another day? Short answer; NO.*

In **1 Corinthians 14:34-35**, Paul addresses the role of women in worship again. Referring to the corporate gathering, Paul says: **READ** Paul's words sound harsh until you study the context of this verse. In the early church, men and women sat on different sides of the assembly. In the text preceding these verses, Paul was instructing about the proper use of the gifts of tongues and prophecy. The word translated "speak" in verse 34 refers to the instruction that immediately preceded it, about the gift of prophecy and perhaps also tongues. The context of Paul's instruction for women in 1 Corinthians 14 addresses ORDER in the worship service. **This suggests that some women were creating confusion in this church by standing up to give a message of prophecy to the assembly or asking their husbands questions across the aisle.** Paul's words instructed the church that these practices are improper at the corporate gathering. The confusion these women created was not reflecting the Triune God, who is a God of ORDER. God's own character demonstrates authority and submission, and He calls His people to demonstrate authority and submission as well [along with ORDER], in our homes, in the church and in ministry. When we live according to God's design, when we pursue ORDER, we bring God glory.

#6 THE ROLE OF WOMEN IN MINISTRY

When you see what the word "ministry" means, I think you'll understand the role of women. Ministry means serving others in the power of the Holy Spirit, for the glory of God. I shudder to think what the church would be like without the ministry of women. God has given us examples of women in ministry throughout the New Testament. Priscilla is listed six times—four times her name is listed first, before that of her husband, Aquilla. Other New Testament women in ministry include Lydia, Chloe, Dorcus, Euodia and Syntyche, Phillip's four daughters and a slew of others.

Titus 2 describes a crucial ministry in the church that God has specifically designated as a ministry for women. **Training** women who are younger in the faith, the ministry which Paul outlined in Titus 2:3-5, *should be a priority for all godly women.* Does the New Testament limit the ministries women can do? Yes, there are **two ministries** that are designated for men only.

FIRST - God does not give women the ministry of officially teaching the Word of God to men. The passage that outlines this principle is **1 Timothy 2: 9-10 READ** In this passage, Paul first addressed modesty and good works, both of which display a woman's heart. His admonition is not against a particular hairstyle, but rather against wearing your wealth in your hair. In the first century, it was a common practice for women to wear gold and pearls in their hair. Paul is instructing women not to dress in a manner that flaunts their wealth and draws attention to themselves. Paul then addresses the role of women in public worship. **READ 11+12** Women are not to teach in the gathering of the corporate body, nor are they to exercise biblical teaching authority over men in the church. Rather, they should receive teaching with a submissive heart. Why is this? **READ 13+14** Paul supports his teaching by reminding Timothy of the created order—this was God's design for His people from the beginning of creation, before mankind fell into sin. Then it was Eve, who took the leadership belonging to Adam and led the human race into sin. So what does this have to do with the woman's role? Paul tells Timothy that **raising godly children** is the primary way in which a woman will influence this world for the kingdom of God. God has given women the high privilege of discipling their sons and daughters to impact the kingdom of God for His glory.

READ 15 Women will be preserved from the stigma of leading the fall into sin {verse14} if they take the lead in raising godly children in Christ {verse 15}. **Instead of producing only cursed children because of sin, now women can raise godly children because of Christ.**

Clearly there is a specific role for women in ministry. In public worship and in any formal teaching environment, in gatherings in which both men and women are present, women are not to be in the authoritative role. When the church gathers together, women participate through praise and worship—they can even assist with leading worship. They can participate in prayer or in a question and answer time. A woman can share her testimony or sing. But women are not to proclaim the Word of God in any authoritative sense to a group of men and women in the congregation. Again, note that Paul bases his reasoning on the creation account, and also on the fall of man. Because Paul provides this basis for his instruction about the role of women in worship, we know this admonition is not cultural. Submission and authority is God's design for humanity, and the Triune God, with three equal persons yet each unique in their role, is modeled and honored when Christians follow this principle.

SECOND - Paul's second exception for women in ministry is found in **READ 1 Timothy 3:2+5**. In this passage, Paul explains about the role of elder or pastor or overseer—in the New Testament, there is no difference between an elder, a pastor and an overseer. In verse 2, *An overseer ... must be ...the husband of one wife*. This is tough for a woman to do—women are not called to function in this role. Then in verse 5, *but if a man does not know how to manage his own household, how will he take care of the church of God?* Paul's point is very simple: if a man is not leading his own family, then he is not qualified to lead God's family. God has given men the responsibility for headship in their own families, and also in God's family. Headship is a male role in the family and in the church. There is no support in the New Testament for women to function as pastors or elders leading the church. Women are encouraged to minister in the church in every way, with these two exceptions. As long as a woman has a heart of submission to Christ, she can serve in many different capacities. * The Holy Spirit has gifted every true Christian, male or female, with a spiritual gift to be used to serve within the body of Christ. In fact, the Scriptures command both women and men to minister their gifts in the church. Though our roles differ, God calls male and female to ministry.

Look at the passages that address spiritual gifts: **READ 1 Peter 4:10, 1 Corinthians 12:7+11, Romans 12:4-6**
The book of Titus adds that God designed women to minister primarily to women and for men to minister primarily to men. This way, Christ uses women in the church to equip women for their biblical role in the home. *Deaconess discussion for another day*

#7 THE ROLE OF WOMEN IN THE HOME introduction only

Titus 2:3-5 gives us a clear picture of what God designed for women: 3 *Older women...4 ...encourage the young women to love their husbands, to love their children, 5 to be sensible, pure, workers at home, kind, being subject to their own husbands, that the word of God may not be dishonored*. The focus of women toward the home is so important to God that He designed Titus 2:4 and 5 to be a **training curriculum**. Older women are to use the qualities listed in verses 4 and 5 as targets for young women to hit. The base of operations for this process is the young woman's home, the church and her community.

1 Timothy 5:14 addresses the same topic, showing the home as a women's priority: **READ 1 Timothy 5:14** The submissive woman of God does not see her home as a **prison**, but rather as her **priority**, the place where she lives out her God-given responsibilities. This is a heart issue—the heart of a godly woman is committed to home as her first priority. Her commitment is so strong toward the home, in verse 14 when Paul says for women to 'keep house' the Greek word means **to RULE a household**. The Greek word is actually two words put together to make one word. The two words in Greek are; house and despot. A woman's focus is so much toward the home; she is considered **the house despot**.

A godly woman sees her role in the family and the home as her primary identity. Whatever she may do outside of the home comes *behind the priority of her husband, children and home*. She will feel compelled to limit what she does outside of the home to things that in some way benefit her family. **The godly woman who has no choice but to work outside of the home or can work outside the home, will still maintain the priority of her family and home in any way she can.**

Overall, the Bible shows us that the home is the ministry base God created for women. 1 Timothy 2 says that a woman's greatest impact for the kingdom of God will be her influence in the lives of her children. Her role is to impact the kingdom from the bottom up, not from the top down. For this reason, Paul tells Timothy motherhood will be a woman's salvation. *I pray that God gives us more women committed to the priority of raising up godly children to impact this world for God's glory.*

QUESTIONS for Discipleship Groups

- #1 How does a woman demonstrate the quality of submission in **WORSHIP**?
- #2 How does a woman display the quality of submission in her role in **MINISTRY**?
- #3 How does a woman exhibit the quality of submission in her role in the **HOME**?
- #4 **KEY** What specific, **UNIQUE**, never been done before, steps will you take each day this week to **DISPLAY** a heart of submission and a heart for the home?

D group projects – one per day; repeat for second week

Wednesday: Demonstrate submission either verbally or in action in a way that is new or hasn't been displayed in a long time

Thursday: Seek to come up with three sentences you will begin to use regularly that will demonstrate a submissive heart – write them out and use them today. *As soon as I ask my husband, I will let you know or Good thing God's in charge of that etc.*

Friday: Pray about how you can minister more effectively in your church family

Saturday: As the Lord to show you one way you could bring more **ORDER** to your home

Sunday: Seek to demonstrate submission of heart in your worship today – make that your prayer

Monday: Surprise your husband by esteeming him, respecting him and demonstrate trust in him in some obvious manner

Tuesday: Re-read the entire card again and listen to how the Spirit directs you, then dependently act on how He leads

NEXT TIME **The role of the single woman**

LATER The best environment for the spiritual growth of a woman; The role of Older women; How to Train Women; Titus 2 'Liking' your spouse etc.

EXTRA ON MINISTRY OF WOMEN

VEILS

Should women be wearing veils discussion for another day? Short answer; NO. I don't believe so, for several reasons. First, we do not know what kind of veil was worn in the Corinthian church. Second, we don't live in a culture in which wearing a veil symbolizes submission. Neither does removing the veil demonstrate that a woman is a prostitute. Plus, adopting the practice of women wearing veils would externalize or ritualize our faith—genuine faith is always an issue of the heart. The Bible affirms other ways a woman can show a submissive heart.

In 1 Corinthians 11:14-15, READ. God has provided a woman with a natural sign of submission—her hair. A woman's hair is her natural veil, symbolizing her role of submission. Fifty years ago in churches across America, women wore hats or some other head covering, while men removed their hats when they entered the church. This practice served as a symbol of the woman's subordination. Today, wearing hats or veils no longer conveys this meaning, nor does the length of a woman's hair in our culture. The principle of submission is still true, but the way we show it is different. When a woman's hair and dress are feminine, this will demonstrate her unique role. God created a distinction between the sexes, physiologically and in their unique roles. God created men to be masculine and also authoritative, in a responsible, loving way; He created women to be feminine and also submissive, in a responsible, loving way. Christians should honor these differences and not live in a way that creates confusion about masculine and feminine identities.

DEACONESS

Can women be deaconesses: short answer from Chris, YES

Romans 16 and 1 Timothy 3 support that women can be deacons in the church.

Paul begins Romans 16 with a commendation of a lady named Phoebe: *1 I commend to you our sister Phoebe, who is a servant of the church which is at Cenchrea; 2 that you receive her in the Lord in a manner worthy of the saints, and that you help her in whatever matter she may have need of you; for she herself has also been a helper of many, and of myself as well.*

When Paul sent his letter to the church at Rome, he sent it with someone traveling to Rome. It was Phoebe who delivered Paul's letter to the church at Rome, and Paul commended her to the church so they would receive her as his emissary, since she was personally delivering his letter.

What do we learn about Phoebe in Romans 16? We learn she was a woman—*our sister, Phoebe*. We learn she was a Gentile—Phoebe is a Greek name meaning "bright." In fact, Phoebe was named after a Greek god, suggesting that she was a Gentile who became a Christian. We learn she was from Cenchrea, a little village about nine miles south of Corinth, and we see that Phoebe delivered Paul's letter to Rome.

Notice also the wording of her introduction: *1...Phoebe, who is a servant of the church which is at Cenchrea;* The word "servant" is translated from the Greek word *deaconon*. In English, this word is deacon. Notice that the passage says, "a servant of the church," rather than, "a servant of the Lord." This wording indicates that hers was a position of leadership. Phoebe was a deaconess in the church at Cenchrea.

From church history we learn, in New Testament times, a deaconess generally had four areas of responsibility. Her role included taking care of the sick, visiting Christian prisoners to provide them with food, clothes and letters, participating in baptisms (most likely to help women before and after immersion), and ministering to women in the church who were in need.

The Bible does not describe the exact function of a deaconess, but 1 Timothy 3:11 does define the qualifications for this position: *Women must likewise be dignified, not malicious gossips, but temperate, faithful in all things.* Some of your translations say "wives of deacons." The original Greek text of 1 Timothy 3:11 says, "women," not "wives of deacons." Paul teaches that both women and men must meet certain qualifications in order to function as deacons. But a woman doesn't have to be a deacon to serve in the church. All women are to serve in the church whether they are deacons or not.