

27. Paul and Women in Ministry

1) Introduction

Paul has often been misunderstood regarding his stance on women in ministry.

However, he collaborated with many female leaders in spreading the gospel.

This lecture examines how Paul viewed female ministers, who they were, and what his biblical stance was on women's roles in the church.

2) Female Ministers in Paul's Letters

(1) Priscilla:

A co-worker with Aquila, she taught Apollos (Acts 18:26, Rom 16:3).

(2) Phoebe:

A deacon of the church in Cenchreae who delivered the letter to the Romans (Rom 16:1–2).

(3) Euodia and Syntyche:

Women who labored for the gospel in Philippi (Phil 4:2–3).

(4) Other Women:

Mary, Tryphena, Tryphosa, Persis, and others listed in Romans 16.

3) Paul's Foundational Position

(1) Paul emphasized, "There is neither male nor female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus" (Gal 3:28).

(2) His instructions on order and roles in the church reflected creation order and cultural considerations, not inferiority of women.

(3) Passages like 1 Corinthians 11 and 1 Timothy 2 must be interpreted contextually with awareness of local situations.

4) Application to the Modern Church

- (1) Paul affirmed and encouraged women's gifts and leadership.
- (2) Today's church should equip women for ministry rather than suppress their calling, involving them actively in evangelism and service.
- (3) When grounded in Scripture, female leadership strengthens the church's mission and vitality.

5) Conclusion

- (1) Paul did not restrict women in ministry.
- (2) On the contrary, his ministry with female co-workers offers vital insights for today's church.
- (3) Women in ministry are integral to the gospel and the church's essence, and Paul supported them wholeheartedly.