

Public Bible Study

— Scriptural Authority and Speaking Roles —

- Is There Scriptural Authority for Public Bible Study?
- Silence in the Formal Assembly (1Cor.14)
- Silence in a Broader Teaching Context (1Tim.2)
- What is Permissible and What is Not
- Why This Order Matters

Our subject this morning is, “**Public Bible Study: Scriptural Authority and Speaking Roles**”.

The Bible says,

- “**Let all things Be Done decently and in order.**” ([1Cor.14:40](#))

In today’s world, customs shift and opinions vary, but God’s Word remains settled or fixed ([Psa.119:89](#)). As disciples of Christ (or Christians), our goal must not be, to adapt Scripture to our preferences, but to understand God’s perfect design, for **Worship, Learning and Order** in the church.

This lesson will answer:

- Whether public Bible study is scripturally authorized, as a means of edification..

Additionally, this study explores two foundational scriptures pertaining to conduct, in a public Bible study setting:

- [1Cor.14:34–35](#) — which governs conduct in public worship,
- [1Tim.2:11–12](#) — which outlines broader spiritual roles and behaviors.

Together, these passages will guide us, as we:

- Clarify the role of women in public Bible study settings,
- Identify what is Biblically permissible and what is not,
- And reinforce why this order matters to God and to the church.

Let us begin by asking:

I. Is There Scriptural Authority for Public Bible Study?

We have...

A. Commands, to Teach and Edify One Another

The Bible says,

- “**Teaching** them to observe all things...” (read [Matt.28:19-20](#))

The Hebrew writer said,

- “...Ye ought to be **Teachers**...” (read [Heb.5:12](#))

Paul told Timothy,

- “...Commit thou to faithful men, who shall be able, to **Teach** others also.” ([2Tim.2:2](#))

These verses clearly show, that ongoing teaching and learning is central to discipleship.

The assembly for learning God’s Word, is not only authorized, but expected ([Acts 2:42](#); [Heb.10:25](#)).

Let’s explore some,

B. Examples of Christians Meeting for Teaching

- Paul taught “...**daily in the school** of one Tyrannus.” ([Acts 19:9](#))
- Paul taught “...**publicly, and from house to house.**” ([Acts 20:20](#))

The Bible says,

- “Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly... **Teaching** and admonishing **one another**...” ([Col.3:16](#))

Teaching occurred both publicly and privately, inside and outside the formal assembly.

Bible study is authorized, as a work of edification. Along with apostles, prophets and evangelists,

- Jesus “gave some, ...**Teachers**; “for the **Perfecting of the saints**, for the **Work of the ministry**, for the **Edifying of the body of Christ**.” ([Eph.4:12](#)).

Let's now examine Paul's instruction regarding,

II. Silence, in the Formal Assembly

This is where the whole church comes together for edification.

- "When the whole church, be come together, into one place" (reads [1Cor.14:23](#))

Paul addresses how spiritual gifts were used in worship.

Though miraculous gifts have ceased ([1Cor.13:8–10](#)), the principle of orderly worship remains ([1Cor.14:40](#)).

God has given specific instruction for behavior, in that setting.

- ³³ For God is not the author of confusion, but of peace, as in ALL churches of the saints.
³⁴ 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." ([1Cor.14:33-34](#))

Notice if you will, the following,

A. Text Breakdown

The first phrase, from [1Cor.14:34](#) reads,

1. **"Let your women keep silence, in the churches"**

Silence (Greek: sigao) means: to be silent, to say nothing, to refrain from speaking.

The same Greek word is used earlier:

- A tongue-speaker, must be silent, if no interpreter is present. ([1Cor.14:28](#))
- A prophet must be silent, if another receives revelation ([1Cor.14:30](#))

This indicates complete vocal silence, not just quietness or restraint.

This silence is applied consistently, to preserve order and peace ([1Cor.14:40](#); [1Cor.14:33](#)).

The next phrase, from [1Cor.14:34](#),

2. **"for it is not permitted unto them, to speak"**

Speak (Greek: laleō) means: to talk, to utter sounds, to vocalize words.

- There is no indication that this only refers to disruptive speech.
- The instruction forbids, any form of vocal instruction, in the formal assembly setting.
- God has not authorized women to speak aloud in public worship — not in leading, teaching, or in general vocal roles.

Another phrase, from [1Cor.14:34](#),

3. **"but they are commanded, to be under obedience"**

Under obedience (Greek: hypotassō) means: to subject oneself, to submit to authority, to rank under.

- It reflects both a spiritual posture and practical action.
- Silence is not just about refraining from speaking — it reflects a heart of submission, to God's order.
- **"Submitting yourselves one to another, in the fear of God."** ([Eph.5:21](#))

The final phrase, from [1Cor.14:34](#),

4. **"as also saith the law"**

Paul appeals to the Old Testament (the Law) — especially the creation order:

- woman was created after man, as a helper ([Gen.2:18](#); [2:23](#))
- man is given the role of rule in the home ([Gen.3:16](#))
- This shows the instruction is not cultural, but based on timeless truths, rooted from creation.

A. In Summary

[1Cor.14:23–35](#), clearly applies to the formal assembly.

- “When the whole church, be come together, into one place” ([1Cor.14:23](#)),
- God commands silence of women in the context of public speech, teaching, or instruction.

This instruction:

- Reflects God's character ([1Cor.14:33](#)),
- Aligns with the principle of submission ([1Cor.11:3](#)),
- And is based on God's timeless order — not local custom.

Now that we've examined public worship, let's consider,

III. Silence, in a Broader Teaching Context

From [1Tim.2](#), Paul expands beyond the assembly, and gives God's general instruction, for how women are to behave, in any setting involving spiritual teaching among men.

Notice if you will, the following,

A. Text Breakdown

The first phrase, from [1Tim.2:11](#),

1. “Let the woman, learn in silence”

This **Silence** (Greek: hēsychia) is a different Greek word, than the word found in 1Cor.14.

- **Strong's Definition** is: “stillness,” “quietness,” “silence” — not necessarily absolute muteness, but the absence of disturbance or assertion.
- **Thayer's Lexicon** reads, “Quietness” or “descriptive of a life free from outward disturbance” Used to describe a calm demeanor and submissive conduct, especially in contrast to public authority or leading roles.
- **Vine's Definition** is: “Quietness” rather than mere silence. It is the opposite of turmoil or public expression of authority. It describes a quiet, orderly life — not disruptive or assertive (see 1Thess.4:11; 2Thess.3:12)

Silence, in the context of [1Tim.2](#) means, quietness or calm demeanor, not total muteness.

- Paul is not forbidding learning—he commands it, but the manner of learning matters.
- It implies a posture of humble reception and ongoing growth, not teaching or leading over men.

The next phrase, from [1Tim.2:11](#),

2. “With all subjection”

Subjection (Greek: hypotagē), conveys the idea of: willingly submitting to another's authority.

- A woman learns in a way, that acknowledges God's order and headship (see [1Cor.11:3](#)).

Another phrase, from [1Tim.2:12](#),

3. “I suffer not a woman, to teach”

Teach (Greek: didaskēin), refers to: instructing with authority.

- Paul is not permitting women to teach men in spiritual settings, as it violates God's structure.

The final phrase, from [1Tim.2:12](#),

4. “Nor to usurp authority, over the man”

Usurp Authority (Greek: authentein), means to: exercise or take spiritual authority over a man, And it strongly implies assertive or dominating control.

- So, any setting where a woman would lead, correct, or guide men spiritually is therefore outside the bounds of Scripture.

[1Tim.2:12-14](#) is...

B. Rooted in Creation, Not Culture

Paul doesn't ground this teaching in culture, but in the created order:

- Adam was formed first ([1Tim.2:13](#))
- Eve was deceived ([1Tim.2:14](#))

This is a timeless rationale, reaching back to Genesis ([Gen.2:18](#); [Gen.2:23](#); [Gen.3:16](#)).

- Therefore, it applies not only to formal worship assemblies, but to Bible class studies,
- and any setting or location where men are present.

Having established the timeless nature of Paul's teaching, we now make,

C. Application to Bible Class Settings

If men are present, women must not take a teaching role.

This includes: being the class instructor, guiding the discussion, or reading Scripture aloud, in a way that leads.

Women are encouraged to be students, helpers, and encouragers

—but never leaders, in spiritual teaching over men ([Titus 2:3-5](#); [1Pet.3:1-4](#)).

Let us now make practical application of,

IV. What is Permissible and What is Not

Many congregations seek to build one another up, through the expedience of public Bible study classes. How can women participate, without violating God's instructions?

A. What is Biblically Permissible (but with extreme Caution, I might add)

1. **Learning quietly with submission**
 - This is encouraged! ([1Tim.2:11](#))
2. **Singing praises**
 - Singing is commanded for all ([Eph.5:19](#); [Col.3:16](#))
3. **Teaching children or other women** ([Titus 2:3-5](#); [2Tim.1:5](#); [2Tim.3:15](#))
4. **Privately sharing the gospel**
 - Priscilla, with her husband Aquila, **Taught** Apollos privately ([Acts 18:26](#))
5. **Respectfully asking a question** (IF truly for their own learning)
 - Not done, out of spite, to challenge, teach, or redirect the discussion
 - Compare [1Cor.14:35](#) — where women, should ask questions at home, to avoid disruption

B. What Is Not Permissible

1. Teaching or guiding men in spiritual instruction ([1Tim.2:12](#))
2. Leading mixed-gender Bible classes
3. Reading Scripture aloud in a manner that directs the class
4. Leading prayers or songs in the presence of men
 - "men" are to lead prayer in every place ([1Tim.2:8](#))
5. Correcting or guiding the male teacher
 - Even by phrasing it, as a question or comment

Before we conclude, let us remember,

V. Why This Order Matters

A. God's Character Demands Order

"God is not the author of confusion, but of peace" ([1Cor.14:33](#); [40](#)).

- His plan brings clarity, harmony, and unity — not dis-order.
- Peace and clarity are part of God's nature.
- Dis-order in spiritual roles, mis-represents Him.

B. God's Headship Structure Reflects His Wisdom

God > Christ > Man > Woman ([1Cor.11:3](#))

- This reflects the divine order, established from creation.
- This divine order is not temporary or cultural, but rooted in His eternal plan.

C. Submission Honors God's Design

The principle from [1Tim.2:13-14](#), is grounded in creation (Adam formed first, Eve deceived).

- Silence and submission reflect a heart aligned with God's authority.

Why this order matters,

D. We Glorify God Through Obedience (Jn.14:15)

When we follow this structure in public worship and Bible study,
we glorify God, by trusting His wisdom, over human preference ([Rom.11:33,36](#); [Prov.3:5-6](#); [Isa.55:8-9](#)).

VI. Final Thoughts

- “Be not unwise, but understanding, what the Will of the Lord IS.” ([Eph.5:17](#))

As we’ve studied together, we have seen that public Bible study is not only authorized
— it is expected of faithful Christians.

Yet even in Public Bible Study settings, God has given us clear instructions about order and role distinctions.
Women are encouraged to learn, grow, and teach other women and children
— but God has not permitted them to lead or instruct over men in spiritual settings.

This is not about value or ability, but about honoring the order God established from creation.
When we submit to His will — whether in the worship assembly, a Bible class, or even private study
— we show our love for Him and glorify His name.

**So let us commit to doing all things decently and in order,
trusting that God's design is always right, always best,
and always leads to peace and unity in the body of Christ.**

If you have a spiritual need, **The Lord invites**, and we await to assist.

Won’t you **Come**...

Believing (Heb.11:6), Repenting (Lk.13:3), Confessing (Acts 8:37) , and Be Baptized INTO Christ (Gal.3:26-27)
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...while we stand and sing.