

ON WOMEN TEACHING MEN

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I. INTRODUCTION

1. We have reference to a woman teaching the Bible to a man.
2. Of course we know because of 1Cor.14:34,35 and 1Tim.2:12 there are certain restrictions placed upon women teaching men in spiritual matters, where they are forbidden to do so under certain conditions and the reasons why are stated.
3. But does this mean that women are never allowed under any circumstances to teach a man, any man, in biblical matters?
4. Some so affirm that is the case. Are they correct in their affirmation?
5. The purpose of this study is to examine their claim in the light of Bible evidence on the subject.

II. DISCUSSION

A. FIRST, WE IDENTIFY AND EXPLAIN THE FALSE IDEA OF THE “WOMEN’S ROLE” WITH REFERENCE TO TEACHING A MAN WITH WHICH WE ARE DEALING IN THIS STUDY.

1. It is contented by some that a woman may never, in any “didactical” (*instrumental*) [from the Greek adj. “didaskos”] way, instruct a man in biblical matters.
2. They affirm that the term “teach” from the Greek verb “didasko” is never used in any passage to depict a situation in which a woman can instruct a man. Because they claim that whenever and where ever the word “teach”, translated from the Greek verb didasko, is found in a passage it forbids a woman to teach a man, because the word always involves an “authoritative” type of teaching, which women are forbidden to do in the case of men.
3. That neither Pricilla nor Aquila in Ac.18:24-26 taught Apollos anything in the biblical sense of the word “teach.” That they only “expounded unto him the way of God more perfectly (carefully, accurately).” To “expound” these people affirm is not teaching in the biblical sense. They say: ---

- a. There is nothing in Ac18:24-26 to indicate that Aquila and Pricilla taught Apollos anything in the biblical sense.
 - b. Ac.18:24-26 is not even a teaching situation because Apollos didn't need to be taught in the biblical sense of the word "teach" (didasko).
 - c. That Apollos was already taught by John's teaching; that he was already **taught** and was **teaching** the **things** of the Lord diligently (accurately), V.25; that Apollos already knew "the way of the Lord."
 - d. All this as if Apollos was lacking in nothing in his knowledge which was to be supplied by both Aquila and Pricilla.
4. This position is in error because of the truth taught in the Scriptures that:
- a. The word "teach" from the Greek verb "didasko" is not always used of an "authoritative" type of teaching over the man, which the woman is forbidden to do.
 - b. Women did "teach" men in the worship assembly in biblical times, and is allowed to "teach" men in the worship assembly today, and where the original word for "teach" in the passage allowing her to do so is from the Greek verb "didasko", the word they claim always forbids a woman to "teach" (didasko) a man.
 - c. There is more than one N.T. passage where the word "teach" translated from the Greek verb "didasko" is found and which is not used in an "authoritative" type of teaching.
 - d. We have a scripture proving that a woman can teach the gospel to a man under certain circumstances without violating that which is forbidden in 1Tim.2:12.

B. NOW WE GO TO COL.3:16 AND THE CASE OF WOMEN TEACHING MEN UNDER CERTAIN CIRCUMSTANCES.

- 1. This scripture refutes what some are affirming that the original term translated "teach" from the Greek verb "didasko" is never used to depict a situation in which a woman can instruct or teach a man; that a woman may never, in any "didactical" (instructional) way, instruct a man in biblical matters; that a

- woman is not even permitted to grade a man's Bible correspondence course.
2. Their reasoning being that for her to do so under any and all circumstances always involves an "authoritative" type of teaching involving the official role of a teacher who is over his or her student, which is forbidden the woman with reference to teaching and usurping authority over the man in 1Tim.2:12.
 3. The underlying error in this theory is in assigning a static definition to the term "didasko" (rendered "teach" in 1Tim.2:12).
 - a. Such a practice reveals a failure to recognize that words may be employed variously in different contexts.
 - b. An example is that of 1Cor.14:34,35 in which a woman is forbidden to "speak" (lateo) in the church assembly. Yet, at other times she is authorized, even commanded, to "speak" (lateo) in the assembly of the church when singing as in Eph.5:19; Col.3:16.
 - c. Who would dare contend that women may not sing in the assembly of the church? I repeat, Who?
 4. Once again, their reasoning on the word "didasko" rendered "teach" in the English version always involves an "authoritative" type of teaching by the one doing it is in error because there is nothing intrinsic or inherent in and of the word itself that demands a role subordination.
 - a. Context and only context can indicate that. That is, only the context in which the word is found and/or used indicates whether or not its use therein demands a role subordination.
 - b. Cf. 1Cor.11:14: "Doth not even nature itself teach you.."
 5. Just as 1Tim.2:12 is an example where the context demands a role subordination and forbids the woman to teach and to usurp authority over the man; so Col.3:16 is an example where a woman is allowed, authorized, even commanded to teach men.
 - a. The word "teaching" in Col.3:16 in the Greek Testament is the present tense participle form of the verb "didasko"
 - b. Paul is describing the reciprocal instructions in which Christians, both men and women, engage when they worship God collectively in the assembly.

- c. If didasko always denotes teaching that excludes women, as some affirm, then it would of necessity follow that women are not permitted to sing in the church assembly.
 - d. But Col.3:16 allows, even commands, them to “teach”, a teaching that involves teaching men. And the word “teaching” is from a form of the original word “didasko”.
 - e. Richard R. Melick, Jr., Commentary on Phil., Col., Phlm., 305, Nashville, Broadman Press: “The specific vehicle for teaching and admonishing is song.”
6. Consider these facts about Col.3:16:
- a. There was no punctuation in the original Greek text. It was all capital letters. Moreover, the sense is not determined by punctuation.
 - b. The verb *enoikeito* (“let dwell”) is in the imperative (command) mood.
 - c. “Teaching” and “admonishing” one another are present tense participles.
 - d. There is a common N.T. pattern which suggests that present participles, when connected with an imperative verb, reflect the means by which the action of the verb is implemented.
 - (1) In this case letting the word dwell in you is implemented by teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs.
 - (2) Note other examples of the pattern reflecting the means by which the action of the verb is implemented.
 - (a) Mt.28:19: “make disciples...baptizing them”
 - (b) Col.4:5: “walk in wisdom...redeeming the time”
 - (c) 1Tim6:20: “keep that which is committed to thy trust, avoiding profane and vain babblings, and oppositions of science falsely so called.”
 - (d) 2Tim.2:15: “Give diligence to show thyself approved unto God...rightly dividing...”
 - e. “Teaching” and “admonishing” are not verbs without objects; the teaching is executed by singing.

- f. The entire worship assembly, by their singing, as directed, are teaching (didasko), with no one exerting or usurping authority over another!

C. NOW CONSIDER THE CASE OF PRISCILLA AND AQUILA IN AC.18:24-26, WITH EMPHASIS ON V.26: “they took him unto them, and expounded (EKTITHEMI) (“explained,” ESV) unto him the way of God more perfectly (exactly, accurately).”

1. The following facts from this text are indisputable:
 - a. Apollos was lacking in necessary spiritual information, Vv.24,25.
 - b. **Both** Priscilla (the wife) and Aquila (the husband) took Apollos (the preacher) aside and *instructed him* in “the way of God,” V.26.
 - c. The term “expound” (“explained”, ESV) is used in Ac.18:26 as it is in Ac.11:4 and Ac.28:23 in the sense of “to convey information by careful elaboration, explain, expound” (Danker, F.W. et. al. 2000, 310, *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament*. Chicago, Il.: Univ. of Chicago.
 - d. It was a “deliberated and detailed narrative,” A.T. Robertson, *Word Pictures in the New Testament*, Vol. 3, 152.
 - e. Harper, *The Analytical Greek Lexicon*, 126, “to set forth, declare, explain.”
2. In this case, what did they need to set forth, declare and/or explain to Apollos?
 - a. “the way of God” Cf. Ac.11:4; 28:23.
 - b. Is there any doubt that Peter and Paul “taught” when they “expounded”?
 - c. Why then should there be any doubt that both Priscilla and Aquila did also?
3. Apollos was provided “new information” because he knew “only the baptism of John,” i.e., he ***did not know*** that John’s baptism was then and there obsolete, Vv.24-26.

D. FINALLY, CONSIDER 1PET.3:1-6 AND THE CASE OF THE “UNBELIEVING” HUSBAND WHICH REVEALS THAT A

WOMAN CAN TEACH A MAN. SHE CAN TEACH HER HUSBAND THE GOSPEL.

1. In this case Peter is providing further instruction and encouragement to wives who are Christians who have “unbelieving” husbands.
2. The situation is that of a husband who has not obeyed “**the** word,” V.1, where the phrase “the word” containing the article “the” identifies it as meaning “the gospel”; he had not obeyed “the gospel.”
3. The phrase “obey not” reflects a strong Greek verb that conveys the idea of refusing to believe and obey (Thayer, 55): “not to allow oneself to be persuaded; not to comply with...to refuse or withhold belief (in Christ, in the gospel)...Jno.3:36; 1Pet.2:8; 3:1”.
4. This necessarily implies the man had been taught the truth, but he stubbornly resisted.
 - a. Who had taught him the truth, the gospel?
 - b. Obviously, his wife. For Peter continues by suggesting that she might even yet, “without word” (no Greek article), win him, make a believer out of him, by her chaste, holy example of behavior before him as a Christian, Vv.1-6; Cf. Mt.5:13-16; 1Cor.7:12-16; Tit.2:10: of servants: “that they may adorn (garnish) the doctrine (teaching didaskalian) of God...”

III. CONCLUSION

1. Without a doubt:
 - a. Women are restricted in their teaching role. In fact, women are forbidden to teach a man under certain circumstances.
 - b. The scriptures teach that women are allowed to teach a man, even teach men under other circumstances, and that even where the word for “teach” is the Greek verb “didasko”.

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