



“Upon the return to Jerusalem after Jesus’ ascension, we see 11 and the 120 gathering to pray and among them are those who we may remember, but not recognize as disciples. Acts 1:14 mentions the women who were with them. What role did women play in Jesus’ countercultural Kingdom? What role are they to play today? Join us this week as we look at the role of women in the early church and in our church today.”

INTRODUCTION ACTIVITY:

Name a woman who was influential to you in your walk of faith and how they were influential.

MEMORY VERSE:

Acts 1:14

“All these [disciples] with one accord were devoting themselves to prayer, together with the women and Mary the mother of Jesus, and his brothers.”

SCRIPTURE READING:

Acts 1:12-14

“12 Then they returned to Jerusalem from the mount called Olivet, which is near Jerusalem, a Sabbath day's journey away. 13 And when they had entered, they went up to the upper room, where they were staying, Peter and John and James and Andrew, Philip and Thomas, Bartholomew and Matthew, James the son of Alphaeus and Simon the Zealot and Judas the son of James. 14 All these with one accord were devoting themselves to prayer, together with the women and Mary the mother of Jesus, and his brothers.”

Galatians 3:28

“There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is no male and female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus.”

1 Corinthians 14:33-35

“33 For God is not a God of confusion but of peace. As in all the churches of the saints, 34 the women should keep silent in the churches. For they are not permitted to speak, but should be in submission, as the Law also says. 35 If there is anything they desire to learn, let them ask their husbands at home. For it is shameful for a woman to speak in church.”

1 Timothy 2:8-15

“8 I desire then that in every place the men should pray, lifting holy hands without anger or quarreling; 9 likewise also that women should adorn themselves in respectable apparel, with modesty and self-control, not with braided hair and gold or pearls or costly attire, 10 but with what is proper for women who profess godliness—with good works. 11 Let a woman learn quietly with all submissiveness. 12 I do not permit a woman to teach or to exercise authority

over a man; rather, she is to remain quiet. 13 For Adam was formed first, then Eve; 14 and Adam was not deceived, but the woman was deceived and became a transgressor. 15 Yet she will be saved through childbearing—if they continue in faith and love and holiness, with self-control.”

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

1. At first glance, how do these passages about women in the church strike you? Why do you think they strike you that way?
2. Why do you think Jesus didn't directly engage with the cultural practices concerning gender roles at the time? Or do you think there is biblical evidence that He did?
3. Does Paul, the author of Timothy, have a lower view of women?
4. This is just one issue that churches divide over, but there is no need for division if we can look at the Scriptures Hebraically and desire to be a unified church pursuing after Jesus together. What are some other issues that divide churches in the West?
5. How can we create space for diversity of thought, maturity, and understanding in our local congregation but still strive for Biblical truth and understanding?

APPLICATION QUESTIONS:

1. If you grew up in the church, what was the view of a woman's role in that church? Why was it that way?
2. How does it make you feel that other brothers and sisters in Christ believe differently than we do on this issue of women in ministry? How does it make you feel that, likely, there are people in our own church who differ on how they understand the Scriptures to be teaching about women in leadership roles of the church?
3. What differences are there between men and women? Egalitarians believe that they are created different but still equal. In what ways are they different? Are the differences merely biological?
4. What is your attitude towards women in leadership positions? Is this something you need to repent of in light of this biblical teaching?

CLOSING PRAYER ACTIVITY:

Invite someone to close the group in prayer.



Angel at the grave of Jesus, Gustave Dore 1866