

## I Corinthians 14:34-36

### The egalitarian position

For more information on this subject go to [apptoteach.org](http://apptoteach.org) theology file #407

#### I Corinthians 14

“<sup>33</sup> . . . As in all the churches <sup>34</sup> let the women keep silent in the churches; for they are not permitted to speak, but let them subject themselves, just as the Law also says. <sup>35</sup> And 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. <sup>36</sup> Was it from you that the word of God {first} went forth? Or has it come to you only?”

**It is clear that Paul did not permit women to speak in church meetings.**

### But in **what sense** were women not to speak?

#### Acts 2

“<sup>17</sup> And it shall be in the last days, God says, “That I will pour forth of My Spirit upon all mankind; and your sons and **your daughters shall prophesy,**”

#### I Corinthians 11

“<sup>4</sup> Every man who has {something} on his head while praying or prophesying, disgraces his head. <sup>5</sup> But **every woman who has her head uncovered while praying or prophesying,** disgraces her head;”

### Galatians 3:28

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



#### complementarian

Men and women are equal but have distinct and complementary roles in family and church.

#### egalitarian

Gender equality requires equal access to all roles in ministry.

#### The gender roles in ministry debate

- ✓ **The issue is one of Biblical interpretation.** It is not an issue of gender.
- ✓ **The implications of how we read the Bible are serious.** Other issues are potentially effected.
- ✓ **Some Biblical texts seems to conflict with popular culture, common sense, and other texts.**
- ✓ **The burden of proof rests with those who wish to change a long standing interpretation.**
- ✓ **The position that best explains all the Biblical texts is to be preferred.**
- ✓ **This issue is not fundamental to the faith but is important because of the authority of Scripture.**



### Approaches



#### complementarian

Which text address the issue most directly? **I Tim.2**

Which texts are more indirect?  
**Gal.3:28**

#### egalitarian

Which texts are basic?  
**Gal.3:28** (principle)

Which texts are applicational?  
**I Tim.2** (cultural)

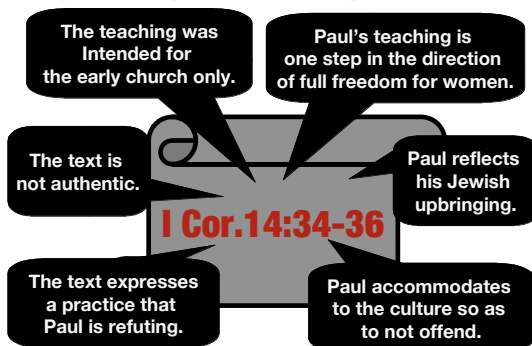
## Arguments for the egalitarian position

1. **Justice.** If God is just there must be role equality.
2. **Jesus.** Jesus' treatment of women suggests that they had freedom in ministry.
3. **N.T. church.** There are many examples of women in leadership roles.
4. **Specific texts.** The Bible teaches full equality.  
Gal.3:28 there is no distinction in Christ
5. **Explanations of problem texts.** There are answers to texts that seem to contradict this position.
6. **Calling.** Women are often called by the Spirit to positions of leadership in the church.

## N.T. examples of women in leadership?

1. **Acts 18:26** "But when Priscilla and Aquila heard him, they took him aside and explained to him the way of God more accurately."
2. **Rom.16:1-2** "I commend to you our sister Phoebe, who is a servant (**deaconess**) of the church . . . She herself has also been a helper (**protectoress**) of many, and of myself as well."
3. **Rom.16:7** "Greet Andronicus and Junias (**Junia?**), my kinsmen, and my fellow-prisoners, who are outstanding among the apostles."
4. **II Jn.1.** "The elder to the chosen lady and her children"

## Popular Egalitarian explanations



## Jesus' view of women

1. **Disciples.** Jesus welcomed women as disciples.
2. **Instruction.** Jesus taught women along with men.
3. **Recognition.** Jesus gave women special recognition.
4. **Participation.** Women were present at key events in Jesus' life.
5. **Gospel of Thomas.** Jesus had a close relationship with Mary.
6. **The 12 Apostles. Jesus' Apostles and the 70 he sent out as missionaries were all men!**

Galatians 3:28

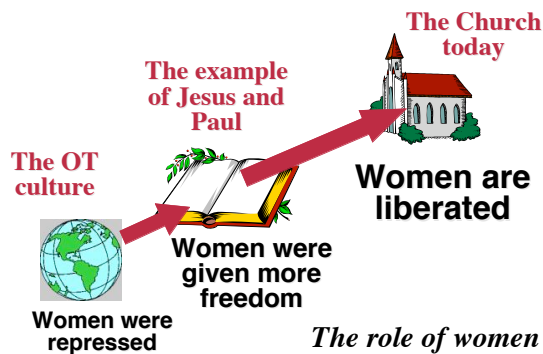
"There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free man, there is **neither male nor female**; for you are all one in Christ Jesus."

Colossians 3:11,18-19

"<sup>11</sup> a renewal in which there is **no distinction** between Greek and Jew, circumcised and uncircumcised, barbarian, Scythian, slave and freeman, but Christ is all , and in all."

"<sup>18</sup> **Wives, be subject to your husbands**, as is fitting in the Lord."

## Redemptive Movement method of interpretation



# Calling

General  
(values)

To faith  
and faithfulness

Personal  
(vocation)

Rare  
and Dramatic  
(notarized  
by the church)

“There is in fact increasing agreement among both liberal feminist and hierarchicalist authors that neither Paul nor any other New Testament writer or character can be fairly labeled egalitarian.”

Craig L. Blomberg  
*“On Women in Ministry”*