

## Women Serving God

Women have always been an important part of God's plan.

**Deborah** - When Joshua died the Israelites lost his strong leadership. As a result within a few years they gave in to the immoral influence of their neighbors in Canaan. Good and bad Judges ruled Israel for many years. One of the good judges was Deborah. See Judges 4 and 5. It took her brave leadership to go with Barak and the army to give them courage to defeat their enemies - Judges 4:6-9. Yes, God has used women to lead and serve in special ways. They also can have powerful influence to motivate men to do what is right.

**Esther** - Queen Esther demonstrated courage to stand before her husband the King and defend the Jews so they would not be destroyed. Read Esther 4:13-16. This Old Testament book was named after her.

**Dorcas** - In the New Testament in Acts 9:36-42 we see Dorcas setting an example for the other women. She made clothes and coats for others. She did good works and helped people. When she died, her friends called for the Apostle Peter to come. Instead of preaching her funeral, Peter raised her from the dead.

**Mary, the mother of John Mark** - In Acts 12:12 we read of Mary, the mother of John Mark, who opened her home to the church for a prayer meeting. She also raised a son who wrote the gospel of Mark.

**Lydia** - Sometimes women were the first in a community to obey the gospel. Such was the case in Philippi. Acts 16:13-15 tells of the conversion of Lydia and her household in Philippi. Later Paul paid tribute to the work that Christian women had done for the Lord's cause in Philippi and said that aid should be supplied to those women. Read Philippians 4:3.

**Priscilla** - In Acts 18:1-3, 18-19, 24-26 we find Aquila and Priscilla serving as a husband and wife evangelistic team. They were church builders. They provided Paul a place to live in Corinth. They taught Apollos the truth about baptism. Most church leaders and preachers like myself will be the first to tell you that any of our success is largely the result of the support and help of our good wives. Priscilla is presented as a team leader with her husband. Paul praised them in Romans 16:3-4.

Christian women have corrected many preachers like myself. When we made mistakes or said something wrong, they would kindly take us aside and gently let us know what we said wrong or what we could do to be more effective. And they often provided support for our families. Edna Ruebush in Monette, Arkansas made a dress suit for my wife. When I had chest pains and no money to get checked out she made a medical appointment and paid the doctor bill.

**Phoebe** - In Romans 16:1-2 Paul described Phoebe as a sister, servant, and saint who helped many including himself. He said that she should be assisted in her work.

**Lois and Eunice** - In 2 Timothy 1:5 Paul praised Lois and Eunice, a grandmother and mother, for their faith that they passed on to their grandson and son, Timothy. It takes a lot of determination and endurance to be a good grandmother and mother and teach values and character to your children and grandchildren.

My grandmother provided spiritual leadership and values for me as a boy and grown man. I probably would not have become a preacher without her influence.

These are only a few of the great Christian women who served God and His people.

God is calling our women today to Christian service. Thank God for our dedicated and gracious Christian women who serve Him with honor and dignity.

Titus 2:3-5 specifically listed responsibilities for older and younger women.

The apostle Paul was a champion for supporting women in the first century. At the same time he clarified some limitations on women. Men also have limitations placed on them. Paul also spoke of the different leadership roles for men and women in the church.

A wise woman once said, "There are some things men have to do and others things women have to do. They have no business getting them all mixed up." God's women and God's men will not seek a place, position, or work for which she or he are not intended to fill.

In 1 Corinthians 11:3 Paul pointed out the order of authority. Everyone has limited authority. Even Christ is in submission to God and man is in submission to Christ. And woman is in submission to man. This is not popular or politically correct to say today, but I am just telling you what the Bible says.

In 1 Corinthians 14 Paul gave instructions for orderly church worship assemblies. He said that women are to keep silent in verse 34. That is why we do not have women leading or serving in a public way in our worship services.

It is clear that a woman cannot serve as an overseer or elder in the church. That role is to be filled by men according to 1 Timothy 3:1-7. It specifically refers to "a man". The masculine pronoun is used repeatedly in these verses. And an elder is to be a **husband** of one wife.

A woman cannot be a deacon because a deacon is to be the husband of one wife according to 1 Timothy 3:12.

A woman also cannot serve as a preacher - 1 Corinthians 14:34. In 1 Timothy 2:12 Paul prohibited women from teaching and having authority over man.

There is so much more that women can do as we saw from Deborah, Esther, Dorcas, Mary, Lydia, Priscilla, Phoebe, Lois, and Eunice and Scriptures like we read from Titus 2:3-5 and many other references.

We have talented and well-educated women in the church who can serve in the work of the church in so many ways that God does permit. Do not let what you are not allowed to do discourage you from doing the many things that God expects you to do. Our families and the church will only be as strong as our wives, mothers, and sisters are strong in the Lord and His service. May God bless our Christian women.