



# January 2023

Editor, Keith Sharp

Designer, William Stewart



- unless otherwise noted, answers to questions by Keith Sharp -

## In This Issue...

### Wallace - Sharp Debate

#### May Women Speak in Mixed Gender Bible Classes?

- I affirm that the N.T. reveals that women should not teach by speaking in mixed gender church meetings.  
**John Wallace** | *Beamsville, Ontario, Canada*
- The Lord authorizes women to speak in Bible classes containing both men and women as long as the women remain in subjection to the men.  
**Keith Sharp** | *Mountain Home, Arkansas, USA*

Finally, brethren

**WHATEVER THINGS**

are true  
are noble  
are just  
are pure  
are lovely

PHILIPPIANS  
**4:8**

are of good report  
IF THERE IS ANY VIRTURE AND IF THERE IS ANYTHING PRAISEWORTHY –  
**meditate on these things.**

You can download this month's Meditate On These Things as a PDF file by clicking [here](#). Also, an archive of past MOTT issues is available at [christstheway.com](http://christstheway.com).

## Affirmative

John Wallace

I affirm that the N.T. reveals that women should not teach by speaking in mixed gender church meetings.

Introductory Remarks. My purpose in this debate is to show a consistent, scriptural method of women's conduct in all church meetings.

How does God want us to conduct all our church meetings?

In our ten church meetings, we allow women to speak in the first four, but are silent in last six.

1. Sunday A.M. Bible study.
2. Wed. Bible study.
3. Women's monthly or weekly Bible study.
4. Vacation Bible school and children's weekly Bible classes.
5. Sunday A.M. worship.
6. Men's weekly or monthly Bible study.
7. Sunday P.M. worship;
8. Elder's meetings.
9. Men's business meetings in absence of elders.

10. Gospel meetings. Is the above practice according to God's Word?

Note below God's seven universal/eternal church meeting conduct rules mentioned in I Cor.14:1-40. These rules are not just for the Corinthian's Sun. worship, but for all church meetings then and now, just like all N.T. principles apply then and now unless context suggests otherwise; I Cor. 4:17. This fact is confirmed by a study of all N.T. church meetings: women did not speak/teach in any mg. (mixed gender) church meetings with apostolic consent with four exceptions mentioned below. A study of thirty versions, three lexicons, Strong and Vine, all these Greek language authorities agreed: women should not speak where it usurps authority in church or home.

All mg. church meetings should be conducted

1. in love- V.1;
2. with edification Vs. 3, 4, 5, 12, 17, 26;
3. with words easily understood- V. 9-19.
4. with speakers speaking one at a time- V. 29-31;
5. with peace, without confusion- V. 33;
6. with women's silence- V. 34-35;
7. with decency and order- V40.

If we avoid one of God's conduct rules- women's silence in mg. Bible studies- we can by the same reasoning avoid all 7 rules and have meetings like the Corinthian church meetings, which Paul condemned.

There are four God -made exceptions to women's silence in mg. church meetings:

1. Women's mutual singing with men; Col. 3:16; Eph. 5:19.
2. Women making the good confession before baptism; Rom. 10:9; Matt.10:32; Act 8:37.
3. Women confessing sins in church meetings are following Peter's example of giving Sapphira an opportunity to confess her sin before the church; Acts 5:1-12.
4. Women teaching women and children in church classes and in VBS; Titus 2: 2-4; I Tim.5:10-14.

Disagreements over women's silence in some church meetings is conditioned on the meaning of the noun hesuchia ( quiet/silence) as used in I Tim. 2:11-12. Thayer's Lexicon: " 2. silence: Acts 22:2; I Tim. 2:11." Barry's Lexicon: "(1) silence Acts: 22:2; I Tim. 2:11." The Analytical Greek Lexicon: "silence, silent attention, Ax. 22: 2; I Tim. 2: 11-12." Granted, hesuchia and it's derivatives are given other meanings in other scriptures by these lexicons, but we are dealing exclusively with it's meaning in I Tim. 2: 11-12. Women's silence doesn't mean some silence, some speaking in mg. Bible studies; i.e.- silence in teaching, leading songs or prayers, but speaking to comment, to ask and answer questions and read the Bible. Truth is always consistent and corroborative, but we are inconsistent and unscriptural in the way women are treated in our mg. Bible studies.

In I Tim. 2:11-12 Paul used the generic expression "I do not permit a women to teach," he did not use the more specific term "to be the teacher" which some believe he did say; "to teach" includes the teaching of the teacher, but not only of the teacher, but the teaching of all men over whom she should not usurp authority. Paul also said women should not usurp authority over "man," which includes more than the teacher. This is verified by the speaking of women in I Cor. 14: 34-35 causing them to usurp authority of all men in assembly. These women by speaking were doing shameful and unlawful acts and women speaking in mg. Bible study are doing similar things. This info. should nullify the doctrine that only the words of a teacher are teaching and women's comments in mg. Bible study are not teaching nor usurping authority.

The teaching- learning connection: if one is learning from the words of another, the one listening is the learner and the one talking is the teacher, no matter how much teaching is being done nor who is the listener and who is the talker. This principle applies to a few words of comments or a half hour of comments by men or women in mg. Bible studies.

The effect of commenting in Bible classes is teaching. Scriptural commenting by the men in audience is teaching, by adding information that the teacher missed or by helping clarify the teacher's information. Since the words "comments or commenting" are not used in the KJV, forcing us to go to a secular dictionary: "comment, a note, explanation, remark, opinion, criticism, reflection, clarification." Doubleday Roget's Thesaurus Dictionary. From the above definition how can some affirm that commenting is not teaching? According to Paul, women are usurping by saying few or many words in commenting or few or many words in praying in mg. Bible studies.

How to recognize when women start usurping authority in mixed gender church meetings.

1. The moment women start talking like men.
2. The moment women's words start teaching men.
3. The moment men become quiet learners by the words of talkative women.
4. The moment that women fail to be completely subjected, silent, non teaching learners to avoid usurping authority.

Paul said, "Let women keep silent in the churches". The NIV in I Cor.14: 33 says; "As in all the churches of the saints, women should remain silent in the churches." Mg. Bible studies are church meetings, therefor women should remain silent in these meetings. First century churches had one weekly meeting- Sun. Worship- and in this one meeting women were to be silent. Today we have two weekly church meetings where women can speak. Where is the authority for a church adding two weekly mg. Bible studies where women can speak?

Conducting all mg. church meetings decently and orderly includes women's silence in these meetings, therefor women speaking in these meetings would make them indecent and disorderly; I Cor.14: 33-40. To please God in Bible classes, we should have separate men's/women's classes, where women in their own classes can teach, comment, lead singing, pray and read the Bible.

Understanding correctly Paul's terms of demeanour and terms of activity used in I Tim. 2:11-12.

Women should be (terms of demeanour). Women should not do (terms of activity).

Quiet/silent.....opposite term.....Talking- action which results in teaching.

Learning.....opposite term.....Teaching- action resulting in usurping.

Submissive.....opposite term.....Usurping- the result of wrongful teaching.

Advocates of women speaking in mg. Bible study obligate themselves to specify how long a women can speak before she usurps authority- will it be thirty seconds or thirty minutes? According to the Bible it is zero seconds; the same amount of time she can lead prayers in mg. Bible studies. Women can teach anyone, anywhere and any time they do not usurp authority in so doing; II Tim. 2:2.

Some believe that changes made to N.T. principles allows women to speak in church meetings.

1. The change from the whole church gathered together in one place (I Cor. 14:23) to dividing into many classes for Bible study nullifies women's silence so they can speak in mg. Bible classes.
2. The change from Sun. Worship (Acts 20:7) to a weekly gospel meeting nullifies women silence so they can lead the singing in gospel meetings.
3. The change from having the Lord's Supper on Sun, (Acts 20: 7-8) to having no Supper during gospel meetings, nullifies women's silence so they can lead prayers in the gospel meetings.
4. The change from having Sun. giving (I Cor. 16: 1-2) to having no giving in gospel meetings nullifies women silence so women can make the opening and closing remarks in a gospel meeting.

Because of similarity, if not bound by church tradition, one can see that all four above are unscriptural.

Declaring women's silence in mg. Bible study as a matter of opinion on which we can differ, does not make it so. No apostle ever said that women's silence in mg. church meetings is a matter of opinion. Paul

treated women's silence in mg. church meetings as a matter of faith, like baptism, church music and frequency of the Lord's Supper. Denominations, without any scriptural support, justify their differences on these matters by declaring them all as matters of opinion. It is improper to justify our differences on matters of faith- i.e. women speaking in mg. church meetings- by declaring them as matters of opinion. Have we forgotten the old adage-"In matters of faith – unity; in matters of opinion- liberality; in all matters – love."? Where does the N.T. say that women's silence in mg. church meetings are matters of opinion? The echo comes roaring back loud and clear, Where? Where? Where? My fervent prayer: that in matters of faith, we all speak the same things with be no divisions among us.

---

## Reply

Keith Sharp

Brother Wallace is self contradictory. He affirms women may sing in the assembly but denies they may teach. When they sing they teach (Colossians 3:16).

Brother Wallace has ten different kinds of church meetings. First Corinthians 14 is for when "the whole church comes together in one place" (verse 23). It doesn't specifically pertain to our classes. Further, it's purpose is to regulate the use of miraculous, spiritual gifts in the worship assembly of the church. The context is Paul's dissertation on spiritual gifts (1 Corinthians 12:1-14:40). Twenty seven of the forty verses of chapter fourteen specifically refer to spiritual gifts.

I agree with all seven of his rules. But number 6, "women's silence", we both believe is qualified. He allows them to sing. They speak and teach when they sing (Ephesians 5:18-19; Colossians 3:16). Paul reveals by the law of contrast the kind of speaking he forbids; "they are to be submissive, as the law also says" (verse 34). Women may not do any speaking in an assembly of the church where men are present by which they would be exercising authority (cf. Titus 2:15).

First Timothy 2:11-12 is not limited to the worship assembly. The assembly is neither mentioned nor implied. Furthermore, First Timothy 2:11-12 does not forbid a woman to teach. She is not "to teach or to have authority over a man, but to be in silence" (verse 12). Either the phrase "over a man" qualifies both "teach" and "have authority," or a woman cannot teach anything to anyone anywhere. She wouldn't be allowed to teach her child to tie his shoe laces. A woman may not be the teacher in charge of a Bible class in which men are present.

Brother Wallace needs to explain why a woman in a Bible class in which all are invited to answer questions, ask questions, and make brief comments is exercising authority. If a child in a home Bible class taught by his mother answers a question, asks a question, or makes a brief comment, has the child exercised authority over his mother (cf. Ephesians 6:1; Luke 2:51)?

"if one is learning from the words of another, the one listening is the learner and the one talking is the teacher." Does this mean the men must not listen to the women singing in the assembly? (Ephesians 5:18-19; Colossians 3:16) Why not?

Certainly commenting is teaching. So is singing (Colossians 3:16).

"How to recognize when women start usurping authority in mixed gender church meetings." When a woman is over the men (1 Timothy 2:11-12), i.e., when she is in charge of the class. I hasten to add that "silence" ("quiet," NASB, ESV) would preclude a woman from being talkative and domineering in a mixed Bible class.

First Corinthians fourteen specifically applies to "when the whole church comes together in one place" (verse 23). I don't know how many different kinds of gatherings the first century church had, but Paul taught over the whole church assembled (Acts 20:7) and groups smaller than the whole church (Acts

20:17; Galatians 2:2). The "...women speaking in these meetings would make them indecent and disorderly," therefore, women" singing "in these meetings would make them indecent and disorderly" (Ephesians 5:18-19). If not, why not?

Brother Wallace wants to have separate men's and women's classes. We do have a ladies class where I preach from which men are excluded, but to forbid mixed gender classes is to make a law where God made none. Apollos, Aquila, and his wife Priscilla, were in a mixed gender Bible study, and Priscilla, along with Aquila, taught Apollos "the way of God more accurately" (Acts 18:26). I, as the apostle Paul, "refuse to yield submission even for an hour" to human religious laws (Galatians 2:3-5).

Brother Wallace's application of his "terms of demeanor" eliminates women singing in the worship assembly (Colossians 3:16).

If we must set a time limit on women speaking, must we set a time limit on our songs? (Ephesians 5:18-19) Brother Wallace's time limit (0 seconds) eliminates women singing in the worship assembly.

"Women can teach anyone, anywhere and any time they do not usurp authority in so doing; II Tim. 2:2." Amen! Logically and scripturally Brother Wallace surrendered his position.

I do not agree with any of the four positions Brother Wallace says some believe, nor does my position imply them.

The kind of silence Paul demands is not a matter of opinion. Women must not speak, either in the worship assembly or Bible classes, in such a way they are not "submissive" (1 Corinthians 14:34; 1 Timothy 2:11) or "have authority over a man" (1 Timothy 2:12).

I remind the reader: Brother Wallace is self contradictory. He affirms women may sing in the assembly but denies they may teach. When they sing they teach (Colossians 3:16).

---

## Response

John Wallace

### John's concluding remarks of the Sharp-Wallace debate on women speaking in church meetings.

I. Bro. Sharp made a good presentation of his beliefs in this debate, but left unanswered the following:

- A. There has been no response to the many challenges to produce one N.T. church meeting in which women taught by speaking with apostolic consent.
- B. Even though truth is consistent, no scriptural reasons were given for the many inconsistencies in Churches of Christ today which have women speaking in mg. church Bible studies.
- C. To please God we must "prove all things" about women's silence in church meetings. Keith's notable statement "I do not agree with any of the four positions Brother Wallace says some believe", **does not prove that God disagrees with the four positions stated in page 3 of my affirmative article. This is what Keith must do to prove his position, but has failed to do.**

II. Keith's major premise (mentioned in seven paragraphs in his rebuttal) that women singing with men in mg. church meetings justifies women commenting in mg. Bible studies. This doctrine does not stand scriptural examination. Women teaching men by mutual singing is one of God's four exemptions to women's silence in church meetings; Eph. 5:19. This mutual teaching by singing together, does not license women to lead singing or prayer nor teach solo by their comments in mg. Bible study. **Women are to be silent – sigao- hesuchia- any where their speaking usurps authority; with God's four exceptions.** We know that women's comments in Bible study are forbidden teaching: men are learning from their

comments, therefore by God's authority, women are not to teach in any way, shape or form that usurps men's authority; I Tim. 2: 11-12.

III. Keith needs to prove that questions addressed by the class teacher in a mg. church Bible study can be scripturally answered by women. He assumes the point he needs to prove. In part of the Corinthian worship service there was dialogue- men asking questions of the speakers, but forbidden to the women; I Cor.14:34-35. This is God's authority forbidding women's dialogue in all church meetings, in the first century and today; I Cor. 4:17. Some believe this does not apply to Bible study because the whole church is not gathered together in one place. If God's rule of women's silence does not apply to Bible study, then all of God's seven church conduct rules do not apply to Bible study. **Avoid one rule, avoid all rules and have meetings similar to the Corinthian's meetings which Paul condemned. Keith agrees with Paul: God's 7 rules of church conduct apply in worship, but without authority, he believes only 6 of the 7 rules apply to Bible study; he omits women's silence. Admitting all seven rules apply to Bible study would defeat this doctrine.**

IV. Because there is generic, but no specific Bible instructions on how to conduct church Bible studies some believe they can, without authority, omit women's silence and allow them to ask/answer questions, comment and read the Bible. Many Bible verses oppose this doctrine, but not one verse, properly understood, supports it. **It is supported by human wisdom and church tradition.**

V. The statement that I have surrendered my position by saying that a women can teach anyone anywhere and anytime it does not usurp authority and that I am trying to make unwarranted laws by stating that we should have men's and women's separate Bible classes are both false. Keith has misunderstood me on both accounts and can determine the truth by re-reading my articles.

VI. Using the rule that women's silence only applies when the whole church is gathered in one place (I Cor. 14:23) and therefor means it only applies in A.M. and P.M. worship and gospel meetings, but then also demanding women's silence in church meetings where the whole church is not gathered together in one place: men's Bible classes, elder's meetings and church business meetings is inconsistent and contradictory. Truth is always consistent and static, error it not.

VII. **Some admit women can usurp authority, but when asked how long can they speak in Bible study before they usurp authority, they avoid the question by asking "must we set a time limit on our songs?"** This response is comparing apples with oranges. God's will: men and women can teach each other by singing together, so the number of songs is immaterial; Col. 3:16. Women are to be silent in all mg. church meetings (with God's four exceptions), **so any amount** of commenting or asking/answering questions in church meetings is usurping; I Tim. 2:11-12; I Cor. 14:34-35. **It's like asking: how much can one steal before it becomes wrong? Answer: any amount of stealing is wrong!!!** Keith correctly believes that women should be silent in gospel meetings, but gives no Bible reasons for the inconsistency of women speaking in some mg. church meetings, but silent in others.

VIII. Referring to "they taught Apollos" in Acts 18:26 meaning that Priscilla taught Apollos like her husband taught Apollos is incorrectly used as authority for women teaching by commenting in mg. church Bible study. Note the consequences of this doctrine. If Priscilla can teach one man in a private study with her husband present, she can teach twenty men in a mg. church Bible study. **In the above private study, her teaching would be usurping her husband's duty. Any teaching by commenting in mg. church meetings, she would be usurping the authority of all men in these meetings. Priscilla must have helped her husband teach, without teaching.** With Priscilla helping her husband teach, without teaching, Apollos was taught.

IX. **Keith said "First Corinthians 14 is for when the whole church comes together in one place (verse 23). It does not specifically pertain to our classes."** The above statement is similar to the first of four changes to N.T. principles that some erroneously believe allows women to speak in mg. church

meetings. We mentioned three other similar erroneous attempts trying to justify women speaking in gospel meetings. We encourage all to re-read this section of my affirmative article on page 3.

**Please Brother Sharp, let us seek peace and pursue it on this issue by following God's Word.**

This debate will appear, Lord willing, in booklet form in January/23 and anyone may obtain a free copy by contacting johnwallace123321@gmail.com.

---

## **Affirmative**

Keith Sharp

Brother John Wallace, a long time friend of mine, has asked me to debate him on the subject of women speaking in public meetings of the church. I have agreed, and our written debate follows.

**I affirm: The Lord authorizes women to speak in Bible classes containing both men and women as long as the women remain in subjection to the men.**

My proposition includes both Bible studies organized by the local church and those carried out by families and individuals.

Since all are commanded to speak to each other in song (Ephesians 5:18-19), the Scriptures authorize women to speak in the public worship assembly when both men and women are present. Thus, women are authorized to speak in the assembly. Singing in the assembly is a form of teaching (Colossians 3:16).

In fact, the Scriptures authorize women to teach the church. The gift of prophecy was to edify (build up by teaching) the church (1 Corinthians 14:4). Certain women had the gift of prophecy (Acts 2:17; 21:8-9; 1 Corinthians 11:5). Therefore, certain women were to edify (build up by teaching) the church.

Thus, a woman may teach any scriptural truth to anyone, anywhere, in any arrangement, unless there is a Bible restriction prohibiting it.

### **Scriptural Limitations on Woman's Teaching**

Two New Testament passages establish one limitation on the woman's teaching role. The first is First Corinthians 14:34-35:

*Let your women keep silent in the churches, for they are not permitted to speak; but they are to be submissive, as the law also says. And if they want to learn something, let them ask their own husbands at home; for it is shameful for women to speak in church.*

The chapter contains four principles that always apply in our public worship assemblies. Three times he uses the comprehensive term "all" to point out a permanent truth, and once he states that the principle was true even under the law. These principles are: "Let all things be done for edification" (verse 26), "For God is not the author of confusion but of peace, as in all the churches of the saints" (verse 33), "Let your women keep silent in the churches, for they are not permitted to speak; but they are to be submissive, as the law also says" (verse 34), and "Let all things be done decently and in order" (verse 40).

"Churches" in verse 34 and "church" in verse 35 are references to the public worship assemblies of the local church. The immediate context pertains to tongue speakers and prophets addressing the worship assemblies (verses 27-33).

The apostle enjoins, "Let your women keep silent in the churches, for they are not permitted to speak" (verse 34).

The Greek word translated “keep silent” is “sigao,” which means “say nothing, keep silent” (Arndt and Gingrich. 757). Whatever kind of speaking the apostle has in mind, the woman may not do it at all.

If this refers to all speech, women cannot sing (Ephesians 5:19), confess their faith (Romans 10:9-10), or confess sin (James 5:16) in church.

The contrast in First Corinthians 14:34 establishes what kind of speaking women are forbidden to do. Opposite to this kind of speaking, “they are to be submissive.” The apostle prohibits women from engaging in the kind of speaking of the context - authoritatively addressing the public worship assembly. By doing this women cast off their role of subjection to man. From the very beginning the principle of feminine submission has been true (verse 34; cf. Genesis 3:16). Women must not speak in the assembly in such a way that their subjection to man is violated.

The other restrictive passage is First Timothy 2:11-12: “Let a woman learn in silence with all submission. And I do not permit a woman to teach or to have authority over a man, but to be in silence.”

The purpose of First Timothy was to teach Timothy as an evangelist how to conduct himself relative to the church (1 Timothy 3:14-15). These principles are primarily fulfilled in the local congregation, the only organized relationship divinely authorized for the church.

First Timothy 2:9-15 gives divine legislation peculiar to godly women and reasons for these commands. Verses nine and ten regulate the dress of women. These requirements apply both in and out of the assembly. Verses eleven and twelve limit the woman in her roles of learning (verse 11) and teaching (verse 12). Verses thirteen and fourteen state the reasons for the woman’s subjection, and verse fifteen assures her she can be saved. These truths do primarily apply to her relationship to the local congregation, in light of the general context, but their application is not limited to the public worship assembly.

Verse eleven regulates a woman’s learning. Her activities as a Bible student have two limitations not placed on men: “in silence with all submission.”

The term “silence” is from a different Greek word than that in First Corinthians 14:34. It can either mean “quietness: descriptive of the life of one who stays at home doing his own work, and does not officiously meddle with the affairs of others” or “silence” (Thayer. 281), depending on the context. The **NASB** translates the verse: “A woman must quietly receive instruction with entire submissiveness.” The **ESV** renders it, “Let a woman learn quietly with all submissiveness.” The apostle Peter directs women to manifest a “quiet spirit” (1 Peter 3:4). The word “quiet” in First Peter 3:4 is a different form of the same word translated “silence” in First Timothy 2:11.

The principle behind all special limitations on women as students and teachers of the Bible is feminine subjection. In an arrangement, such as a Bible class, where questions and answers are invited, and a man is in charge, a woman may ask a question or offer a comment as long as she is not disruptive or domineering without violating the divine principle of submission. To demand that women not utter a word in congregational Bible study arrangements would contradict the truth that prophetesses could edify the first century church.

Thus, “silence” in First Timothy 2:11-12 refers to “quietness,” the attitude of one who is not domineering. The term “submission” means “a yielding of power or surrendering of person and power to the control of another” (Webster. 2277). In all the woman’s learning activities in the local church, she must be submissive to male leadership.

Verse twelve limits women as Bible teachers in the local church. Paul forbids women to do two things in the local church in reference to men: “teach” or “exercise dominion over” men. We have already seen that the Lord authorizes women to teach men, even in the local church. The Scriptures do not contradict



themselves.

The law of contrast will again help us to see the apostle's point. Men, in relationship to the church, are to pray everywhere, i.e., in all situations (1 Timothy 2:8). Paul contrasts the role of women with that of men (verses 9-15). It should be obvious, since women silently pray with the man who leads, verse eight refers to men leading in prayer.

In contrast, women are not to teach men, i.e., they are not to take the leadership position in teaching men. Nor are women in any other way to "exercise dominion over" men in the local church.

The principle is the same as that of First Corinthians 14:34-35. Women, in their roles as students and teachers of the Bible in the local church, must be submissive to men.

### **Practical Application**

A woman must not be a preacher. Evangelists are to speak "with all authority" (Titus 2:15). This phrase means "with every possible form of authority" (Thayer. 244). It is the opposite "to be submissive" in First Corinthians 14:34, which restricts the woman in her teaching. Literally, the woman in her teaching role, relative to man, must be under authority; whereas the preacher, in his teaching, is to be in authority over.

Furthermore, women must not take any leading role in the assembly of the church when men are present. That is why the apostle makes special reference to woman's submission when he forbids her to do the kind of speaking some women were doing at Corinth (1 Corinthians 14:34-35). Everything done in the assembly of the church is to be for edification, i.e., building up by teaching (verse 26; cf. Hebrews 10:24-25). By taking a leading role in the assembly where men are present, the woman would be teaching over a man. Thus, women must not make announcements, wait on the Lord's table, lead prayers, lead singing, or take the collection in worship assemblies where men are present.

A woman must not be the teacher in charge of a Bible class where men are present. She would be exercising dominion over men, in violation of First Timothy 2:11-12.

**Therefore, the Lord authorizes women to speak in Bible classes containing both men and women as long as the women remain in subjection to the men.**

---

### **Reply**

John Wallace

We take no pleasure in listing our inconsistencies regarding women speaking in church meetings, but we must take our heads out of the sand to see things as they really are, so we can make corrections to please God.

1. Claiming to do all things by Bible authority and not doing so in regards to women speaking in mg. Bible studies, is inconsistent and contradictory. Truth is always consistent and corroborative.
2. Our Bible class teachers can't ask "sister, would you help me teach my class by commenting on a certain verse", but will allow her to help teach his class the same verse by unsolicited comments.
3. A song service added to our Sun. P.M. worship is considered part of worship so women can't speak, but adding a Bible study to our Sun. A.M. worship is considered not part of worship so women can speak.
4. Women's forbidden dialogue in worship service (I Cor. 14:34-35), is similar to woman's dialogue in mg. Bible study which many consider acceptable. Why the difference?
5. Our Bible class teachers won't quote as authority the written comments of women's Bible commentaries because it would usurp authority, but will accept women's in-class verbal comments

that usurp authority.

6. Women can't speak in mg. gospel meetings, but can speak in mg. Bible studies. Why this contradiction?
7. In the teaching-learning process, learning proceeds from teaching, but some men declare that women's Bible study commenting is not teaching even though they admit they are learning from women's comments.
8. In our mg. Bible classes women can comment, ask/answer questions and speak to read the Bible, but can not be the teacher, lead songs and lead prayers. O consistency, thou art a true virtue that pleases God.
9. To avoid all the above inconsistencies and please God, we should follow God's seven church meeting conduct rules which includes women's silence in all mg. church meeting and have separate men's and women's Bible classes on Sunday and Wednesday, where women in their own classes, can scripturally teach the class, comment, ask/answer questions, lead singing and prayer and speak to read the Bible.

Women's teaching men by singing with them, is not a violation of women's silence in mg. church meetings.

Woman's scriptural mutual activity done with men is not usurping authority. Men's and women's scriptural teaching by singing together (Eph. 5:19), is similar to the teaching done by mutually saying "amen" together after a prayer or mutually saying the Lord's prayer together. If any of these activities were done solo by a woman, she would be usurping authority. Teaching by singing together with men does not authorize women teaching men by her solo comments.

Women's solo commenting is forbidden teaching (I Tim. 2:11-12), because they are teaching men by their comments. Since the result of commenting is teaching to help the teacher teach his class, women's comments, are forbidden teaching usurping authority. If women's comments are not teaching, their comments are a waste of class time and they should remain silent. Both women's comments that teach and those comments that don't teach, have negative results.

Since women should not dialogue in worship service (I Cor.14:34-35), there is no scriptural reason why women should be able to dialogue in mg. Bible study. Both worship/Bible study are designed by God to worship Him by praising and honouring His Name, but it is shameful and unlawful for women to speak solo in both services.

Women prophets taught by speaking, but according to Paul, not in mg. church meetings (I Cor.14:34-35).

Paul said women should be silent in the Corinthian worship, without saying "except for women prophets." Women prophets speaking in worship in the first century, would justify women speaking-teaching in worship services today. Allowing women prophets to speak in the assembly, while prohibiting all other women, would make God a respecter of persons (Acts 10:34). A complete study of the N.T. reveals no women prophets speaking in mg. church meetings. The two N.T. references to women prophets- Acts 2:17 and Acts 21:9 do not say that they prophesied in public church meetings. The reference to prophets in I Cor.14:29-32, is not a necessary inference that women prophets spoke in the Corinthian worship assembly. Paul's use of the word "women" in I Cor.14:34 means all women. Believing that I Cor.11:5 teaches that women prophets spoke in worship, forces one to also believe that women can lead prayers in worship, because both women's prophesying and praying are mentioned in same context. Searching for a N.T. passage that authorizes women prophets speaking in mg. church meetings, you search in vain.

Where is the scriptural authority to support Keith's statement: "A woman (in mg. Bible study-JW) may ask a question or offer a comment as long it is not disruptive or domineering without violating the divine principle of submission"? This is similar to saying a woman may lead prayers and songs in mg. Bible study, as long as it is not disruptive or domineering? What scripture makes this distinction in mg. Bible

study: women's solo comments are scriptural, but her speaking solo to lead prayers or songs are not? No scriptures teach this.

A quiet, submissive attitude helps women to avoid usurping by speaking, it does not license them to speak.

A women's proper demeanor does not authorize her to speak/teach in mg. Bible study, because women are to be completely submissive, silent (*hesuchia*), non-teaching learners to avoid usurping authority in all mg. church meetings (I Tim.2:11-12). Even if you consider *hesuchia* in this passage to mean women's quiet demeanor, this would not allow them to teach men by their comments because, according to Paul, women ought to be completely subjected, non teaching learners, not talkative commentators teaching by their comments.

Completely subjected: no teaching in any way, shape or form, that will usurp authority.

Keith said "We have already seen that the Lord authorizes women to teach men, even in the local church".

This is a true statement, if he is referring to women teaching men by singing with them, but if he is referring to women teaching men by their solo comments in mg. Bible study, the scriptures do not support this doctrine.

In reference to I Tim. 2:1-15, Keith spoke truth when he said "Verse twelve limits women as Bible teachers".

This verse not only limits women as Bible class teachers, it prohibits their comments in mg. Bible study. The doctrine that women only usurp authority by becoming the teacher of the class and not by her commenting is refuted by recognizing the effect of women's commenting in mg. Bible study is forbidden teaching.

Both Keith and I agree that women should not speak in mg. Bible study where it usurps authority.

We disagree on the amount of women's words that constitutes usurping. Keith believes (if I understand him correctly) that a few words spoken in tranquility and submission does not usurp authority, but many words – eg. two hundred words- spoken with the same demeanor, is sinning!!! This sounds like saying "it's ok to steal \$1, but wrong to steal \$200." A complete study of all N.T mg. church meetings, reveals no women commenting, with apostolic consent, not even for a few seconds. This fair question, asked many times, has received no answer: how much can a women with a quiet, submissive demeanor say in a mg. gender church Bible study, before she usurps authority? This question is the true center of this debate.

Authority for church meetings besides Sunday worship and women's silence in all mg. church meetings.

There is generic authority for church meetings other than Sun. worship. The early church had meetings other than Sunday worship: meetings every day (Acts 2:42-46); a meeting to choose seven deacons (Acts 6:1-6); a meeting to receive the apostles and elders decision on Gentile Christians keeping the law of Moses (Acts 15). Since the early church had these meetings, we also can have similar meetings, as long as we abide by God's seven church conduct rules in all mg. meetings, which includes women's silence-sigao. God tells us how to conduct all church meetings from His example of how the Corinthian church was to conduct their Sun. worship meetings.

We must rely on God's promise that all scripture is given to completely furnish us unto the good works of how to conduct all church meetings (II Tim. 3:16-17). This info. is given in I Cor.14:1-40: the seven God given church meeting conduct rules previously mentioned in my affirmative article. God's information on this topic is logical, consistent and scriptural: the attributes of truth. Having different rules for different mg.

church meetings: women's silence in worship and gospel meetings, but speaking in mg. Bible studies is confusing, inconsistent and unscriptural. The way to avoid all the inconsistencies with our present system and please God, is to have women's silence in all mg, church meetings (with God's four exceptions) and have separate men's and women's Bible classes on Sunday and Wednesday where women in their own classes can scripturally be the teacher, comment, ask/answer questions, lead prayers, lead singing and speak to read the Bible. May God bless us as we strive to please Him in these matters.

---

## Response

Keith Sharp

"Truth is always consistent and corroborative" (John Wallace, Affirmative article). But Brother Wallace is inconsistent. He denies women may do any teaching in Bible classes where men are present, but he allows women to teach by singing in the assembly (Colossians 3:16). Thus, Brother Wallace does not have the truth on this issue.

Brother Wallace affirmed exactly what I am defending in his affirmative: "Women can teach anyone, anywhere and any time they do not usurp authority in so doing." Amen! So, why does he deny my proposition, "The Lord authorizes women to speak in Bible classes containing both men and women as long as the women remain in subjection to the men"?

In reply to each of Brother Wallace's claims of my inconsistency:

1. unproven assertion
2. I solicit questions and comments from all participants in our open discussion Bible classes. I maintain control of the class as the teacher.
3. Women do speak (and teach) in all the assemblies by singing (Ephesians 5:18-19; Colossians 3:16). They don't lead the singing, and they don't control the classes.
4. We don't have dialogue (two speaking) by men or women in our assemblies. One is orderly; the other disorderly (1 Corinthians 14:40).
5. I don't quote any uninspired commentary as authoritative (1 Peter 4:11). I wouldn't mind reading a true comment by a woman to a mixed Bible class. I'm still in charge of the class.
6. Neither men nor women offer comments in gospel meetings.
7. Of course women's comments teach, just as their singing does.
8. I'm consistent. Women cannot be in charge in the assembly or in mixed gender Bible classes.
9. Brother Wallace is not allowed to make rules the church must follow (Galatians 2:3-5).

Some of our songs have sections where only women are to sing. If a man is leading the congregation, are the women violating their role? Even so, if a man is the teacher in charge of a Bible class, and a woman answers a question or makes a comment when called on, she has not violated her role of submission.

Of course women's comments are teaching, just as their singing is. A woman cannot be the teacher in charge of the class or the song leader.

No one should dialogue in the worship assembly (1 Corinthians 14:40).

Priscilla helped teach Apollos (Acts 18:24-26).

Paul forbade prophetesses to do the kind of speaking in the assembly he specified, authoritative (1 Corinthians 14:34-35). That would also negate their leading prayers where men are present.

Brother Wallace's parallel between Bible class comments and leading in the assembly breaks down with "lead." She cannot take the lead over men (1 Corinthians 14:34-35; 1 Timothy 2:11-12).

I used various passages in my affirmative to prove "a woman may teach any scriptural truth to anyone,

anywhere, in any arrangement, unless there is a Bible restriction prohibiting it.” It is Brother Wallace’s obligation to prove that a woman offering a comment or answering a question in a mixed gender Bible class is forbidden. Teaching is not that limitation, for women teach when they sing. If she assumes control of the class, she has sinned (1 Corinthians 14:34-35; 1 Timothy 2:11-12).

If all feminine speaking violates their submission, women cannot sing when men are present (Colossians 3:16).

Paul did not forbid women to teach men (cf. Acts 18:24-26; Colossians 3:16); he forbade women to teach over men (1 Corinthians 14:34-35; 1 Timothy 2:11-12).

Indeed, women cannot teach in such a way that they are over men.

Since Brother Wallace concedes women may teach men in the local church, he must withdraw his objection to women teaching. Regardless of whether it’s singing in the assembly or making a comment when called upon in a Bible class, it’s still teaching.

In his comments on 1 Timothy 2:11-12, Brother Wallace just assumes what he must prove, that to make a comment gives a woman a position of authority. If a child makes a comment in a home Bible class taught by his mother, has he assumed authority over her (Ephesians 6:1)?

The number of words is no more determinative of authority than the amount of money is of stealing. Has she taken authority over the class?

I don’t know where Apollos, Aquila, and Priscilla were, but Priscilla helped teach Apollos (Acts 18:24-26).

Brother Wallace doesn’t believe women must maintain silence in the assembly anymore than I do. He allows them to sing; I allow them to ask and answer questions in my Bible classes. We both teach them to be in submission to the men.

Brother Wallace concludes his reply with a list of unproven assertions and man made laws. We don’t have confusion in the classes of the church where I preach, and the women are in submission to the men. Our godly women don’t need man made rules to keep them in line. Brother Wallace proposes human laws to solve problems that exist only in his mind. We do “not yield submission even for an hour.”

---

If you no longer wish to receive these emails, please reply to this message with "Unsubscribe" in the subject line or simply click on the following link: [Unsubscribe](#)

[Click here](#) to forward this email to a friend

US

[Read](#) the VerticalResponse marketing policy.

