

The Ministry of Women

BY

J. R. CALDWELL

Author of "Foundations of the Faith," "Things to Come," etc.



*PICKERING
& INGLIS*

3^{D.}
Net

THE WITNESS

A JOURNAL OF BIBLE LITERATURE

Edited by H. PICKERING

"FOURSQUARE ON THE WORD OF GOD"

containing:

1. **Truth in Love**; or, "All the Word of God for all the People of God."

2. **Edifying Expositions**, and various Books, Chapters, Incidents by Accredited Teachers.

3. **Practical Papers** on most phases of Christian Work at Home and Abroad, with *Reports* of Special Work.

4. **Current Events** are set forth in their Scriptural bearing.

5. **Questions and Answers**, Correspondence, Original Poems, Study Outlines, and items of interest.

Issued for 57 years, and welcomed by over 25,000 readers in all parts of the world.

Monthly, 2d. 2/6 per Year post free

Specimen copy free on application

PICKERING & INGLIS

229 BOTHWELL STREET, GLASGOW, C.2

14 PATERNOSTER ROW, LONDON, E.C.4

Made and Printed in Great Britain

The Ministry of Women

CHAPTER I.

General View.

THE world in its diverse phases either degrades or idolises woman. It is in the Scriptures alone that her proper place and service are assigned to her.

The prominence into which she is being brought is a notable feature of these days. On the political, social, and religious platform woman is coming to the front, and it is evident that the trend of thought generally tends to still further developments in this direction.

With the political and social elements we are not concerned, but the energy with which women are pressing and being urged into prominence and publicity in evangelistic work and in ministry of the Word to believers, demands a careful investigation of what the Holy Scriptures teach on the whole subject.

That women are gifted by the Holy Spirit for service in the Gospel and for the edifying of those who believe, and that in love, and zeal and self-denial, as well as in spiritual intelligence, the woman is often in advance of the man, we do not question. To disparage the gifts and influence of women in the service of the Lord is far from our thoughts; rather would we seek to stimulate and

encourage, and to render much more effective every gift she possesses and every service to which she is called.

We would at this point emphasise a fact little considered, viz., that considerably over half the world consists of females, and that *the vast majority of these are practically inaccessible to men, and can never hear the Gospel except it is spoken to them by the lips of women.*

Scarcely a week passes without some new pamphlet or article being brought before us advocating the public ministry of women equally with men, both toward the world and toward the Church, and in nearly all of them the assumption is that unless this be conceded, women are silenced, their gifts ignored, their ministry rejected: they are reduced to mere ciphers as regards any effective service.

So far as our contention is concerned this is a mistake. The difference is not as to gift, or ability, or responsibility, but simply and only as to the sphere in which the gifts and abilities she undoubtedly possesses are to be exercised.

If Scripture sanctions their exercise equally with those of the men in public indiscriminately, then by all means let them so minister. If not, then let the Scriptures be diligently searched in order to ascertain what is the sphere assigned to the woman, and what are the ministries to which she is called, and for which she is fitted.

The passages mainly founded upon by one of

the most prominent writers* on the subject are Acts 2. 16-18, and Galatians 3. 27-29. On the words "your sons and your daughters shall prophesy," it is observed, "Here is women's equal warrant with man's for telling out the Gospel of the grace of God." To this we reply that in no passage of the New Testament can it be found that the telling out of the Gospel is limited to those who were endued with the gift of prophecy. To tell out the Gospel is the privilege of all who have experienced its saving power. We would rather produce as our warrant, "Let him that heareth say come;" or, "among whom shine ye as lights in the world, holding forth the Word of life;" or, "therefore they that were scattered abroad went everywhere preaching the Word."

To tell out the Gospel by no means requires the possession of the gift of prophecy. Indeed, this observation shows that the writer had not apprehended the Scriptural meaning of the word prophecy. And here we may remark, that if once the distinctive character of "prophecy" is rightly understood, nine-tenths of the arguments for women preaching disappear. They are all more or less the result of confounding two things which essentially differ, and which are never confounded in Scripture, viz., "prophecy" and "preaching."

In 1 Corinthians 12 we read (verse 28), "God hath set some in the Church, first apostles,

* Dr. A. J. Gordon, in the *Missionary Review* for December, 1894.

secondarily prophets, thirdly teachers, etc." Again (verse 29), "Are all apostles? are all prophets? are all teachers?" In Romans 12. 6-8 prophecy is distinguished from teaching, exhortation, and other ministry. It has a special character peculiar to itself. Again, in Ephesians 4. 11, "prophets" are distinguished from apostles, evangelists, pastors, and teachers. Surely it is incumbent upon us to recognise so very marked a distinction, and reverently to inquire wherein the gift of prophecy differed from all other ministries.

To assert, as the writer already referred to does, that "all we can gather from the New Testament use of this word leads us to believe that it embraces that faithful witnessing for Christ, that fervent telling out of the Gospel under the impulse of the Holy Spirit, which was found in the early Church, and is found just as truly among the faithful to-day"—is simply to ignore the Divine lines of demarcation, to confound the prophet with the evangelist and the teacher, and to reduce the gift of prophecy to the level of ordinary testimony for Christ, which is the privilege of every believer.

Such loose and inaccurate exposition might be borne with were it merely the result of ignorance or inadvertence, but where it is put forward as the ground work upon which the doctrine of women preaching is to be based, and without which the whole superstructure would fall to pieces, truth demands that the fallacy be exposed.

To be "spiritually minded," to be "led of the Spirit," to "walk in the Spirit," and to minister in the Spirit are the common heritage of all who are Christ's. But these privileges, common to all, must not be confounded with that special gift of speaking by the Spirit of God called "prophecy," which was granted only to some, and that not on the ground of special attainment in either knowledge or grace, but according to the sovereign will of God (1 Cor. 12. 11).

Other gifts for ministry, such as that of the teacher, exhorter, or evangelist, ought ever to be exercised in the leading of the Spirit and as taught by the Spirit, but that would never constitute the words of such *inspired* words.

To prophesy is to utter the words of God by inspiration of the Spirit. A prophetic utterance is not necessarily a declaration as to the future; many prophecies dealt with the state of the people at the time, and the mind of God concerning them; but whether it concerned the future or the present, the words were *Divine words*. "Whatever shall be given you in that hour, that speak ye: for it is not ye that speak, but the Holy Spirit" (Mark 13. 11).

The person used by the Spirit in prophecy might have to speak against his will, like Balaam, or things which he understood not, as Caiaphas. He might utter things the significance of which he had afterwards to search into and learn, just as those who heard him (1 Peter 1. 10, 11), but the

words he spoke were not his own, they were given by the Spirit; they were God's words.

Indeed, the whole doctrine of inspiration is involved in the question, "What is prophecy?"

At the commencement of the dispensation it was necessary that God should adopt some means of communicating His mind and will. The New Testament Scriptures were not yet written, and the doctrines of the new covenant, which were to supersede the old, had not been fully announced. The Church in its infancy was wholly dependent for instruction in the faith upon apostles first, and upon prophets next. Apostles were neither multiplied nor perpetuated. Their teachings are, in the wisdom of God, preserved in the Scriptures so far as needed. The gift of prophecy was bestowed upon many, both men and women in different Churches, in order that the saints might be edified—built up on their most holy faith.

It continued in the Church the principal means of edifying until the canon of Scripture was completed. It was then no longer required, and gradually passed away.

To Timothy, the apostle wrote, "The things that thou hast heard of me . . . the same commit thou to faithful men who shall be able to teach others also" (2 Tim. 2. 2). Thus was the passing away of apostles and prophets anticipated and provided for, the permanent gift of edification being those of teaching and exhortation.

The prophet spoke words given by the Spirit

apart from his own premeditation or knowledge—it was “by revelation.” The teacher deals only with that which is written, and expounds the Word being taught intelligently by the Spirit.

The two kinds of ministry are referred to in 1 Corinthians 14. 6, “Except I shall speak to you either by revelation or by knowledge”—the two methods by which the mind of God is communicated—“or by prophesying, or by doctrine (teaching)”—the two methods by which the mind of God is announced. That which is uttered as the result of “revelation” is “prophecy.” That which is spoken as the result of “knowledge” is “doctrine” or teaching.

The passing away of these miraculous and temporary gifts is referred to in 1 Corinthians 13. 8. When it says prophecies shall fail, it cannot mean that any prophetic utterance can fail of its accomplishment. Clearly, it corresponds with the following statement as to tongues: “they shall cease.” That is the gift of prophecy, and the gift of tongues would pass away when their purpose was fulfilled.

Hebrews 2. 4 teaches the purpose for which these gifts were bestowed. They were Divine credentials marking the inauguration of a new dispensation.

Incidental confirmation of this view is found in 2 Peter 2. 1. Referring to past time when there were true prophets, we are told Satan, who ever works by counterfeit, raised up “false pro-

phets." In the future he raises up, not false prophets, but "*false teachers*." Why this change of term? Is it accidental? Or does it not show that the ministry of the future was to be that of teaching, and no longer of prophecy?

Again, it has been taught and generally received that all the second epistles have a special bearing upon the latter times of the Church period.

Is it then without design that there is not in any of the second epistles a single allusion to either New Testament prophets or to the gift of prophecy?

Nor is there any such allusion in the Epistle of Jude, which evidently bears upon the last days.

The prophet, then, was one who spake as he was moved by the Holy Spirit. God could choose whom He pleased, and use them as and where He pleased. Yet even this mysterious gift could be abused in its exercise: and hence the limitation imposed upon those so gifted, "Let the prophets speak two or three."

A dozen might be ready to utter what was in them by the Spirit. But the Spirit's *impulse* is subject to the Lord's *command*. The gift is of the Spirit. The administration of it is of the Lord. See 1 Cor. 12. 4, 5. And it is just here that the command is given, "Let your women keep silence in the churches." We meantime defer consideration of the methods by which the force of this command is evaded.

CHAPTER II.

Cases Cited.

THERE is ample evidence in Scripture that the gift of prophecy was bestowed upon women as well as men in Old Testament times as well as New. The prophecy of Joel quoted in Acts 2 is therefore no fresh charter for woman, but simply the confirmation of a principle that holds good in all ages, that the possessor of a gift from God is responsible to use it. That this gift was bestowed upon greater numbers of both sexes in the New Testament times than in the Old cannot be questioned, but that a larger proportion of those thus gifted were women is at least doubtful. But as already stated,

The Main Point at Issue

is not whether the gift was possessed by women, but whether the sphere in which it was exercised was public or private.

There is no evidence to show that the Song of HANNAH in the Old Testament, or that of MARY in the New was uttered in any larger audience than the circle of their own relatives.

That ANNA must have spoken to many persons is evident, but this she may well have done without exceeding the limits of retirement and modesty befitting a woman; for those who looked for redemption in Jerusalem must at any time have been "a little flock."

The idea of a woman well nigh a hundred years

old standing unveiled upon a platform publicly haranguing a promiscuous multitude of men and women, according to modern ideas and teachings, is too grotesque and too far removed from Scriptural lines to be entertained by any sober-minded and unbiased Christian. Yet Anna the prophetess is adduced as an example of the public preaching of women.

HULDAH dwelt in "the college," whatever that means, and spoke the words given her to those who were sent to her. There is no evidence of publicity.

DEBORAH dwelt under an oak and occupied a position that God put her in of special prominence in the most retired way that was possible. Her case is altogether exceptional and without parallel. God is Sovereign, and if He puts a woman once in such a position of prominence at a particular time, and for special reasons, is it for us to declare what is manifestly exceptional to be normal and justifiable at any time and under any conditions? Moreover, Deborah's going forth to the battle was done under protest to Barak. She did not displace him as leader, but consented to accompany him for his encouragement.

There is no evidence that PHILIP'S FOUR DAUGHTERS prophesied in public, but it is significant that when a prophetic message was to be given to Paul it is not spoken by one of Philip's daughter, though Paul was residing in their house, but by a man—Agabus—sent from Judea. For a

girl to have prophesied to Paul the Apostle would have been doing violence to every proper natural instinct. But virgins now-a-days are taught to publicly preach to those who, for years, might be their fathers by nature and by grace.

As examples of female preaching it is usual to adduce the WOMAN HEALED of the issue of blood testifying by the Lord's command on the spot, of the grace that healed her; the message sent by the Lord to the disciples announcing His resurrection by the women, and the invitation of the woman of Samaria to the men with whom she was acquainted, to come and hear the Christ for themselves.

To liken these spontaneous momentary utterances to public preaching is of itself an exposure of

The Weakness of the Position.

If one plain definite instance of a public address by a woman to a promiscuous audience could be cited, such inappropriate references would never be made.

Much stress is laid upon the Word in Galatians 3. 28, "Neither male nor female." From this, connected with Joel's prophecy, it is argued that women are in this dispensation on the same footing as men in all respects, so that if men are at liberty to preach publicly, so are women.

But is this application of the Word according to truth?

This passage is evidently parallel with 1 Corinthians 12. 13; Colossians 3. 2; Romans 10. 12.

Clearly these passages all teach that such distinctions in the flesh have no place in the freedom and fulness of the Gospel, in the privileges that belong in common to all who are in Christ, and in the Sonship of which the Spirit witnesses in the heart of the believer. The Greek and the Jew, the bond-servant and his master, the woman and the man, are all by grace on a footing of absolute equality in the enjoyment of these spiritual and heavenly blessings.

But to argue from this that in matters of order, behaviour, ministry, sphere of service, all are alike, is to contradict the plain teaching of many Scriptures where

Marked Distinctions

is drawn between the woman and the man. The woman is to be subject; the man is to rule. The woman is to be veiled; the man is to have uncovered head. The woman is to "keep silence in the Churches;" the man is to speak. Whatever may be the exact significance of these injunctions, we mention them here only to show that there is a wide area to which the words "there is neither male nor female" do not apply. But this will become more evident as we proceed.

CHAPTER III.

Greek Words Used.

HAVING shown from many Scriptures that prophecy is distinct from preaching or teaching, we

now proceed to examine words used as the equivalent of our English word "preach."

First comes the Greek word "*keerusso*," to proclaim publicly, as a herald. Its meaning is defined in such passages as Matthew 10. 27, "What ye hear in the ear that preach ye upon the housetops;" Mark 1. 29, "He preached in the synagogues;" Revelation 5. 2, "A strong angel proclaiming (preaching) with a loud voice, etc."

By reference to the "Englishman's Greek Concordance" it can be seen that this word is used of John the Baptist, of the Lord Jesus, of the twelve apostles, of Philip, of Paul, and others, but in no instance can it be shown that a woman was among the number of those that preached.

Though this word is not found in

The Commission of the Seventy

in Luke 10, yet it is evident that their mission was of the same public character as that of the twelve apostles. Some have gone so far as to state that there is no evidence to prove that the seventy were all men, and we admit it might be difficult to prove if from our translation, but anyone acquainted with the original can see for themselves that by no possibility could any but men have been included.

In verse 2 (Luke 10) the word "other" is masculine plural, also the pronoun "them." Verse 1, "them," masculine plural, "lambs," asserted by one advocate of women preaching to be feminine, is common gender and is proved

by the context here to be necessarily masculine. Verse 7, "labourer" and "his," both masculine. Verse 18, "them," masculine. In verse 17 the article "*the*" is masculine, making the numeral to imply men only. Again in verse 2 "the labourers," both article and noun are masculine. It is not necessary to say more to show the straits to which those are driven who wish to maintain that the public preaching of women is Scriptural, but in any case it is not for us to prove a negative; let those who assert that there were women among the seventy give proof for their assertion.

The cognate words "preaching" and "preacher" were also used of Jonah and of Noah, as well as of the Lord and of Paul, but never of a woman. The Greek word "*uangelizo*," or "evangelize," is commonly rendered "preach the Gospel," or "preach" only. Those who did so as being specially gifted for this ministry are called evangelists (*uangelistes*). This word is applied to Philip (Acts 21. 8), and to Timothy (2 Tim. 4. 5), and to those whom the Lord gave in Ephesians 4. 11—but there is no instance of a woman being called "an evangelist."

Even the verb evangelise is in no instance used of a woman, though it could hardly be maintained that women were not included among those in Acts 8. 4, who, being scattered abroad by persecution, went everywhere preaching or evangelising the Word.

It may be remarked here, however, that this

word does not necessarily imply a *public* act, though generally it is so. There might, therefore, have been no hindrance to

Women "Evangelising"

in a suited sphere, though certainly there is no evidence of the word being so applied. "*Dialegmai*" is rendered "preach" but never used of a woman. "*Laleo*" is occasionally rendered "preach," but only means to speak, and may be either private or public.

The word "*didasko*," signifying "to teach," occurs frequently, but is only used of a woman in the case of Jezebel (Rev. 2. 20). To Timothy the apostle writes: "I suffer not a woman to teach," and he is to commit the things he had heard to faithful *men* (not women), who should be able to teach others also.

Didaskalos—"teacher" or "master"—in the sense of teacher, is never used of a woman, and in Titus 2. 4, when the aged women are told to teach the younger women a different word is used, and properly rendered in the R. V. "train."

The female evangelists, preachers, and teachers of modern times are not found in Scripture.

It has before been pointed out that although women were the first to see the Lord after His resurrection, Paul does not refer to them in 1 Corinthians 15. It is written, "He was seen of Cephas, then of the twelve; after that He was seen of above 500 brethren at once; after that He was seen of James, then of all the apostles, and last

of all He was seen of me also." Why no mention of Mary or of the other women?

Is it not that Paul was here bringing forward public witness to the fact of the resurrection? The Greek word for "witness" is "*martur*," from which comes our English word "martyr." Witnesses of the resurrection were "chosen before of God" (see Acts 10. 41, 42), but amongst them no mention is made of women.

A woman might be a "servant of the Church," as Phœbe, but in no instance is a woman named as evangelist, pastor, or teacher. No woman was used of God to write any of the books of the Bible, and no mention is made of any miracle in any age having ever been wrought by a woman.

When Paul speaks of women who "laboured with him in the Gospel" (Phil. 4. 3) he carefully avoids saying "who preached the Gospel," and gives no indication that their service was of a public character. Female help in the work of the Gospel was then, and is yet, *invaluable*, but it has its own proper sphere.

In 1 Timothy 5. 10, where is given

A Summary of Women's Work,

we have, "if she have brought up children, if she have lodged strangers, if she have washed the saints' feet, if she have relieved the afflicted, if she have diligently followed every good work."

How is it that in such a catalogue of womanly service, no mention is made of "preaching?"

Is it not simply and evidently consistent with

the whole tenor of Scripture, and is it not indirectly a powerful corroboration of what we maintain, that no such function existed or was recognised in apostolic times as the public preaching of women?

CHAPTER IV.

Special Passages Reviewed.

HAVING glanced at the general testimony of Scripture as to the sphere of women's ministry, we turn now to certain passages bearing on the subject about which very diverse views are entertained.

We begin with 1 Timothy 2, a chapter evidently setting forth certain matters of order in the public gatherings of the saints.

After instruction as to the nature and scope of the prayers that befit such occasions, the apostle proceeds to give his mind, as taught of God, concerning the men, in verse 8, and the women, from verses 9 to 15.

The initial words of verse 9, "In like manner also," are held by some to signify that the instruction of verse 8 is to be repeated as if it were written, "In like manner also I will that women pray everywhere," etc.; thus maintaining the equal right of women with men to lead in prayer in public assemblies.

But comparing the use of the same Greek word in chapter 3. 8-11, and in Titus 2. 3-6, we find that it does not necessarily imply a repetition of

the instructions that had gone before, but as Alford points out, "it seems to be little more than a copula, not necessarily referring to the matter which has been last under treatment."

If it was intended that the full instruction of verse 8 should apply equally to men and women, why then are the two sexes so definitely distinguished in the exhortation? Is it not perfectly evident that what occupies the mind of the writer is

The Attire of the Women

when they appear in a public assembly joining in prayer with the men, but not necessarily "lifting up holy hands," which rather implies the public act of leading an Assembly in prayer?

The fact is that women are not naturally fitted for such a service, as has often been proved in the writer's experience, where women attempted to lead were unheard, and their performance proved to be rather a disturbance than for edification.

It must be borne in mind wherever prayer in public is referred to, that it is not only the *one who leads* that prays. All join in prayer, and where a large promiscuous Assembly are thus worshipping God, the modest apparel of the women should form a striking contrast to the style that was and still is current in public entertainments of the world.

Having disposed of the subject of dress, the apostle goes on to enjoin upon the woman silence

and subjection, and to prohibit her assuming the functions of teaching and authority as regards the man.

To say that this only applies to the wife in her relation to her husband seems to us to be evading the obvious force of the passage. It is the public assembly that is in view throughout, and not the home circle.

Two reasons are adduced for the putting of the woman in this

Subordinate Position.

The first from creation: "Adam was first formed; then Eve." It is therefore stamped on the order of nature, and in public assembly as well as in the structure of the household this teaching of creation and nature is to be acknowledged. The second reason is connected with the entrance of sin. "The woman being deceived was in the transgression." Thus as the order of creation denies her the place of *authority*; the further fact of her having been the one whom Satan at first *deceived*, debars her from the position of teacher.

With such definite Scripture in view, how is it possible to accept the interpretation put by some upon the words, "In Christ Jesus there is neither male nor female," viz., that men and women are upon an absolutely equal footing in regard to ministry as well as standing in grace?

In the home circle woman is neither prohibited from teaching all she knows, nor is silence im-

posed upon her. * The application is to the public assembly and to it only.

To this agrees exactly 1 Corinthians 14. 34: "Let your women keep silence in the Churches: for it is not permitted unto them to speak; but to be under obedience, as also saith the law."

One would have thought that words could not be plainer than these. But those who contend for the public preaching of women assert that the Greek word rendered "to speak," means to "chatter" or "talk," and that this solemn command amounts only to the prohibition of a practice to which women were more liable than men, viz., to interrupt the service by audible conversation or asking of questions.

It appears to us

An Insult to Women

to say that it was necessary to issue an authoritative order to prevent them from doing what any one, male or female, might do, and what would be as unbecoming in a man as a woman.

But we need only mention that the word (*laleo*) rendered "to speak," is the same that is used in Matthew 13. 3; Luke 9. 11, and other passages, of the Lord; Luke 1. 19, of the angel Gabriel; Mark 13. 11, of the disciples under the guidance of the Spirit; and in Matthew 28. 25, of the Holy Spirit Himself; of Paul, in 1 Corin-

* Priscilla is named as instructing Apollos in their own home, therefore privately. Possibly, like Manoah's wife, Priscilla knew more than her husband, and no Scripture could be adduced to hinder her from communicating, in the home sphere, all she knew to Apollos.

thians 2. 6, 7, etc., etc., to show the untenableness of such an argument.

And if it meant only a prohibition of *talking in the meeting*, how could it possibly have been added, "for it is a shame for women to speak in the Church?" Would it not be equally "a shame" for men to "chatter," and so interrupt the worship?

Here, as in Timothy, silence and subjection are the two things enjoined. The testimony of Scripture is uniform and consistent throughout.

Special pleaders, by way of making a difficulty, have argued that if women are to be absolutely "in silence," then they ought not to sing. But it is noticeable that

What is Forbidden is Not Singing,

but "speaking" and "teaching." Singing is peculiarly an act of fellowship in which all can participate, and would be lacking in its most important element if the female voice were absent. In its very nature it gives prominence to none; all the voices blend, and even a leader may fulfil his part without appearing to do so. When leading involves prominence and publicity it becomes unsuited to a woman.

The allusion to "the law" in verse 34 is probably a reference to Genesis 3. 16, but it may also allude to the place generally assigned to the woman throughout the Old Testament.

On verse 35 Alford remarks: "They might say in answer to the former command to keep silence,

'But if we do not understand anything are we not to ask?' The stress is on the 'learn.' 'Their own' confines them to their husbands to the exclusion of other men."

In 1 Corinthians 11 the hidden,

Covered Position of the Woman

is insisted on, upon other grounds.

Creation is again referred to as affording instruction in two particulars not elsewhere adduced.

1st. "The man is not of (out of) the woman but the woman of (out of) the man." This answers to 1 Timothy 4. 13: "For Adam was first formed, then Eve." The priority and consequent precedence of the man is the point insisted on.

2nd. "Neither was the man created for the woman, but the woman for the man." The man having thus the first place in the thoughts and counsels of God as well as in the operation of His hands.

On the other hand, two counterbalancing considerations are adduced. 1st, "Nevertheless, neither is the man without the woman, neither the woman without the man, in the Lord." That is, God does not look at them as independent of each other, but as mutually dependent and necessary to each other; and 2nd, "For as the woman is of the man, even so is the man also by the woman." The allusion here being to the order of nature, that man generally, and more particularly as alluding to Christ, is born of woman.

This whole passage, to be rightly understood,

must be viewed by us according to the thought that underlies it as to the typical teaching of each particular. Underlying verse 8 there is the thought, the Church is taken out of Christ; verse 9, the Church is created for Christ; verse 11, Christ and the Church are together in the thoughts and counsels of God; verse 12, Christ is the offspring of the woman, "of whom as concerning the flesh Christ came," this great honour pertaining to the woman alone, notwithstanding the subordinate place assigned to her in the order of creation and through her part in the fall.

From this beautiful convergence of Scriptures, and super-added thereto the teaching of nature (verse 14)—which, by giving to the woman long hair for a covering, is in perfect accord with the teaching of Scripture—the apostle deduces the necessity for the woman being veiled, or covered, in token of her subjection to the man, in the public assembly; and this with the further and deeper design, that she in the Assembly be a fitting representation of the subjection of the Church in relation to Christ.

The man is to have the head uncovered, for he is the representative of Christ. The woman is to have the head covered, for she represents the Church.

All this is in perfect accord with the other Scriptures we have examined. There is no evidence whatever to show that even in disorderly Corinth a woman ever publicly taught or exercised authority. But from verse 5 it is argued, 1st,

that women prophesied; 2nd, that they publicly led the Assembly in prayer; and 3rd, that this was not in wilfulness or ignorance, but according to Divine order, and therefore an example to be followed still.

That women prayed we admit, though it remains to be proved by those who assert it, that women led the public Assembly in prayer.

That women prophesied publicly in the Corinthian Church we neither assert nor deny. They may have done so, and we admit that the language of verse 5 seems to imply that they did. But we submit that verse 31, "Ye may all prophecy one by one," followed almost immediately by, "let your women keep silence in the Churches," conveys to the mind of an ordinary reader the thought that such public use of the gift of prophecy by women had not the Divine sanction. And the Church in all ages has so understood it. Be that as it may, it has been clearly shown that the gift of prophecy does not now exist, and that preaching and teaching publicly are functions that throughout the entire Scriptures are assigned to men and to men only.

It has been argued from Romans 16. 7, "of note among the apostles," that if women were dignified with the office of "apostles" there is no lesser position which they are unfitted to occupy. (Dr. A. S. Gordon in *Missionary Review of the World*, Dec., 1894.)

On this passage, Bloomfield remarks, referring

to 2 Corinthians 8. 23 and Philippians 2. 25, in both of which the word "messenger" is literally "apostle:" "In both these passages the article is not found, as here (Rom. 16. 7), which I think determines it to mean apostle in the highest sense. Thus the '*En*' would signify '*inter*,' that is to say, 'who were well known and held in consideration by or among the apostles.'" If this be correct, then the idea of

"Female Apostles"

disappears.

But even if Bloomfield's contention be not admitted, it cannot be gainsaid that the word "apostle" is used in the New Testament in two senses. The major sense is defined by such passages as Acts 1. 21, 22; Acts 2. 14; 1 Corinthians 9. 1, 2; 2 Corinthians 12. 12. They were "apostles of the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ" (2 Peter 3. 2). None others were apostles in the same sense.

But there were those who were messengers, *i. e.*, apostles of the Churches. Apostle signifies literally, one sent on a special service. Any one who had been sent forth on some special service or ministry of love by the Church might be called an apostle. And it is in this sense, we believe, that the word is used in 2 Corinthians 8. 23; Philippians 2. 25, and *possibly*, also, in Romans 16. 7. In the same way the word "angel" (*angelos*), while generally used of heavenly messengers, is once used in James 2. 25 of the spies who came in to Rahab.

But, again, Alford remarks: "The person to be saluted may be Junia feminine or Junias masculine." If so, the foregoing comments, sound in themselves, are needless. But in any case this passage affords but a slender basis for the theory of female ministry and apostolate that has been founded upon it.

Much is made of the rendering in the Revised Version of Psalm 67. 11: "The Lord giveth the Word. The women that publish the tidings are a great host." But surely such a passage as this, occurring as it does in one of the loftiest poetic passages in Scripture, must be governed by the teaching of all Scripture. Does not the reference in verse 25, also in Exodus 15. 20; Judges 11. 34; 1 Samuel 18. 6, to the custom of the women in Israel to celebrate in companies, with songs and dancing, the victories of Jehovah, quite explain the passage without doing violence to all Scripture by affirming that here, at least is a warrant for the public preaching of women?

We admit the difficulty of

Defining Between Public and Private.

To draw lines as to where the private passes into the public, may be perplexing, but let the principle be admitted and obeyed, and the details will adjust themselves in each case. It has been remarked that the same difficulty may arise in distinguishing between "long hair" and "short," yet the distinction is there in Scripture and we do not question it, but seek to be subject to it. So,

also, between "young and old." Who shall fix an age at which a young person becomes old? Yet we cannot but own and approve the instructions of Scripture as given for each.

"Certain women" accompanied the Lord Jesus and His disciples, and "ministered unto Him of their substance" (Luke 8. 2, 3).

To Him personally was their service rendered, and high was the honour thus put upon them, and precious the grace that accepted their ministry. He is not here now; but His members are. Of their substance still may women minister to Him and His members, and on His feet still may the ointment be poured which love has prepared. This personal service to the poor, the weak, the sick, the lonely, is part of woman's ministry to Him, a service in which she has the first place, and in which the man can only be her helper.

But the ministry of the Word in the Assembly and in every public sphere, the man is given the first place, and woman comes in as his helper.

CHAPTER V.

Results of Women's Work.

ONE consideration must not be omitted. None can deny that there are very many whose conversion took place through the public preaching of women. What God has wrought through any instrumentality ought ever to be frankly and fully acknowledged.

This indisputable fact is, however, adduced,

as absolutely justifying their ministry. In the face of it, some seem to think that all Scripture must give way. With such, the tests is the result. If the result be blessing to souls, the means, they say, are abundantly justified.

But let this principle be fairly tested. When Moses smote the rock the water flowed abundantly, and the people received the blessing. Did the end justify the means? Grace did not stint the blessing, though the God who gave it took in hand the discipline of the erring servant through whom the blessing came.

The crew of the ship in which the fugitive Jonah was found were blessed through his testimony. Did the fact that thus the knowledge of the true God came to them justify Jonah in his flight from God?

God blesses His Word wherever it is made known. Many have been blessed through reading the Scriptures apart from any human instrumentality. Others through tracts and booklets, others by a bill upon a wall. Even the Word from the lips of unsaved persons has been blessed, and many a time the Word has been used to conversion from the lips of children of God, who have owned to their life being at that very time unworthy of a Christian.

The Physical Constitution

of the female is not fitted for a service involving so much excitement and effort. Many have gone on for a while, and have ere long broken down with

irreparably shattered constitutions to sink into a premature grave.

Others have sadly lost their womanly modesty and reserve, their very countenance and demeanour telling the sad tale to others, **denied by themselves**, of their usurpation of the **functions of the man**. Others have become so engrossed with their public work that home and husband and children have been neglected and become a reproach in the eyes of the world.

God is a Sovereign, and can bestow blessing through any means He pleases; but His Word cannot be set aside with impunity. Sooner or later it will be found that all-round blessing, blessing to the servant and to those ministered to, can only come through God's work being done in God's own way.

The work of the Lord at home and abroad is suffering sorely to-day from

Lack of Woman's Help.

There are sick ones who need to be tended, but this ministry, so fitted to a sister, is left, it may be, to an unsaved neighbour.

There are houses to be visited, mothers to be helped and instructed, children to be gathered and taught—all suited work for women, and few to do it.

Many years ago an elderly Christian woman, long since with the Lord, visited in a city district from house to house. She approached the writer thus: "I will gather the neighbours into kitchens

if you will give them the Gospel." The writer gladly consented. It was his first Gospel work, and none since has ever been so richly blessed. The memory of it is blessed still. He could never have gone in and out and entered into the circumstances and sorrows of the mothers as she did. It was her calling and her gift. She won their hearts, and secured their kitchens for the neighbours. Yet she felt she could not preach the Gospel to them as the one whose co-operation she sought.

What a helper she was! Patiently she plodded on; kitchen after kitchen was opened to her any evening of the week, and abundance of work provided for Gospel preachers willing to fill an humble place. O that God would put it into the hearts of many even thus to *labour in the Gospel*.

The women of India, China, Africa, are inaccessible to men. All their ancient habits of life are such as to impose an impassable barrier to any but their own sex.

Half the World is Crying Bitterly for Woman's Help.

and yet, forsooth, those who contend, with all Scripture at their back, that the public sphere is not for women are regarded as if they would impose a limit upon woman's usefulness.

Let the reader judge whether the sphere which God in His Word has assigned to her, or that into which her own will has thrust her, is likeliest to end in glory to God and blessing to souls.