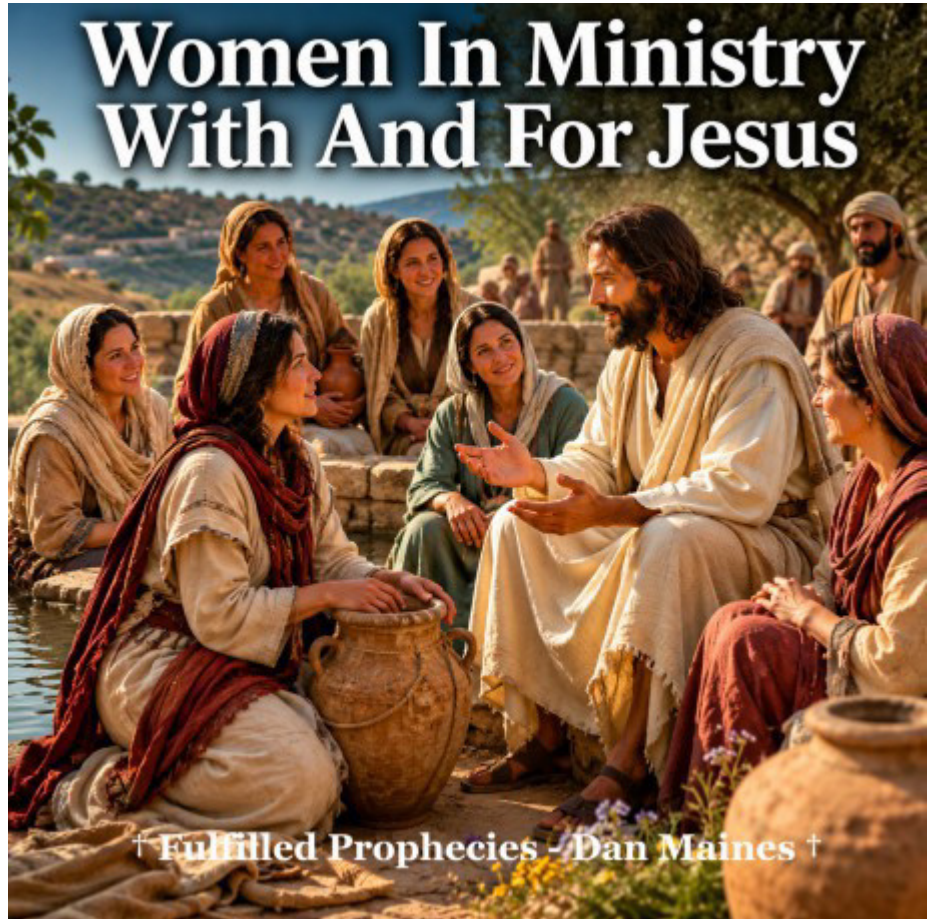


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Women In Ministry With And For Jesus



By Dan Maines

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Introduction

† Many people assume women were silent spectators in the ministry of Jesus, but the scriptures present a very different picture.

† Women followed Jesus, supported His ministry, learned from Him, proclaimed His message, and were entrusted with important responsibilities in advancing the gospel.

† If Jesus commissioned women to proclaim the good news, we must carefully examine whether scripture permits women to

teach and preach the gospel today.

Luke 8:1-3

Soon afterward, Jesus began going around from one city and village to another, proclaiming and preaching the kingdom of God. The twelve were with Him, and also some women who had been healed of evil spirits and sicknesses: Mary who was called Magdalene, from whom seven demons had gone out, and Joanna the wife of Chuza, Herod's steward, and Susanna, and many others who were contributing to their support out of their private means.

† Women were not merely observers of Christ's ministry, they actively participated in it.

† These women traveled with Jesus and supported the proclamation of the kingdom.

† Scripture presents them as valuable co-laborers in the work being accomplished. (Luke 8:1-3)

John 4:28-30

So the woman left her waterpot and went into the city, and said to the people, "Come, see a Man who told me all the things that I have done; this is not the Christ, is He?" They left the city and were coming to Him.

† Jesus revealed Himself to the Samaritan woman and she immediately became a messenger of that truth.

† She did not keep the message private, she went into the city and publicly proclaimed what she had learned. (John 4:28-30)

† The result of her testimony was that people came to Christ. (John 4:30)

John 4:39

Now from that city many of the Samaritans believed in Him because of the word of the woman who testified, "He told me all the things that I have done."

† Scripture specifically states that many believed because of the word of the woman.

† This is evangelism in its simplest form, proclaiming Christ so

others may believe.

† If leading people to Christ is ministry, then the Samaritan woman was clearly engaged in ministry. (John 4:39)

Matthew 28:10

Then Jesus said to them, "Do not be afraid; go, bring word to My brothers to leave for Galilee, and there they will see Me."

† After His resurrection, Jesus instructed women to carry His message to others.

† The first witnesses of the resurrection were women, and Christ entrusted them with announcing that truth. (Matthew 28:10)

† The risen Lord was not reluctant to use women as messengers of His gospel.

John 20:17-18

Jesus said to her, "Stop clinging to Me, for I have not yet ascended to the Father; but go to My brothers and say to them, 'I am ascending to My Father and your Father, and My God and your God.'" Mary Magdalene came and announced to the disciples, "I have seen the Lord," and that He had said these things to her.

† Mary Magdalene was sent by Jesus Himself to deliver His message.

† She proclaimed the resurrection to the disciples before they saw the risen Christ themselves.

† If proclaiming the risen Christ is preaching the gospel, Mary was entrusted with that responsibility. (John 20:17-18)

Acts 2:17-18

'AND IT SHALL BE IN THE LAST DAYS,' God says,
'THAT I WILL POUR OUT MY SPIRIT ON ALL MANKIND;
AND YOUR SONS AND YOUR DAUGHTERS WILL PROPHECY,
AND YOUR YOUNG MEN WILL SEE VISIONS,
AND YOUR OLD MEN WILL HAVE DREAMS;
AND EVEN ON MY MALE AND FEMALE SERVANTS
I WILL POUR OUT MY SPIRIT IN THOSE DAYS,

And they will prophesy.

† God's Spirit was poured out on both men and women.

† The prophecy specifically says daughters and handmaidens would prophesy.

† God did not restrict His Spirit's gifts to men alone. (Acts 2:17-18)

1 Corinthians 11:5

But every woman who has her head uncovered while praying or prophesying disgraces her head, for it is one and the same as the woman whose head is shaved.

† Paul acknowledged women praying and prophesying in the assembly.

† His concern in this passage was conduct and order, not silence.

† A woman cannot be both prophesying and completely silent at the same time. (1 Corinthians 11:5)

Acts 18:26

and he began speaking boldly in the synagogue. But when Priscilla and Aquila heard him, they took him aside and explained the way of God more accurately to him.

† Priscilla participated in teaching Apollos, one of the most gifted preachers in the New Testament.

† Scripture records her involvement without criticism or correction.

† The focus is on accurate instruction, not on gender restrictions. (Acts 18:26)

Acts 21:8-9

On the next day we left and came to Caesarea, and we entered the house of Philip the evangelist, who was one of the seven, and stayed with him. Now this man had four virgin daughters who were prophetesses.

† Philip's daughters are specifically identified as women who prophesied.

† Scripture presents this as a gift from God, not as a violation of

God's will.

† Their ministry is recorded as a normal part of the New Covenant church. (Acts 21:8-9)

Romans 16:1-2

I recommend to you our sister Phoebe, who is a servant of the church which is at Cenchrea, 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.

† Phoebe is commended by Paul as a servant of the church.

† She was trusted and respected among believers.

† Paul encouraged the church to assist her in her ministry work. (Romans 16:1-2)

Romans 16:3-5

Greet Prisca and Aquila, my fellow workers in Christ Jesus, who risked their own necks for my life, to whom not only do I give thanks, but also all the churches of the Gentiles; also greet the church that is in their house. Greet Epaenetus, my beloved, who is the first convert to Christ from Asia.

† Priscilla is called a fellow worker in Christ Jesus.

† Paul placed her among those actively laboring in gospel ministry.

† Her contribution to the church is openly honored. (Romans 16:3-5)

Romans 16:7

Greet Andronicus and Junia, my kinsfolk and my fellow prisoners, who are outstanding in the view of the apostles, who also were in Christ before me.

† Junia is presented as a respected and well-known believer among the apostles.

† Her faithful service was recognized by the early church.

† This passage demonstrates the significant role women held among the first Christians. (Romans 16:7)

Philippians 4:2-3

I urge Euodia and I urge Syntyche to live in harmony in the Lord. Indeed, true companion, I ask you also, help these women who have shared my struggle in the cause of the gospel, together with Clement as well as the rest of my fellow workers, whose names are in the book of life.

† Paul described these women as laboring with him in the gospel.

† He placed them alongside fellow workers in gospel ministry.

† Their work was not insignificant, they were active participants in spreading the message of Christ. (Philippians 4:2-3)

Galatians 3:28

There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is neither male nor female; for you are all one in Christ Jesus.

† Under the New Covenant, all believers share equally in Christ.

† The gospel commission is not limited by ethnicity, social status, or gender.

† The focus of ministry is faithfulness to Christ and His message. (Galatians 3:28)

1 Timothy 2:12

But I do not allow a woman to teach or to exercise authority over a man, but to remain quiet.

† This verse is often quoted without considering its historical setting.

† Paul's letters addressed specific first-century congregational problems during the transition from Old Covenant Judaism into the New Covenant age. (1 Timothy 1:3-7)

† A local corrective instruction should not be used to overturn the many examples of women proclaiming God's truth throughout scripture.

1 Corinthians 14:34-35

the women are to keep silent in the churches; for they are not permitted to speak, but are to subject themselves, just as the

Law also says. If they desire to learn anything, let them ask their own husbands at home; for it is improper for a woman to speak in church.

† This passage must be understood alongside Paul's earlier acknowledgment that women prayed and prophesied. (1 Corinthians 11:5)

† The context of 1 Corinthians 14 is orderly worship and the correction of disruptions within the assembly.

† Paul cannot be forbidding all speech from women while simultaneously regulating how women prophesy publicly.

Historical References

† Miriam served as a prophetess in Israel and publicly declared God's works. (Exodus 15:20-21)

† Deborah judged Israel and delivered God's word to the nation. (Judges 4:4-5)

† Huldah the prophetess instructed the leaders of Judah concerning the Book of the Law. (2 Kings 22:14-20)

† Eusebius recorded numerous faithful Christian women who served the church during the first centuries after Christ.

† Early Christian history contains accounts of women who taught, evangelized, suffered persecution, and faithfully proclaimed Christ.

How It Applies To Us Today

† Every believer should use the gifts God has given them for the benefit of the body of Christ.

† The Samaritan woman did not wait for permission from religious leaders before telling others about Jesus.

† Mary Magdalene faithfully delivered the message Christ gave her.

† God poured out His Spirit on sons and daughters alike.

† If God has gifted a woman to teach scripture accurately and proclaim Christ faithfully, we should evaluate her message by scripture, not by her gender.

† The church is strengthened when all believers use their gifts

to glorify Christ and spread the gospel.

Q & A Appendix

Q: Was the Samaritan woman a missionary?

A: Yes. She was sent from her encounter with Christ into her city where she proclaimed Him and many believed because of her testimony. (John 4:28-30; John 4:39)

Q: Are women allowed to spread the gospel?

A: Yes. Jesus sent women to announce His message, including the news of His resurrection. (Matthew 28:10; John 20:17-18)

Q: How is spreading the gospel different from preaching?

A: At its core, preaching is proclaiming God's message. When the Samaritan woman, Mary Magdalene, and other women publicly proclaimed Christ, they were communicating God's truth to others. (John 4:39; John 20:18)

Q: Did God give spiritual gifts only to men?

A: No. God's Spirit was poured out on sons and daughters, and both prophesied. (Acts 2:17-18)

Q: What about "let your women keep silence in the churches"?

A: The same letter acknowledges women praying and prophesying publicly. The context of 1 Corinthians 14 is orderly worship and the correction of disruptions, not a universal prohibition against women speaking. (1 Corinthians 11:5; 1 Corinthians 14:34-35)

Q: If women could proclaim Christ publicly, why would preaching today be forbidden?

A: Scripture repeatedly shows women proclaiming God's truth to men and women alike. The burden of proof rests on anyone claiming Christ approved women proclaiming the gospel publicly but forbids it in the assembly of believers.

† This is the fulfilled perspective we proclaim at Fulfilled Prophecies †

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Source Index

† Luke 8:1-3; John 4:28-30, 39; Matthew 28:10; John 20:17-18;

Acts 2:17-18; 1 Corinthians 11:5; Acts 18:26; Acts 21:8-9;
Romans 16:1-2; Romans 16:3-5; Romans 16:7; Philippians 4:2-3;
Galatians 3:28; 1 Timothy 2:12; 1 Corinthians 14:34-35
† Miriam; Deborah; Huldah; Eusebius

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