



Scripture | 1 Corinthians 14:26-40, 1 Timothy 2:8-15

Ice Breaker | 1. Who is a woman, other than your mother, who has taught you life lessons or in your faith?

Going Deeper |

1. Read 1 Corinthians 14:26-40
2. What is the situation that this passage is addressing? What would you say is the main point of the passage?
3. Verses 34-35 are verses that can be particularly challenging to read in our contemporary context. What reasons do you think Paul had for saying it was disgraceful for women to speak in church?
4. Is this passage dealing with something specific in Corinth, or is it a prescription for how the church should be for all times?
5. Read 1 Timothy 2:8-15
6. According to this passage, what are men and women supposed to be like? (8-10) If that is what they are supposed to be like, who do you think men and women at that time were defined?
7. Verses 11-12 are again verses that, in our cultural context, can be particularly challenging. Knowing the context of Ephesus is helpful for us to be better understand what Paul means in what he says. What do you know about the context of the letter that may help understand this passage?
8. On Sunday, Rob said that both the verses in Corinthians and 1 Timothy were elevating women towards equality in Paul's day, not diminishing them. What from these verses is elevating women towards equality with men?
9. Verse 12 has been used as biblical evidence as to why women should not be pastors or speakers in church. In the English translation, it typically reads, "I do not permit women to teach or have authority over men." But it could (and maybe should) be translated as "I don't mean to imply that I am setting up women as the authority over men in the same way men previously had authority over women." Why might Paul need to say this to Timothy while he is in a place like Ephesus, where the largest temple held a female-only cult to Artemis (Diana) that was led by female priests?
10. We know from scripture that Timothy's primary influences in his faith life (other than Paul) were his mother and grandmother. Imagine you are Timothy, knowing that women have taught you, and that is how you came to know Christ, how would you hear what Paul is saying?

11. Both 1 Corinthians and 1 Timothy emphasized the opportunity for women to learn and not be disrupted, or a disruption in learning. This would have been controversial in Paul's day as women were not permitted to learn the same way men were. How do you think the communities of faith reacted to this instruction?
12. Rob said on Sunday that he believes the point of these passages is not to relegate women to secondary roles, but to present them with the opportunity for equality in a culture that did not offer it to them. In particular, by allowing women and men to learn and use their gifts together and not view one sex as superior to the other, contrary to the way the world worked at that time. What are the advantages of a body of believers where men and women are encouraged to develop whatever gifts God has given them?
13. How do you respond to the perspective that Paul is calling both men and women to live in contrast to the standard images of male and female in the roman world?
14. How might Christians today live in contrast to the standard images of male and female in our present world?