

Built By God

Man * Woman * Child

Psalm 127:1

EXCEPT THE Lord builds the house, they labor in vain who build it; except the Lord keeps the city, the watchman wakes but in vain. [Ps. 121:1, 3, 5.]

God wants to build us!

Hebrews 3:4 AMP

For [of course] every house is built and furnished by someone, but the Builder of all things and the Furnisher [of the entire equipment of all things] is God.

Proverbs 31:25-31

Strength and dignity are her clothing and her position is strong and secure; she rejoices over the future [the latter day or time to come, knowing that she and her family are in readiness for it]!

26 She opens her mouth in skillful and godly Wisdom, and on her tongue is the law of kindness [giving counsel and instruction].

27 She looks well to how things go in her household, and the bread of idleness (gossip, discontent, and self-pity) she will not eat. [I Tim. 5:14; Tit. 2:5.]

28 Her children rise up and call her blessed (happy, fortunate, and to be envied); and her husband boasts of and praises her, [saying],

29 Many daughters have done virtuously, nobly, and well [with the strength of character that is steadfast in goodness], but you excel them all.

30 Charm and grace are deceptive, and beauty is vain [because it is not lasting], but a woman who reverently and worshipfully fears the Lord, she shall be praised!

31 Give her of the fruit of her hands, and let her own works praise her in the gates [of the city]! [Phil. 4:8.]

What does God ask of women?

((SEEK GOD FIRST))

Reject the idea that anyone or anything can satisfy you!

Matthew 6:33 AMP

But seek (aim at and strive after) first of all His kingdom and His righteousness (His way of doing and being right), and then all these things taken together will be given you besides.

1 Chronicles 16:8-12 AMP

O give thanks to the Lord, call on His name; make known His doings among the peoples!

9 Sing to Him, sing praises to Him; meditate on and talk of all His wondrous works and devoutly praise them!

10 Glory in His holy name; let the hearts of those rejoice who seek the Lord!

11 Seek the Lord and His strength; yearn for and seek His face and to be in His presence continually!

12 [Earnestly] remember the marvelous deeds which He has done, His miracles, and the judgments He uttered [as in Egypt],

Jeremiah 29:11-13 AMP

For I know the thoughts and plans that I have for you, says the Lord, thoughts and plans for welfare and peace and not for evil, to give you hope in your final outcome.

12 Then you will call upon Me, and you will come and pray to Me, and I will hear and heed you.

13 Then you will seek Me, inquire for, and require Me [as a vital necessity] and find Me when you search for Me with all your heart. [Deut. 4:29-30.]

((SPEAK FAITHFULLY))

Love others with Godly wisdom, boldness, and kindness as a faithful completer of others.

Genesis 2:18 AMP

Now the Lord God said, It is not good (sufficient, satisfactory) that the man should be alone; I will make him a helper meet (suitable, adapted, complementary) for him.

Proverbs 27:5-6 AMP

Open rebuke is better than love that is hidden. [Prov. 28:23; Gal. 2:14.]

6 Faithful are the wounds of a friend, but the kisses of an enemy are lavish and deceitful.

Proverbs 31:26 AMP

26 She opens her mouth in skillful and godly Wisdom, and on her tongue is the law of kindness [giving counsel and instruction].

Psalm 19:14 AMP

Let the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart be acceptable in Your sight, O Lord, my [firm, impenetrable] Rock and my Redeemer.

Proverbs 13:3 AMP

He who guards his mouth keeps his life, but he who opens wide his lips comes to ruin.

((SHOW TRUE BEAUTY))

Bodies deteriorate, persons develop. Invest in that which lasts!

Proverbs 31:30 AMP

30 Charm and grace are deceptive, and beauty is vain [because it is not lasting], but a woman who reverently and worshipfully fears the Lord, she shall be praised!

1 Timothy 2:9-10 AMP

Also [I desire] that women should adorn themselves modestly and appropriately and sensibly in seemly apparel, not with [elaborate] hair arrangement or gold or pearls or expensive clothing,

10 But by doing good deeds (deeds in themselves good and for the good and advantage of those contacted by them), as befits women who profess reverential fear for and devotion to God.

1 Samuel 16:7 AMP

But the Lord said to Samuel, Look not on his appearance or at the height of his stature, for I have rejected him. For the Lord sees not as man sees; for man looks on the outward appearance, but the Lord looks on the heart.

Proverbs 11:22 AMP

As a ring of gold in a swine's snout, so is a fair woman who is without discretion.

((Stay Humble & Serve The King))

Be vigilant against pride. Get the log out of your eye. Don't think less of yourself, think of yourself less. Seek first His Kingdom, His glory, His righteousness. Hope in the eternal. Live for a greater reward.

1 Peter 5:5-7 Amp

Likewise, you who are younger and of lesser rank, be subject to the elders (the ministers and spiritual guides of the church)—[giving them due respect and yielding to their counsel]. Clothe (apron) yourselves, all of you, with humility [as the garb of a servant, so that its covering cannot possibly be stripped from you, with freedom from pride and arrogance] toward one another. For God sets Himself against the proud (the insolent, the overbearing, the disdainful, the presumptuous, the boastful)—[and He opposes, frustrates, and defeats them], but gives grace (favor, blessing) to the humble. [Prov. 3:34.]

6 Therefore humble yourselves [demote, lower yourselves in your own estimation] under the mighty hand of God, that in due time He may exalt you,

7 Casting the whole of your care [all your anxieties, all your worries, all your concerns, once and for all] on Him, for He cares for you affectionately and cares about you watchfully. [Ps. 55:22.]

Proverbs 12:1 AMP

WHOEVER LOVES instruction and correction loves knowledge, but he who hates reproof is like a brute beast, stupid and indiscriminating.

Micah 6:8 AMP

He has showed you, O man, what is good. And what does the Lord require of you but to do justly, and to love kindness and mercy, and to humble yourself and walk humbly with your God? [Deut. 10:12, 13.]

Matthew 6:33 AMP

But seek (aim at and strive after) first of all His kingdom and His righteousness (His way of doing and being right), and then all these things taken together will be given you besides.

Mark 10:45 AMP

For even the Son of Man came not to have service rendered to Him, but to serve, and to give His life as a ransom for (instead of) many.

LET THE WOMEN KEEP SILENT

What did Paul mean, and can women really lead in the church?

Jesus had women in his inner circle of disciples.

Luke 8:1-3 AMP

SOON AFTERWARD, [Jesus] went on through towns and villages, preaching and bringing the good news (the Gospel) of the kingdom of God. And the Twelve [apostles] were with Him,

2 And also some women who had been cured of evil spirits and diseases: Mary, called Magdalene, from whom seven demons had been expelled;

3 And Joanna, the wife of Chuza, Herod's household manager; and Susanna; and many others, who ministered to and provided for Him and them out of their property and personal belongings.

The women received the Holy Spirit and power of God just as the men did.

Acts 1:14 AMP

All of these with their minds in full agreement devoted themselves steadfastly to prayer, [waiting together] with the women and Mary the mother of Jesus, and with His brothers.

Acts 1:4-5 AMP

And while being in their company and eating with them, He commanded them not to leave Jerusalem but to wait for what the Father had promised, Of which [He said] you have heard Me speak. [John 14:16, 26; 15:26.]

5 For John baptized with water, but not many days from now you shall be baptized with (placed in, introduced into) the Holy Spirit.

Women can speak.

Acts 2:17 AMP

And it shall come to pass in the last days, God declares, that I will pour out of My Spirit upon all mankind, and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy [telling forth the divine counsels] and your young men shall see visions (divinely granted appearances), and your old men shall dream [divinely suggested] dreams. Jesus sent a woman into the village to tell about him.

John 4:28-29 AMP

Then the woman left her water jar and went away to the town. And she began telling the people,

29 Come, see a Man Who has told me everything that I ever did! Can this be [is not this] the Christ? [Must not this be the Messiah, the Anointed One?]

John 4:39 AMP

Now numerous Samaritans from that town believed in and trusted in Him because of what the woman said when she declared and testified, He told me everything that I ever did.

Acts 1:8 AMP

But you shall receive power (ability, efficiency, and might) when the Holy Spirit has come upon you, and you shall be My witnesses in Jerusalem and all Judea and Samaria and to the ends (the very bounds) of the earth.

The first evangelist Jesus sent to Samaria was the woman at the well.

Jesus entrusted a woman to first tell of his resurrection.

John 20:17-18 AMP

Jesus said to her, Do not cling to Me [do not hold Me], for I have not yet ascended to the Father. But go to My brethren and tell them, I am ascending to My Father and your Father, and to My God and your God.

18 Away came Mary Magdalene, bringing the disciples news (word) that she had seen the Lord and that He had said these things to her.

A Gospel That Empowers Women (excerpt of an article by J. Lee Grady)

In conservative Christian circles women are expected to live contentedly in the background, presumably to focus on domestic duties, because this is their humble, God-ordained "place" in life. It's a place of invisible service and of godly but quiet influence over children and the home, or perhaps over the church nursery, Sunday school class or women's Bible study.

Women, of course, are told it is an honor to live in the shadow of their husbands or other male authorities and a disgrace for them to assume a place of significant spiritual authority. But we need to ask: Where did we get this warped idea when it was not the perspective of Jesus, nor is it promoted anywhere in the Scriptures?

The Bible, in fact, contains a rich record of women who were placed in authority by God. We must consider the way God used them before we attempt to pull an isolated verse out of context to build a doctrine that restricts the ministry opportunities of women. Consider the following biblical women and the level of authority they were given:

Miriam. There is no question that Moses' sister was considered a leader in ancient Israel. This is confirmed in Micah 6:4: "'I brought you up from the land of Egypt, I redeemed you from the house of bondage; and I sent before you Moses, Aaron, and Miriam'" (emphasis added). She represented the authority of God to the people in the same way Moses did. She spoke for God. That's why she is described in Exodus 15:20 as a prophetess.

Deborah. Among the judges of Israel, Deborah was the only one other than Samuel who held the respected position of prophet. She is referred to as a prophetess in Judges 4:4, and her attentiveness to God's purpose and strategy resulted in an impressive military victory for Israel that secured peace for 40 years (see Judg. 5:31).

Deborah functioned as a civil ruler and was so respected for her anointing and spiritual insights that Barak, Israel's military commander, refused to go into battle without her.

Deborah, who is called "'a mother in Israel'" (Judg. 5:7), presents an intriguing problem for conservative church leaders today who want to promote the view that women cannot function in senior positions of spiritual authority.

Huldah. After 50 years of paganism and spiritual adultery in Israel, King Josiah assumed the throne and rediscovered the Book of the Law, which had been hidden in the temple. When it was read aloud, he immediately repented and turned to the Lord, then sent his high priest to seek out a faithful follower of God who could speak for Him. To whom did he turn? To Huldah, a prophetess who obviously had remained faithful to the Lord during one of the darkest periods in Israel's history (see 2 Kin. 22:14).

We know little about this woman except that she lived in Jerusalem with her husband, Shallum, and that her prophetic message to Josiah came true. The fact that Israel's high priest, Hilkiah, and his associates sought her out to make their inquiry of the Lord shows that she had earned a reputation for hearing from God.

Esther. Although Esther did not function in a place of ecclesiastical authority, her life proves that God can and does use women in strategic positions of influence to further His purposes. Indeed, He singled out this young Jewish woman and thrust her into the place of an intercessor and deliverer, not unlike Moses, and her prayers and courageous actions literally saved her people from genocide.

Phoebe. Paul commended Phoebe to the church at Rome and asked them to "receive her in the Lord" when she arrived from Cenchrea to work among them (Rom. 16:1-2). Although he refers to her as a "deacon" (diakonon in Greek), scholars have translated the word as "servant" in many Bible versions. But it is more accurate to categorize Phoebe with men such as Stephen and Philip, whom Paul describes with this same Greek word.

Paul's commending of Phoebe to the Roman church was his way of enduing her with apostolic authority, and he obviously expected the early Christians to follow her instructions when she arrived. She was sent by Paul to carry out specific plans, probably related to evangelism and church planting.

Priscilla. Along with her husband, Aquila, this woman was a noted laborer in the early church, and it was this couple's influence that helped launch the apostolic ministry of Apollos (see Acts 18:24-26). It would be safe to say that they also functioned as apostles, since Paul refers to them in Romans 16:3 as "fellow workers in Christ Jesus." We are told that they had a church "in their house" (v. 5) and that this brave couple "risked their own necks" to save Paul's life (v. 4).

Philip's daughters. Acts 21:9 says that Philip the evangelist had four daughters who were "prophetesses" (NASB). The term used here is taken from the same root word used in Acts 15:32 to describe two male prophets, Judas and Silas.

We know nothing about the daughters, but we can assume that their influence was significant enough to be mentioned in the biblical record. Obviously they were engaged in public speaking, and their words carried the same level of authority as those of Agabus, a male prophet who is mentioned in Acts 21:10. Philip's daughters were, in essence, women preachers who experienced a high level of respect for their spiritual insights and level of giftedness.

Lois and Eunice. The apostle Paul commends these two women, Timothy's mother and grandmother, for shaping the young man's ministry through their instruction and example. Although it is an obscure passage, it is a crucial one because so many churches today use Paul's letters to Timothy to justify misguided policies that limit the scope of women's ministry.

It is ironic that people twist Paul's words "I do not permit a woman to teach" (1 Tim. 2:12, NKJV) in order to make a blanket prohibition against women teaching men, when in 2 Timothy 1:5 Paul commends Lois and Eunice for teaching Timothy the faith!

There are several other examples of women who held positions of spiritual authority in the New Testament church. Like Jesus, the apostle Paul had women disciples whom he trained and commissioned to preach and evangelize on the front lines. Where are the women who "share the struggle" of apostolic ministry today? How tragic that the church in the 21st century has not empowered an entire army of women with the authority necessary to take cities and nations for Christ.

Then What about Keeping Silent in the Church???

Q. But didn't the apostle Paul say in 1 Timothy 2:12 that women aren't allowed to teach or to have authority over men?

A. This verse is commonly cited to suggest that women can never teach men in a church setting. But because it contradicts other biblical passages that describe women exercising spiritual authority, we must look deeper to discover the context of the passage. In this verse, Paul says he wants women to "be in silence" (NKJV).

But in other epistles he endorses the idea of women praying and prophesying publicly (see 1 Cor. 11:5). So obviously his stern restriction on women in 1 Timothy 2:12 does not apply to all women in all situations.

Many Bible scholars believe Paul was dealing with a serious heresy problem in the church at Ephesus when he wrote 1 Timothy 2:12. Certain female teachers were spreading dangerous gnostic fables, and in some cases they were suggesting that women are superior to men or that Eve was created before Adam.

Paul commanded Timothy not to let these women spread their doctrines. Yet we know that he was more than willing to let trained, Bible-believing women teach--since he commends such female ministers as Phoebe, Junia, Priscilla, Tryphena and Tryphosa. Also, the priestesses of Diana were beginning to attend meetings because their husbands were turning to God. They became disruptive during the meetings, and Paul was telling the people that they needed to rebuke those women and tell them to be silent.

Q. If women can be spiritual leaders, then why did Paul say they had to be silent in church?

A. The apostle Paul's strong words in 1 Corinthians 14:34 ("Let your women keep silent in the churches, for they are not permitted to speak") is a curious verse, one that has perplexed scholars because it seems to contradict Paul's earlier words in the same chapter--in which he encourages all believers to prophesy.

Some theologians believe the apostle is calling for order because women were disrupting the church meeting with loud, argumentative chatter. Others believe that verses 34 and 35 are quotes from a letter written to Paul by the leaders of the Corinthian church, which Paul answers in verse 36 (Amplified) by saying: "What! Did the Word of the Lord originate with you?"

However we interpret the complexities of this passage, we cannot use it to create a blanket rule that restricts women from preaching, praying, teaching or prophesying. Women prophets appear in the Old and New Testaments, and Joel 2:28 declares that both your "sons and your daughters" (NKJV, emphasis added) would prophesy after the Holy Spirit was given to the church.

