

Can Women Be Pastors?

The question on whether women can be pastors or not is a very hot issue that has been discussed in all Christian denominations for more than 30 years. More and more churches have been allowing women to become pastors in recent years as they believe that women are just as good as men in proclaiming and preaching the Word of God. More and more people in general believe that since women are very good at many of public and private jobs, they can do well, too, in religious parts.

However, we need to take a careful look at the Holy Bible to see what the Lord God says about women becoming pastors. Before we move on that, we need to decide on whom has the final authority on this issue: the Lord God or the people. If it is the Lord God, then we need to have the Holy Spirit speak directly to us by looking at particular Bible verses, which are as follows:

I Corinthians 14:33-34 - As in all the churches of God's holy people, the women must keep silent. They don't have the right to speak.

I Timothy 2:11-12 - A woman must learn in silence, in keeping with her position. I don't allow a woman to teach or have authority over a man.

I Timothy 3:1-2 - If anyone sets his heart on being a bishop (pastor or church leader), he desires something excellent...must have a good reputation...must have only one wife...

Titus 1:6 - A spiritual leader must have a good reputation...must have only one wife and have children who are believers.

Many people from churches allowing woman pastors often say that the above Bible verses no longer apply to our times because lots of things about women have changed. In other words, the world had changed so much in the past 40 years that women are able to do so many things very well.

When such churches are asked to provide evidence directly from the Bible that women can be pastors, they usually use Galatians 3:28, which reads:

There are neither Jews nor Greeks, slaves nor free people, males nor females. You are all the same in Christ.

In order for us to read that (Galatians 3:28) verse correctly, we need to read the whole context of that verse (we should read before and after that verse so that we can have the whole picture of what that verse really says). We do not use just one verse only, but read the whole paragraph so that we can know what the Lord God wants to say to us. Read the whole paragraph of Galatians 3:21-29. After reading, we get a different picture. We know that Galatians 3:28 does not talk about women becoming pastors. Actually, it talks about all people, both male and female, having the same spiritual need for salvation in Christ Jesus.

Now that women do not have the call from the Lord God to become pastors, we should remember that both man and woman are created in the image of God - meaning that both are equal before the Lord God in everything, that is, man is not any better than woman and woman is not any better than man. It is that God gave special roles with special responsibilities to man and woman. For example, only woman, not man, has the ability to bear children. Still another example is that man tend to think more from mind while women from heart. Yes, man and woman are very different from each other; yet, at the same time, they are completely complementary (work together) with each other. In other words, man and woman cannot really live on own, away from each other. That is God's plan.

To be more specific, God gave man the responsibility to be husband and father; woman wife and mother. Each has different duties from the other, yet they work together as a team, as one flesh.

To date, just about five mainline churches do not allow for woman pastors: Roman Catholic, Orthodox Church (Russian and Greek), Presbyterian, conservative Baptists and Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod (LCMS).

Churches allowing woman pastors are: United Methodist, Assembly of God, Foursquare Gospel, liberal Baptists, Episcopal, Evangelical Lutheran Church of America (ELCA).

Moreover, if we are not to use the Holy Bible to help us decide on whether woman can become pastor, then we should use hard facts:

- At least 95% of all woman pastors married to man pastors have eventually gotten divorced.
- Most woman pastors tend to be more of pro-choice than pro-life
- Most such pastors tend to speak straight from emotional experiences during sermons rather than assigned Biblical readings.

On a final note, while LCMS do not permit woman pastors on the basis of the Holy Bible, this church has much more many woman church workers, that is, in proportion to the church membership, than any other Christian church in this country. They can be teachers, directors of Christian education, directors of Christian outreach, deaconesses and parish nurses, just to name a few.