

WOMEN'S ROLE IN THE DECISION-MAKING PROCESS OF THE CHURCH

There is no direct reference to the practice of the men of the congregation meeting to conduct the affairs of the local congregation. It is obvious, however, that the local congregations were functioning without elders and deacons, and made decisions which affected the entire congregation. In fact, Paul wrote to the church at Corinth and never mentioned that they had any elders at that time. They were, however, functioning as a local congregation. And there are some divine principles as well as God-approved examples which would tend to leave the women of the congregation out of the decision making process of the local church.

WOMEN EXCLUDED UNDER LAW OF MOSES

Those who led the worship of God under the Law of Moses were MEN - selected from the house of Aaron. [Exodus 28:1] The Elders of the cities who sat at the gate were MEN! [Proverbs 31:23] And godly women were honored that their husbands sat at the gate. Furthermore, the women were not permitted to enter the inner part of the temple.

WOMEN EXCLUDED UNDER LAW OF CHRIST

It is apparent that under the law today, women are not to be appointed as elders! 1 Timothy 3:1,2 "This {is} a faithful saying: If a man desires the position of a bishop, he desires a good work. (2) A bishop then must be blameless, the husband of one wife, temperate, sober minded, of good behavior, hospitable, able to teach." Titus 1:5,6 "For this reason I left you in Crete, that you should set in order the things that are lacking, and appoint elders in every city as I commanded you - (6) if a man is blameless, the husband of one wife, having faithful children not accused of dissipation or insubordination." The fact that some are disregarding these divine precepts today, does not imply God's approval in any way.

WHO SHOULD BE MAKING THE DECISIONS?

In the absence of elders in a local congregation, WHO SHOULD BE MAKING THE DECISIONS? Under no circumstances do we find women being appointed under either law for the purpose of leading worship or making decisions in matters religious. Likewise, under the Law of Christ the Holy Spirit never

indicated that women were to be used in roles of leadership.

Furthermore, there are divine principles- which must be remembered in this and in every situation involving the interaction of MEN and WOMEN. 1 Timothy 2:13-15 "For Adam was formed first, then Eve. (14) And Adam was not deceived, but the woman being deceived, fell into transgression. (15) Nevertheless she will be saved in childbearing if they continue in faith, love, and holiness, with self control." Following directly after this, Paul instructed on the qualifications of elders! Notice: "Adam was formed first, then Eve" shows that it is a matter of ORDER- man first, then woman; "Adam was not deceived, but the woman being deceived, fell into transgression" it is a matter of ORDER again, in that man was deceived, but woman was FIRST deceived, and thus BOTH fell into transgression. Paul discusses this also in 1 Corinthians 11:3 "But I want you to know that the head of every man is Christ, the head of woman {is} man, and the head of Christ {is} God."

It is not permitted for a woman to usurp authority over man, under any circumstances! The word usurp, which occurs in the KJV of 1 Timothy 2:12 means: "831. authenteo {ow-then-teh'-o}; from a compound of 846 and an obsolete hentes (a worker); to act of oneself, i.e. (figuratively) dominate: -usurp authority over." What godly woman would want to be in a position of authority in the church? When the subject of women being in the business meetings of the church comes up, invariably some good godly woman will say: "Why would any woman want to be in such meetings?" Far too often it is women who want to leave their God-given role who are advocating their "right" to be a part of the decision making process of the local church. This is a case of the evils of society manifesting themselves in the Lord's church.

While the ideal is to have qualified men to serve as elders, it is not always possible to have such. Far more damage is done to the local church by appointing unqualified men to serve as elders, than is done by conducting the affairs of the local church in an orderly fashion without any elders. In lieu of qualified men to serve, it behooves those in whose hands God has intrusted the headship of woman to make careful decisions concerning the function of the local church, remembering the principle taught in Ephesians 5:21 "submitting to one another in the fear of God."

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