

SERMON NOTES

Order, Decency, and Holding Our Tongues

1 Corinthians 14:33–40 | Matt Green | November 8, 2020

“Women Should Keep Silent in the Churches...” (14:34–35)

- Surely Paul couldn't have meant that!
- Or, did Paul mean it exactly?
- The answer is much more complicated...

Important Evidence

- Remember the context:
 - Building one another up using spiritual giftings
 - Exercising gifts in love
 - Pursuing order in worship
- Women had a prominent place in the 1st century church
 - They functioned as prophets
 - They worked with Paul (cf. 11:5)
 - They were involved in teaching
- Men have a position of leadership/headship
 - This is rooted in the creation order
 - Such headship is found in God Himself (cf. 11:3)

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Cultural Considerations

- The virtuous woman “ought to be modest and guarded about saying anything in the hearing of outsiders.” (Plutarch)
- “A woman ought to do her talking either to her husband or through her husband.” (Plutarch)
- Principle: “We may follow the culture when the cultural practice apparently reflects biblical truth, and we should not follow the culture when the cultural practice does not accurately reflect biblical truth.”
- Paul’s directions seek to uphold cultural standards and biblical principles.
 - Cultural standards about women speaking in public
 - Biblical principles about men’s headship in the church and in marriage
 - Note: Paul also challenged cultural norms, in allowing women to speak (prophesy, etc.)

A Truly Spiritual Perspective (14:36–40)

- The Corinthians are not the source of God’s word
- The truly spiritual will acknowledge Paul’s teaching
- Worship gatherings must be conducted in an *orderly* manner
- All things should be done *decently*
 - In contrast with drunken orgies
 - In a way that highlights the church’s witness

What is your response to this? Discuss it with someone today