# LET'S TALK ABOUT IT



**Part 2 • November 8, 2026 | Pastor Jason Smotherman**

## WOMEN IN MINISTRY

> ***GENESIS 1:27 (NKJV)*** *So God created man in His own image; in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them.*

Both male and female bear God's image.

**We know in reading our origin story:** God blessed them. God spoke to them. God commissioned them. The original calling of humanity was given to male and female together.

**Through our biblical worldview we understand:** We are not the same, and there is beauty in the differences between male and female.

Equality does not require sameness. If we were the same, one of us would be unnecessary.

> ***GENESIS 3:16 (NKJV)*** *Your desire shall be for your husband, And he shall rule over you.*

The Fall distorted God's perfect design. Dominance was a result of the Fall, not the original commission. God's original design was male and female, different by design, both bearing His image, and together fulfilling His mission. God's redemption story involves restoring what the Fall distorted and recovering God's original design.

**THE NOISE FROM THE FALL IS INCREDIBLE:**

- Chauvinism — Men are superior to women.
- Feminism — Men and women must be the same in order to be equal.
- Competition — Male and female become rivals instead of partners.
- Domination — Leadership becomes about power rather than service.

But Scripture gives us another picture: Different by design. Equal in value. Together in calling. Redemption doesn't erase God's design. It restores our ability to fulfill it together.

**CHURCH BELIEF SYSTEMS ABOUT THE ROLES OF WOMEN.**

**1. STRICT COMPLEMENTARIAN**

Men and women are equal in value but have distinct roles. Senior pastoral leadership and governing authority are reserved for men.

**2. MODERATE COMPLEMENTARIAN**

Women may lead and minister in many areas, but the role of senior/lead pastor or elder is reserved for men.

**3. EGALITARIAN**

Men and women are equal in value and may both be called by God to operate in ministry or leadership role.

**4. PARKWAY'S VIEW**

The Holy Spirit calls and gifts both men and women for ministry at most levels of church leadership.

> ***ACTS 2:17–18 (NKJV)***
> *Your sons and your daughters shall prophesy... And on My menservants and on My maidservants I will pour out My Spirit in those days.*

Our position is not that men and women are the same. It is that God's call and the Spirit's gifting are not restricted by gender.

Different by design. Equal in value. Called by God. Empowered by the Spirit.

**BIBLICAL EXAMPLES OF WHY WE BELIEVE THIS WAY:**

Miriam — Prophet And Leader Of Israel
*Exodus 15:20–21, Micah 6:4*

Deborah — Prophet And Judge
*Judges 4:4–6, Judges 5:7*

Huldah — A Woman Who Spoke God's Word To National Leaders
*2 Kings 22:13-15*

Esther — A Woman Who Exercised Courageous Leadership
*Esther 4:16-17*

The Woman Of Proverbs 31 — Teaching And Instruction
*Proverbs 31:1, Proverbs 31:26*

Joel Prophesied That Women Would Speak By The Spirit
*Joel 2:28–29*

Anna — Prophet And Proclaimer Of Jesus
*Luke 2:36-38*

Jesus And The Samaritan Woman
*John 4:28–30, John 4:39*

Women Followed Jesus And Supported His Ministry
*Luke 8:1–3*

Mary Magdalene — Commissioned By The Risen Jesus
*John 20:17-18*

Pentecost Displays Restoration Completed
*Acts 2:16–18.*

Women Prayed And Prophesied In The Corinthian Church
*1 Corinthians 11:5*

Philip's Four Daughters — Women Who Prophesied
*Acts 21:8–9*

Lydia — Foundational Leadership In Philippi
*Acts 16:14-15, Acts 16:40*

Priscilla — Teacher And Coworker
*Acts 18:24–26, Romans 16:3*

Phoebe — Minister Of The Church
*Romans 16:1-2*

Junia — A Woman Notable Among The Apostles
*Romans 16:7, Acts 14:14*

Tryphena, Tryphosa, And Persis — Women Who Labored In Ministry
*Romans 16:12*

Mary — A Woman Who Worked Hard For The Church
*Romans 16:6*

Euodia And Syntyche — Paul's Gospel Coworkers
*Philippians 4:2–3*

Chloe — A Woman Of Influence In Corinth
*1 Corinthians 1:11*

Women Are Included Among Paul's Coworkers
*Romans 16 includes: Phoebe (minister/servant of the church), Priscilla (fellow worker), Junia (notable among the apostles), Mary (worked very hard), Tryphena (worker in the Lord), Tryphosa (worker in the Lord), Persis (worked very hard in the Lord).*

## WHAT ABOUT "WOMEN SHOULD KEEP SILENT"?

*1 Corinthians 14:34*

If we isolate that sentence, it sounds absolute. But it cannot mean that women are never allowed to speak during Christian gatherings. Why? Because Paul already said in 1 Corinthians 11:5, "But every woman who prays or prophesies..." Paul assumes women pray and prophesy. Therefore 1 Corinthians 14 must address a particular kind of speaking or disruption.

The larger chapter is about maintaining order when the church gathers. Paul also tells tongue-speakers to be silent. *1 Corinthians 14:28* And prophets are also told: *1 Corinthians 14:30* Three groups are told to be silent in particular circumstances. Tongue speakers. Prophets. Women.

The issue is not, who is allowed to speak? The issue is, how do we maintain order when the church gathers?

*1 Corinthians 14:40*, Let all things be done decently and in order.

## WHAT ABOUT "I DO NOT PERMIT A WOMAN TO TEACH"?

The second major passage is: *1 Timothy 2:11–12*

This passage deserves serious interpretation. But notice something often overlooked: "Let a woman learn."

In the ancient world, that statement itself was significant. Paul expects women to become students of Christian doctrine. The difficult question concerns what Paul means by: "teach or have authority." Whatever interpretation we adopt must fit Paul's own ministry practice. Because Paul also recognizes Priscilla explaining doctrine to Apollos. Phoebe serving the church. Junia among the apostles. Women prophesying and praying. Euodia and Syntyche laboring beside him in the gospel.

So 1 Timothy 2 cannot responsibly be interpreted in isolation from Paul's actual ministry. At the very least we must recognize that complete silence isn't what was being addressed, it was unruly and out of order behavior. Both men and women in Ephesus needed correction.

These passages also suggest women were not the only ones causing problems. Still speaking to women, Paul turned his attention to teaching and authority: "A woman should learn in quietness and full submission. I do not permit a woman to teach or to assume authority over a man; she must be quiet" (verses 11–12).

It is important to note that the only imperative in these verses is "a woman should learn." What Paul expected of women is a serious commitment to learning and discipleship.

While the Greek word Paul used, hēsuchia, can refer to silence, it is more accurately translated here as "in a calm state." Paul used the same term in 2 Thessalonians 3:12 when telling disruptive people to settle down and engage in honest work.

## GALATIANS — OUR COMMON STANDING IN CHRIST

*Galatians 3:26, Galatians 3:28*

Paul isn't saying biological distinctions disappear. He is declaring our common standing before Christ. Race doesn't determine access to Christ. Social status doesn't determine access to Christ. Gender doesn't determine access to Christ.

**We are one in Christ.**