

The Baptist Examiner

A nation-wide, independent paper, standing foursquare for the distinguishing doctrines of Baptists, and shunning not to declare all the counsel of God.

"To the law and to the testimony if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them" (Isa. 3:20).

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WOMAN'S PUBLIC MINISTRY

PASTOR A. N. MORRIS, Doerun, Ga.

The "ASSISTANT PASTOR," whose editor is Elder J. I. D. Miller, a strong and faithful defender of the ancient gospel, has the following in a recent issue:

"Rev. Edward B. Turner, pastor of three Baptist churches in Massachusetts, died recently, and his daughter, 21 years of age, succeeds her father as pastor at each church. I am wondering what Dr. T. P. Simmons, Editor of the Baptist Examiner, [the editor is not a doctor; only a New Testament elder, bishop and pastor. See Matt. 23:8] and Rev. A. N. Morris, Doerun, pastor, who is contributing editor of the same paper, would say of this." Then he quotes the platform of the Baptist Examiner, and adds: "It is suggested there are women in some Baptist churches in the South, even in Georgia, who would like to occupy the pulpit. Also there are some Baptist preachers favorable to such departure, but may the Lord save us against that day."

The "contributing editor" is glad to cater to the curiosity of this comrade of the cross who for many years has earnestly contended for the ancient faith, by making a few feeble remarks.

1. **The case of a woman being the pastor of a Baptist church is no new thing among us.** A woman was pastor of the Baptist church, Richwood, West Virginia, ten years. She resigned and married a Rev. Mr. Turner, then the church called both to the pastorate and they accepted as joint pastors.

2. **This was the logical outcome of certain movements in the Northern Baptist Convention.** Some of these movements were: The W. M. U., the B. Y. P. U., the S. S., all of which train women to speak and pray publicly in mixed assemblies. The B. S. U. is now training women to speak in public, even calling off regular Sunday evening sermon, and allowing them to occupy the pulpit. These innovations do not usually come through the church as such, but through organizations attached to the church. These steps have long since been taken in the territory of the Southern Baptist Convention. Prior to 1890 Baptist women in the South were, in the main, loyal to the Scriptures in this respect, but since then this heresy has been gradually creeping into the ranks of Southern Baptists.

More than forty years ago Dr. J. B. Hawthorne preached a sermon to his church in Atlanta on "PAUL AND THE WOMEN," and that sermon lies before me as I write. In it Dr. Hawthorne warned against this innovation, and said:

"If through God's infinite mercy I am ever permitted to see the face of the Apostle Paul, I shall feel that I owe him an humble apology for having many times tried to believe, that in some unaccountable way he had made a prodigious mistake, and inflicted upon woman a cruel injustice in forbidding her to speak in the church. My sympathies, my prejudices, and three-fourths of my reading and thinking have been on the woman's side of this question. But the conflict is over. After a long and painful struggle I have made an unconditional surrender to conscience, and Paul, and the Holy Ghost."

This has been my experience. Brought up in the territory of the Northern Baptist Convention with no one even question-

ing the right of women to take men's places in the public meetings, I studied what I reasonably could to defend this practice until I was overwhelmed with biblical facts. Then I decided I would—regardless of the fear or favor of man—teach the commandments of the Lord. Dr. T. T. Eaton, at one time my beloved pastor, once stated in the Western Recorder that some men, in attendance upon the Southern Baptist Convention, tried to get into the W. M. U. Convention, but were forbidden entrance. Baptist women in those days were true to the Scriptures. But alas! things have changed. Now the women insist that men attend their meetings, and some even clamor to be heard upon the floor of the S. B. Convention. Unless these tendencies are checked we shall soon have women preaching and pastoring Baptist churches in the South. Already some are filling pulpits and "lecturing" and giving expositions of the Scriptures, which is virtually Expository Preaching.

3. **This is certainly removing the ancient landmarks which our fathers have set (Prov. 22:28).** Twenty-five years ago the position I am now taking was the orthodox position of Southern Baptists, but now many regard me as a heretic because I stand where Baptists stood for almost nineteen centuries. Modernism seems to have such a hold upon some of our denominational leaders that they are willing to encourage the violation of the Scriptures, provided this rebellion comes from those who contribute money to the denominational program. **Baptist principles and Baptist precedents are certainly being scrapped today, and who knows what the end will be?** Already we are caught in the grip of the greatest lawlessness America has ever experienced, and yet false prophets are "**crying peace, peace; when there is no peace** (Jer. 6:14; Isa. 48:22). Their remedy for these fearful times seems to be "**push, pep, pageants, and programs,**" and many times these take the place of the regular sermon on God's holy day. I thank my Lord for the many thousands of Southern Baptist women who love God, honor Christ, obey the Scriptures, build the home, raise children, modestly dress, and are willing to fill the place God wants them to fill. All honor to them.

4. **So long as Baptists follow this trend they cannot consistently assert their belief in an inerrant Bible, for that Bible is too clear in its teaching on woman's public ministry to be scrapped by our disobedience.** Some of those who want to transmute women at the expense of truth say there is but one passage of Scripture that seems to conflict with their practice, and they do not understand that. I refer to 1 Cor. 14:34. But suppose it could be shown that this is the only passage, would that weaken the inspiration of the Bible? Does God have to repeat his commands to make them more binding? But this is not the only Scripture forbidding this modern transmutation of women. Space forbids a lengthy discussion here, but note—the Serpent, Adam and Eve were all concerned in the first transgression (Gen. 3:1-19). Each played a prominent part, and the curse fell upon each differently.

(1) **The Serpent.** The curse upon the serpent was, that he should crawl upon his belly, eat dust, and hate and make war upon the posterity of the woman. No part of this penalty

has yet been revoked. The snake still crawls as his only method of locomotion.

(2) **The Man.** The curse upon the man was, that the ground was cursed for his sake, bringing forth thorns and thistles; in the sweat of his face he should eat bread; he should return to dust. No part of this penalty has been removed. The earth produces "thorns and thistles," men go to their toil, and at the end of life they die.

(3) **The Woman.** The curse upon the woman was, that she would have pain and sorrow in child-bearing and should take a subordinate place under man. No one questions the fact of pain in motherhood. We all agree that the law concerning the curse remains in its every part, save one, and that is that woman takes a subordinate place under man. Some think this has been repealed. But where is the record of such repeal? Christianity having a powerful influence upon woman's elevation from heathenism and slavery, there would be need of instructions just here lest she go too far in her new liberty in Christ Jesus. Just such instructions were given by the Holy Spirit through Paul and Peter. **Both these men had seen Christ, had been inspired by the Spirit, and certainly knew the mind of Christ. What they say is the same as if Christ had said it. This I believe with all my heart. Do you? I believe the woman's sin was not as great as the man's sin, for she was deceived while he was not. But this fact does not change God's law.**

Here is the foundation of the New Testament teaching on woman's public ministry. Much could be said, but I must limit the discussion here. The Scripture says: **"Let your women keep silence in the churches: for it is not permitted unto them to speak: but they are commanded to be under obedience, as also saith the law"** (1 Cor 14:34). What law? The law I have just discussed. This law was not for the Corinthian church alone, for "churches" are named, and the epistle was written to that church and to **"all that in every place call upon the name of Jesus Christ our Lord"** (1 Cor. 1:2). **Woman is to acknowledge the headship of man because of the divine order in creation. "For Adam was first formed, then Eve."** (1 Tim. 2:13). Man was created first, and therefore comes first in authority. Certainly Adam and Eve were not the progenitors of the Corinthians only, but of the human race. Hence this law concerns all the race. **Every woman who speaks and prays publicly in the presence of men repudiates this order in her own creation. Woman is also to take a subordinate place in authority because of the order in transgression. "Adam was not deceived: but the woman being deceived was in the transgression"** (1 Tim 2:14). She was first in the transgression, and is required to acknowledge that fact by allowing men to do the public teaching, praying and preaching. The Bible says so, and that should be the end of all controversy. **"Now Paul says that when a woman goes into a church and teaches or preaches in the presence of men, she reverses God's order and violates the laws of her own nature and creation. 'I suffer not a woman to teach, nor usurp authority over the man.' Teaching implies authority over those who are taught, and as a woman has not, according to God's economy, authority over man, she is not permitted to stand up in public assembly and teach him"**—Dr. J. B. Hawthorne.

"If any man think himself to be a prophet, or spiritual let him acknowledge that THE THINGS THAT I WRITE UNTO YOU ARE THE COMMANDMENTS OF THE LORD" (1 Cor. 14:37). Are men and women who place women in men's places in the churches willing to acknowledge Paul's writings are God's commands? If not, then they should not be followed as the chosen leaders in God's work. Paul says that the silence enjoined upon women in the 34th verse is the **COMMAND OF THE LORD**. Then every time a woman breaks that "silence" she violates a command of the Lord, and it is useless for her to claim that she is being led of the Holy Spirit, for the Spirit

never dishonors Christ. Jesus says: **"If any one loves me he will keep my word** (John 14:23). He also said: **"And why call ye me Lord, Lord, and do not the things which I say?"** (Luke 6:46). But some one says, it seems to be expedient for women to some times exercise their gifts publicly though the Bible forbids it generally. Uzzah thought it expedient to steady the ark, but he lost his life (1 Chron. 13:9, 10). Saul thought it expedient to spare the best of the flocks and herds, but he lost his kingdom. (1 Sam. 15:9-35). Both Uzza and Saul followed their own reason instead of the plain command of the Lord. **"To obey is better than sacrifice * * * rebellion is as the sin of witchcraft, and stubbornness is as iniquity and idolatry. Because thou hast rejected the word of the Lord, he hath rejected thee."** (1 Sam 15:22, 23).

Women are forbidden to do four things publicly in mixed assemblies, viz:

(1) **Offer prayer in public.** "I will therefore that the men pray in every place" (1 Tim. 2:8). "The men"—as distinguished from the women, who were not to lead in public prayer in the Ephesian church"—**Alfred Rowland, LL.B., B. A.** "That men"—rather as **Greek**, 'that the men,' as distinguished from 'the women'"—**J. F. & B. Com.** "The praying spoken of is not a mental act, but part of the public worship of the church, and is therefore limited to the men"—**The Popular Commentary.** "Every place"—**Greek**, 'in every place,' viz., of public prayer"—**J. F. B. Com.** So Broadus Eaton, etc.

(2) **Teach publicly in mixed assemblies.** "I suffer not a woman to teach, nor to usurp authority over the man" (1 Tim. 2:11, 12). "The reference is still to public assemblies, where women were not to teach"—**Alfred Rowland.** "She might teach, but not in public (Acts 18:26)"—**J. F. B. Com.**

(3) **Speak publicly in mixed assemblies.** "It is not permitted unto them to speak," "for it is a shame for a woman to speak in the church" (1 Cor. 14:34, 35). "As in all church assemblies of the saints, your women ought to be silent in the church assemblies"—**Meyer.** "Women are debarred by the apostle from speaking in church assemblies"—**The Pulpit Com.**

(4) **Exercising authority over man.** "Nor usurp authority over man" (1 Tim. 2:13). Woman was placed under authority because she was second in creation, and first in transgression. God says so.

As long as snakes crawl, and men go to their toil, and the earth produces thorns and thistles, and women have pain in motherhood, and the human race die, I shall continue to believe that God's law prohibiting women from speaking, praying, and preaching publicly in mixed assemblies is in force.

NOTE CHANGE OF ADDRESS

Please note that the street address of the Baptist Examiner has been changed. It is now 4758 Winchester Avenue.

WANTED

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