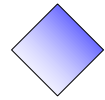


The Voice of Truth



January 26, 2014

Should Women Have a Leading Part in The Assemblies Today?

By Jimmy Pettigrew

The church in the first century, like the church today, faced the danger of being consumed, devoured, and engulfed by its culture. Judaism and paganism were all forces at work in the early days of the church. One of our greatest dangers is still conformity to the world. Jesus said, they are not of the world, even as I am not of the world (**Jn. 17:16**). We are not to be conformed, but rather to be transformed (**Rom. 12:1-2**). But we can see in the church, we have adopted the world's standards, and have become like the world in many areas. One area we need to watch out for in the church is the Feminist Movement. The Feminist Movement is very powerful in today's society. They are dedicated to restructuring the family, the institution of marriage, and even the church itself.

Over the past few years we have witnessed a growing interest in the role of females in public worship. We see, read and hear of people ordaining women. Will the pressure be applied for us to conform? Will we allow women to fill our pulpits? To be appointed to serve as elders and deacons? It is annoying, rousing and unsettling to hear members of the church to assert that they see nothing wrong with female leading prayers, waiting on the Lord's Table, leading singing or teaching Bible class where both men and women are present. Let us examine this question, in hope that we will respect and obey God's Word in this matter.

SHOULD WOMEN HAVE A LEADING PART IN THE ASSEMBLIES TODAY?

Women played a significant role in the work of the church in the first century, and this is very apparent in the New Testament. Women labored in missions with the apostle Paul (**Phil. 4:3**). Females were authorized to teach children (**2 Tim. 1:5-6**) and other females (**Tit. 2:3-4**). Paul commended Phebe who was a servant of the church (**Rom. 16:1**). A woman could assist a man in expounding the scriptures to a man, as in the case of Priscilla and Aquilla teaching Apollos (**Acts 18:26**). Although it is appar-

ent that women were active in the part of the early church, it is equally apparent that God places some restrictions and limitations on the women's role in the church. We must never assume or conclude that they (women) can teach anywhere that Paul was authorized to teach! Their work was limited to such places and situations as would not cause them to exercise dominion over a man.

In the Old Testament Cain and Abel had sisters; but mention is made only of offerings made by Cain and Abel. Are we to assume that the sisters did not worship the Lord? When Noah and his family emerged from the ark after the flood, they worshiped the Lord. But the record says: *"And Noah builded an altar unto the LORD; and took of every clean beast, and of every clean fowl, and offered burnt offerings on the altar"* (**Gen. 8:20**). We do not understand from this that Noah was the only one of eight souls delivered from the flood that worshiped, but that it was he who took the lead in that worship. When the Jews came out of Babylonian captivity back to Jerusalem, there was an occasion when all the people gathered themselves together with both men and women present (**Neh. 8:1-8**). Ezra, the priest, brought the Law before the congregation and read it to them. All the people worshiped the Lord, and certain of the men caused the people to understand the Law. But not one word is said to indicate any women took any leading part in this great assembly. The women were a part of the assembly as were the men, and they worshiped just as did the men, but they did not take any leading part!

Women were not authorized by God to take a leading role in worship, in a mixed assembly; both males and females were present. This will be seen from our discussion of First Timothy chapter 2. The book of First Timothy was by the apostle Paul to the young evangelist Timothy who was ministering to the church in Ephesus. The purpose of the epistle was to provide Timothy with written instructions about methods of procedure in the church (**1 Tim. 3:14-**

Continued on Page Two

In This Issue...

Pages 1 to 2 - Should Women Have a Leading Part in The Assemblies Today?
Page 2 - WHAT'S THE DIFFERENCE?

Pages 3 to 4 - "Tradition Or Tradition?"
Page 4 - THE ONE BODY | THINK! THINK! THINK!

Continued from Page One, "Should Women Have a Leading Part in The Assemblies Today?"

15). Chapters two and three deal with some of the specifics of church life, worship, work and the organization of the church. The word church (EKKLESIA) in this book is used in its broader, more general sense and is not limited to public assembly. The immediate context of chapter two is worship, not merely public worship, but worship wherever and whenever it is offered. In First Timothy, Paul begins by mentioning prayer for all men (1 Tim. 2:1-2). The word men (ANTHROPOS) in the Greek, it means mankind, human beings, male and female. Now notice this; I will therefore that men pray every where, lifting up holy hands, without wrath and doubting (1 Tim. 2:8). Paul used (ANDRAS), another Greek word for men, which means MALE. The point is this prayer is to be made for all mankind, but where both men and women are present the males (ONLY) are to do the praying, they are authorized to take the lead! In such a gathering women are to learn from men, not teach over them (1 Tim. 2:11-12). Women are to be in a role of subjection, not authority or dominion. These verses show the woman is to be in relative quietness in respect to authority. She is prohibited from exercising roles of leadership in which she would usurp authority over man. Man is in the leadership role, and women are not to teach over the man having dominion over him. Since men are told to pray (lead prayers) and in the context in which women are to be in silence, the conclusion is inescapable that women are not to lead prayers in public worship. Let it be understood that a woman is not forbidden the position of teaching (1 Tim. 5:4; Tit. 2:4), but she is not given leadership of teaching over the man. While she may teach even in the assembly, for when she sings she is teaching (Col. 3:16), she is restricted in that she is not to be in the lead.

First Corinthians chapter eleven shows that there were

occasions when women both prayed and prophesied. The prophecy of Joel quoted by Peter in (Acts 2:17-21) said both men and women would prophesy. Philip the evangelist had four virgin daughters who prophesied (Acts 21:8-9). But there is not a single statement in the Bible to indicate that any of these women ever took a leading part in any public worship involving men. All the praying and prophesying they did was in harmony with the restrictions placed upon them in (1 Tim. 2:8-15; 1 Cor. 14:23, 34-35), she was ordered to keep silence.

If Jesus had intended for women to have the role of leadership in public worship, it would have been a simple matter to make that plain in the New Testament. He might have selected at least one woman among the apostles. The apostle Paul states two reasons why God placed men instead of women in the position of public leadership in the church. For Adam was first formed, then Eve. (1 Tim. 2:13). Read carefully (1 Cor. 11:1-16). Man did not come from a woman. The woman came from man. And man was not made for the woman. The woman was made for man. So that is why a woman is under authority. Second reason why God placed men instead of women in the position of public leadership in the church; and Adam was not deceived, but the woman being deceived was in the transgression (1 Tim. 2:14). For a woman to stand before the congregation of the saints to lead in any capacity, whether leading singing, prayer or serving the Lord's Supper, she would have to go beyond the teaching on the New Testament (2 Jn. 9), beyond things which are written (1 Cor. 4:6).

It is not a matter of what we think or what we want or like or I don't see anything wrong with it, but we need to have a **THUS SAITH THE LORD!** ♦

WHAT'S THE DIFFERENCE?

BETWEEN the atheist who would not dream of financially supporting the church and the Christian who will not financially support the Lord's church?

BETWEEN the skeptic who does not believe the Bible and the negligent Christian who never reads it?

BETWEEN those who do not believe in Bible classes and those who choose never to attend a class?

BETWEEN the atheist who does nothing to build up the Lord's church and the Christian who finds fault with others, but does nothing himself?

BETWEEN a man of the world, and a person in the church who lives like a man in the world?

BETWEEN a man of the world who lives for self and a person in the church who lives for self, not God?

These are tough questions for Christians who live in a tough world. The fact is, Christians make no difference until they are different. Again, **WHAT'S THE DIFFERENCE?** ♦

***A faith that will not take us to worship will not
Take us to heaven!*** ♦

“Tradition Or Tradition?”

By Jarrod Jacobs

The word “tradition” has become somewhat of a by-word or buzz-word for many in the Lord’s church. For some Christians, anything they associate with being “traditional,” or with things that “we” do often, is rejected. When speaking of “traditional” things, a look and air of disdain comes upon them. They belittle those things they consider “traditional.” Sometimes we find folks who wish to do things differently for no other reason than for the sake of being different. This is unfortunate.

Today, it seems that if there is anything which someone could say has been done for ‘x’ amount of time, then these ones are ready to throw it out, and try something “new” and “exciting.” (That is, until that thing becomes a “tradition”!) Their attitude reminds me of the attitude of those Paul found at Athens (**Acts 17:21**). In contrast, we need to be reminded that Solomon said there is nothing for which it can be said, “See *this is new*” (**Ecc. 1:10**).

The Word “Tradition” Needs A Context.

The reason I titled this article the way I did is because “tradition” does not always mean “tradition”. In other words, just because something is a “tradition” doesn’t mean we must do it. At the same time, some things called “traditions” must be accepted and obeyed because they are commanded of God! So, how can we determine when a tradition is simply something men have done for a long time and when the tradition is something that God has commanded? Put simply, this is determined by the context! We find the English word “tradition” used seven times in the New Testament, but it is used in two very different ways. Thus, we must define “tradition” according to its Bible context. Read the passages below and contrast the way this word is used in context:

- ◆ “Why do your disciples break the tradition of the elders?” (**Matt. 15:2; Mk. 7:3, 5**).
- ◆ “Why do you break the commandment of God for the sake of your tradition?” (**Matt. 15:3, 6; Mk. 7:9, 13**).
- ◆ “You leave the commandment of God and hold to the tradition of men” (**Mk. 7:8; Col. 2:8**).
- ◆ “I was advancing in Judaism beyond many of my own age among my people, so extremely zealous was I for the traditions of my fathers” (**Gal. 1:14**).
- ◆ “So then, brothers, stand firm and hold to the traditions that you were taught by us, either by our spoken word or by our letter” (**II Thess. 2:15**).

- ◆ “Now we command you, brethren, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye withdraw yourselves from every brother that walketh disorderly, and not after the tradition which he received of us” (**II Thess. 3:6**).
- ◆ “Forasmuch as ye know that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold, from your vain conversation received by tradition from your fathers” (**I Pet. 1:18**).

Notice that on two occasions the word “tradition” was used with the understanding that one is expected to continue in certain things or be considered a sinner and condemned in the sight of God (**II Thess. 2:15, 3:6**). These “traditions” were words passed down by God through Christ, to the apostles, and then to the Christians (**II Thess. 2:15; II Tim. 2:2**). These are the things which must continue, regardless of whether or not men belittle them as “traditional”!

Contrasting “Traditions”

There may be an attitude among some which says that if certain things have “always” been done, then this can never change. Such an attitude can be detrimental to a group of God’s people if it is allowed to go unrestrained. Just because someone doesn’t like a change does not mean that the change is sinful. (Read: **Heb. 7:12-14**, God changed His law) Therefore, we can have certain traditions which have been an expedient practice of men at some point in time, and then change them or omit them altogether, and there be no sin involved. Examples of this include:

- ◆ Whether or not we have a chalkboard/whiteboard or an overhead/powerpoint projector in our preaching and teaching. Though these are commonly seen in church buildings, to have or not have such tools does not constitute sin.
- ◆ The “traditional” order of services can be changed and not constitute sin so long as we do not omit what God commanded (**Jn. 4:24; Acts 2:42**).
- ◆ Some congregations schedule their Sunday worship service and then have the Bible class afterward. Others schedule their Sunday Bible class first. Still other congregations have a Sunday AM and PM Bible class. To change, or rearrange our “traditional” order does not constitute sin.

Continued from Page Three, "Tradition Or Tradition?"

Yet, the Bible speaks of some traditions which, if changed, would result in sin. Therefore, such things need to be left alone. For example:

- ◆ If we said that a man doing the preaching in a congregation is "traditional," and we asked a sister to preach one day, this is sin (I Tim. 2:12).
- ◆ To add instruments to our singing, or to stop singing altogether would definitely be a change in "tradition", but that would also constitute sin (**Eph. 5:19; Col. 3:16; Heb. 13:15**).
- ◆ To declare that it is a sin to have Bible classes on Sun-

day, or to say that there is only one "authorized" time for such classes becomes sin as we have no right to bind where God has not bound (**I Pet. 4:11**). Other examples could be added to this list, we know.

Conclusion

Before we get too "trigger-happy" putting down and changing "our traditions", let us make sure that the traditions we are discussing are ones that we have the right to change! As we have seen, there are some traditions that we have no right or authority to change! (**I Pet. 4:11; Col. 3:17**) *Credit: The Old Paths - 8/5/12* ♦

THE ONE BODY

The church is the body of Christ, "And he is the head of the body, the church (**Col. 1:18**). There is only one body, one church. "And hath put all things under his feet, and gave him to be the head over all things to the church, which is his body, the fulness of him that filleth all in all" (**Eph. 1:22-23**). The New Testament teaches that there is only one body; this one body is the church. We are "fellow heirs of the same body" (**Eph. 3:6**). We are "reconciled to God in one body" (**Eph. 2:16**). Christ is founder of only one church. "Upon this rock I will build my church" (**Matt. 16:18**). Jesus did not say that we would build a church, His church or one of His churches. He said, "I will build my church." The word "church" signifies singularity. Jesus did not build many different churches, but one! None should encourage any to seek the church of your choice, but the church of Christ's choice, that is, the one that is Christ-built, blood-bought (**Acts 20:28**), the one in which He is the Saviour of (**Eph. 5:23**).

Since there is one, and only one church and since Christ saves only those in that one church; thus, if one living today is not a member of that church (**Rom. 16:16**), then he is not saved. ♦

THINK! THINK! THINK!

What sort of church would the Lord's church be if every member were just like me? ♦

What Must I Do To Be Saved?

- Hear and Learn - Rom. 10:17 m. 10:9-10 ; 1 Pet. 3:21 ; John 6:45; 17:3
- Believe - Heb. 11:6; John 6:29; 8:24
- Repent - Luke 13:3; Acts 3:19; 17:30
- Confess the Lord - Matt. 10:32-33; Romans 10:9-10; 1 Pet. 3:21
- Be Baptized - Mark 16:16; Acts 22:16; Gal. 3:26-27
- Continue in the Apostles' Teaching - Acts 2:42; 2 Tim. 3:14-17

About the Hillcrest church of Christ

Evangelist: Jimmy Pettigrew

How to Contact Us

Telephone: (920)499-5677
E-mail: hillcrestcofc@live.com



Our Address

1621 Hillcrest Drive
Green Bay, WI 54313



Schedule of Assembly

Bible Study: Sunday, 9:00am
Worship Service: Sunday, 10:00am
Bible Study: Wednesday, 7:00pm*

*A song service is held on the last Wednesday of every month