

# Keeping Silent in the church

- <sup>34</sup> the women are to **keep silent** in the churches; for they are **not permitted to speak**, but are to subject themselves, just as the Law also says. <sup>35</sup> 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.

**1 CORINTHIANS 14.34-35**

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- **Who** were these women? (1 Corinthians 14)
- They could have been **prophetesses** who wanted to exercise their spiritual gifts in the special assemblies.
- Possibly **women in general** in the churches.
- Possibly the **wives of the prophets**.

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- If “**prophetesses**” it seems as though Paul would have identified them as such. (specifically in v. 29).
- As to the “**women**” in general – its possible – but they were to ask their husbands at home.
- If this were women in general – widows, single women – women whose husbands were new converts – women whose husbands who were not prophets would not anyone at home to ask.

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- That they were the “**wives of the prophets**” seems to be the more logical choice.
- “**Wives of prophets**” would have had someone to answer any questions they might have had when they arrived home.

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- 1 CORINTHIANS 14 – “CONTEXT” –
- These women of 1 Corinthians 14 (likely the wives of prophets) were commanded not to interrupt when men spoke in tongues and or prophesied. (Divine Revelation taking place).
- V. 26, “...when you come together, everyone of you has a psalm, has a doctrine, has a tongue, has a revelation, has an interpretation.”

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- 1 CORINTHIANS 14 – “CONTEXT” –
- And even if we were to be compelled to include a “prophetess” (Joel 2.28; Acts 2.17) we would have to assume that they had a husband at home.
- It seems easier to suggest that this was directed toward the wives of those who were prophesying.
- But all 3-categories of women were to remain silent in the assembly under consideration.

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- Concluding remark(s): What women may or may not do in a regular worship assembly, such as Acts 20.7; 1 Corinthians 11.17-34 is NOT restricted, regulated or regimented by the prohibitions in 1 Corinthians 14.34-35
- Except: The principle that she is to be “under obedience” or as is stated in 1 Timothy 2.12, “not to usurp (exercise) authority over the man.”

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- Concluding remark(s): As further proof of this is the word translated “silent” (v. 34), which is defined as (*sige, sigao*) – “to keep silent – to hold one’s peace; to be kept in silence; be concealed.” (Thayer, p. 754).
- The “silence” of 1 Timothy 2.11 comes from the Greek “hesuchia” and denotes “quietness” (W.E. Vine).
- The ASV makes this distinction by using “quietness” in 1 Timothy 2.11 and “silence” in 1 Corinthians 14.34.



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- Concluding remark(s):
- That these women in 1 Corinthians 14.34 were married women with Christian husbands capable of answering the questions of their wives at home (v.35).
- This doesn't seem likely that this was directed to single women or to women with unbelieving husbands, or newly converted husbands.

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- Concluding remark(s):
- God – through the Holy Spirit – through Paul even regulated men in this assembly under consideration.
- See 1 Corinthians 14.27-30.
- V. 29, only two or at the most three men were to speak at any one assembly.
- The others were to remain in silence and discern. (v. 29).

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- We don't have “tongue speakers” or “prophets”
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- It is God's Divine plan that women be in subjection to man (Genesis 3.15; 1 Timothy 2.12).
- Although a woman may teach a man (Anna, Luke 2.36-38; Joel 2.28; Priscilla, Acts 18.24-26; Philip's 4-daughters, Acts 21.8, 9) and speak in an assembly of men and women, (Acts 5.1-11; 12.12-16).
- Ask questions in a Bible Class, make comments where men are present – .

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- “under obedience” (meaning) –
- To be “subject” or “subordinate” –
- “Voluntary subject oneself” –
- See 1 Timothy 2.11-14 – “In sorrow you shall bring forth children; and thy desire shall be to thy husband, and he shall rule over thee.”
- See 1 Corinthians 11.3

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- God's reason for this – (1 Timothy 2.13, 14) –
- “Adam was formed first, then Eve” – (v. 13) -
- “Adam was not deceived, but the woman being deceived fell into transgression.” (v. 14) –
- See also 2 Corinthians 11.3 concerning Eve being “beguiled” -