

Women's Roles & the LGBTQ Agenda: The Same Sermon

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Reading Time: 4 minutes

Two of the most controversial subjects faced by the church in recent years have been the role of women in the church and the LGBTQ movement. These controversies have raged as the world views the church and even at times inside of the church itself. If congregations are not talking about these issues from their classrooms and pulpits, it is **not** because members are not dealing with them regularly in society. Interestingly enough, as one starts to examine the arguments made in and around each of these topics, he will find that they revolve around the same issues. As a matter of fact, in preaching recently on the role of women in the church, I could not help but think that I was merely *re-preaching* an earlier lesson concerning the LGBTQ movement. The points were the same; only the specific application was different. As the church struggles with these issues, it should remember that the way we respond to one of these two issues will eventually mirror the way we approach the other one.

Plain Bible Teaching

First, the sermon begins with straightforward Biblical teaching. There are certain things that, as a preacher, I would never have the nerve or audacity to say out loud if it were not for the unavoidable fact that the Bible clearly addresses them. **About the role of women in the church, Paul wrote, 1 Timothy 2:11-12**, “Let a woman learn quietly with all submissiveness. I do not permit a woman to teach or to exercise authority over a man; rather, she is to remain quiet” (ESV). **In reference to the LGBTQ movement**, 1 Corinthians 6:9-10 proclaims, “Or do you not know that the unrighteous will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived: neither the sexually immoral, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor men who practice homosexuality, ¹⁰ nor thieves, nor the greedy, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor swindlers will inherit the kingdom of God.” **Some would deny that these texts mean what they clearly state. I would advise anyone to steer clear of those who desire to explain away clear Bible teaching.**

Don't be distracted by misrepresentations.

Second, the sermon spends some time on prefatory remarks that address some extremes a few have assumed on these issues: (a) Paul is not saying in 1 Timothy that the role of a woman in the church is limited to preparing food for the potluck. (b) This text is not about talent or ability. (c) This text is not about value or worth (Gal. 3:28). (d) It is not even about whether a woman can bring souls to Christ (Acts 18:26). **It is merely about submission to the way God has chosen to set up His Church.**

In the same way, 1 Corinthians 6 is not saying that the practice of homosexuality is worse than other sins, nor is it saying that Christians should be abusive of these people. *Quite the opposite*. Paul shows us that the church at Corinth was actually comprised of some former homosexuals, yet they had been washed, sanctified, and justified in the name of Christ. Neither of these passages are about hate or oppression. They are actually about liberation through Christ and His Will.

Paul's writings are not based on 1st

century culture alone.

Third, **the common objection that Paul's Words are simply *cultural* must be addressed.** Many dismiss 1 Timothy 2:11-12 & 1 Corinthians 6:9-11, and other words of Paul, by saying the culture around him overly influenced Paul. "That is why he taught a woman should not teach or have authority over a man and, why he said the practice of homosexuality is sinful," it is often claimed. The arguments range from, (a) "We should look on Paul with pity as someone who just didn't know any better," to (b) "Paul was a bigot." **The truth is that Paul spoke by inspiration (meaning He spoke the words of God), and he directly tied the rationale of his words to *nature* and *creation* rather than in culture.**

1 Timothy 2:13-14 reveals the reason for the submissive role of women in the church: "For Adam was formed first, then Eve; and Adam was not deceived, but the woman was deceived and became a transgressor." That reason is **still true today** and why its application is **still valid**. In addressing the subject of homosexuality in Romans 1:26-27, "For this reason God gave them up to dishonorable passions. For their women exchanged natural relations for those that are contrary to nature; and the men likewise gave up natural relations with women and were consumed with passion for one another, men committing shameless acts with men and receiving in themselves the due penalty for their error." **Proper sexual relations are rooted in nature itself.** Improper sexual relationships are a violation of nature itself. Paul's words are based on creation and not culture, so they cannot be dismissed by 21st Century Christians.

Jesus and Paul do not disagree.

Forth, there are always those who want to discount what Paul taught by separating him from Jesus. People have framed this argument with terminology such as, "We need to read Paul *through* Jesus." Of course, the reason that this line of argumentation is used is because it is observed that Jesus did not directly deal with these issues like Paul does. Ironically, you never see people making this argument when it comes to other subjects that are not "hot-button issues."

The main problem with this line of argumentation is that it shows a complete misunderstanding of inspiration and the source of both Paul and Jesus' message. **Paul was very clear that his message came through a revelation of Jesus Christ** (Gal. 1:11-12). He even referred to his words as the "testimony of God" and "Jesus Christ, and him crucified (1 Cor. 2:1-2). **Jesus claimed the same source for His words in John 12:49:**

“For I have not spoken on my own authority, but the Father who sent me has himself given me a commandment—what to say and what to speak.” Neither Jesus nor Paul claimed to speak on their own authority, but rather that their words were the “testimony of God.” **It is irresponsible and disrespectful to try and play Jesus and Paul against each other, as if they taught a different gospel.**

As we reflect upon these issues—issues that in many ways really require the same sermon—we ought to be reminded that these issues are not really about whether or not a woman can teach a man in the church or whether a Christian can be involved in a loving homosexual relationship. The issues are much deeper and speak to the way we view the Scriptures as God’s revelation. *Theology matters. It is not just about what we believe, but why we believe it.* In congregations that are compromising on issues of women’s roles, it is only a matter of time before they start to compromise on the same issues regarding the LGBTQ movement. These issues stand or fall on the same foundation.