

# THEOLOGICAL QUARTERLY.

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## Testimonials for Old-Fashioned Truths.\*

### I.

LUKE 13, 24—30.

The sermons of our Savior sparkle with telling parables. As we peruse the record which the evangelists have given of His active ministry, we cannot but be impressed with the fact that they were distinct favorites in His public and private discourses. I call them telling parables because they are striking illustrations to drive home momentous and important truths. Some one has said: "They are earthly stories with a heavenly meaning." Such a parable has been selected to rivet our attention to-day. Under God's gracious guidance let us, then, consider:—

#### *THE CLOSED DOOR.*

1. *The door is now open.*
2. *The door will surely be closed.*
3. *The closed door will find you within or without.*

The Savior had just been asked by one of the audience to whom He had been preaching: "Lord, are there few that be saved?" This man had evidently missed the point which our Lord had made in His sermons. He was asking about a matter which was of no concern to his soul's welfare. Hence Christ gave him an answer which should set him right. He told him: "Strive to enter in at the strait gate." That was equivalent to saying: "No man who thinks seriously about his eternal salvation will worry about such a question, but will rather focus his attention upon this one thing that he be saved. To engrave this truth indelibly upon his heart, the Lord tells this parable: The master of a house is anxiously waiting for more and more guests to come to his beautiful mansion. At his hour he will arise and

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# The Woman in the Church. (2)

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## GRECIAN WOMEN.

Virtuous Grecian women during the apostolic age, and long before, were seldom or never in public assemblies, except as converts to Judaism or Christianity. The condition of pagan Grecian women was far inferior to that of their Hebrew sisters. When converted and introduced to Christian assemblies, it materially exalted their conceptions and desires, and female vanity might easily creep in under the name of Christian freedom. (Lange, on 1 Cor. 11, 5. 6.) Pagan Grecian men had but little respect for the character of woman, and regarded her capacities as much inferior to their own. (Smith, *Greek and Roman Antiquities*, p. 621.) Aristotle put her relation to man as that of subject to governor, and asserted that "if she have a will, it is a will without rights, and if she have virtues, they are kindred to those of slaves." Though Plato's ideal education extended equally to both sexes, his ideal community of wives and ideal nudity of woman in the palestra were degrading to the popular estimate of her character. (Jowett's *Plato*.) Smith

says (*Greek and Roman Antiquities*): "The Grecian high poetical ideals of woman had no counterpart in actual life. The Athenian woman was in no respect the equal of her husband; she was not the entertainer of his guests or the mistress of his house, but only his housekeeper and the mother of his children. She took no part in military or political matters."

Virtuous Grecian women, previous to marriage, were chiefly confined at home. After marriage they were not allowed to leave their dwellings except upon special permission of their husbands. At marriage-feasts, contrary to the custom on other public occasions, women as well as men were invited, though they sat with the bride at a table separate from those occupied by the men. (Smith, *l. c.*, p. 620.) In Sparta, Olympia, and Crete married women did not attend gymnastic contests, though the unmarried did, and often engaged in them. (*Ibid.*) The life of a Greek woman of good reputation was one of strict seclusion. She lived with her children and servants in what was called the gynaeconitis, always in the rear of the dwelling, or, in Homer's time, in the upper story. The men occupied the andronitis, the front first story and chief part. Strangers were never admitted to the apartments for women. As a rule, the virtuous women were not well educated, except in the duties of a housekeeper. The unvirtuous women were often well educated, like Aspasia, the famous mistress of Pericles. (Prof. Edw. North, Hamilton College.) The superior education of some of the *hetaerae* was owing to their unrestrained social intercourse with men. Virtuous wives were, in general, shut out from the thoughts and aspirations of intellectual society. They could not mingle with men, nor yet with educated courtesans — enemies of their peace — who associated with their husbands. No women but the *hetaerae* could listen to the philosophers in the arcades or to the orators in the Areopagus. None but they could ride through the streets with uncovered face and in richness of apparel. With their society the men

became familiar, and instead of loving their own wives, often treated them as furniture and chattels. (Sanger's *History of Prostitution*, p. 54.) Doellinger says (*Gentile and Jews*, Vol. 2, p. 237): "If retirement, restraint, ignorance of the world, and legalized respect were the portion of married women, freedom, education, and the homage of men, ending in contempt, fell to the lot of the *hetaerae*. Young women destined for this pursuit received a careful education, such as was denied daughters intended for the married state. Hence the *hetaera* was connected with the arts, the literature, and even the religion of her country; and this gave her a kind of historical importance."

In such society it was of great moment that the Apostle should guard the Christian women against all dress and behavior that would liken them to the vicious. Addressing religious assemblies would bring suspicion upon them and disgrace upon the Church. Appearing in those assemblies at all was for them a marked degree of advancement. One class of Grecians, however, the Dorians, allowed comparatively free and unrestrained intercourse between the sexes, and that naturally led to the charge of licentiousness against them. (Smith, *l. c.*, p. 621.)

Virtuous Greek women going from home customarily wore a veil or light shawl upon the head, with which they could cover their faces when in the presence of men. (Smith.) Spartan married women never appeared in public unveiled, though the young unmarried did. (Smith.) In such society and circumstances the Christian Greek women must have felt constrained to wear their veils in the larger religious assemblies. Wearing the veil would of itself nearly compel silence, and throwing it off to speak would invite scandal. If some in their zeal were willing to incur all risks, and, besides appearing in church, to displace their veils and engage in asking and answering questions in public, the Apostle thought it not becoming or wise, especially so, because, unless they were actually inspired, and the Lord should not be hindered from speaking through them, they could as well put their questions to their husbands at home.

## ROMAN WOMEN.

With customs relative to woman's "silence" among the Romans, we have not so much to do, for Paul's restrictions relative to "silence" were especially concerning Grecian women. The chief of what he wrote was to the church at Ephesus and Corinth, and all this before he ever went to Rome; and all that he wrote was while he was in Grecian or Roman society. But we might remark here that the condition of Roman women under the emperors, which was the time of the Apostles, was miserable and degraded. We need not expand here on the moral corruption of that period.

Roman as well as Grecian and Hebrew women customarily wore the veil in the presence of men. The bride at marriage wore a veil called *flammeum* (Smith, *l. c.*, p. 625), while the usual veil was named *velum*, or its derivative, *velamen*. The fact that the women covered their head with a veil always remained. On the whole, Roman society in the apostolic age required woman's "silence" nearly or fully as much as Grecian. Virtuous women were too little esteemed to be allowed social freedom with men. That freedom was so much granted to *vicious* women as to drive the virtuous into seclusion. Silence became their protection, and there was no occasion for the Apostle to except them from the restrictions laid upon Christian women in the churches of Greece and Asia Minor.

## QUOTATIONS FROM THE FATHERS.

Clement of Alexandria (born about 150 A. D.) wrote as follows: "It has also been enjoined that the head should be veiled and the face covered; for it is a wicked thing for beauty to be a snare to men. Nor is it seemly for a woman to wish to make herself conspicuous by using a purple veil." Again: "Let her be entirely covered, unless she happen to be at home. For that style of dress is grave and protects from being gazed at. And she will never fall who puts before her eyes modesty and her shawl; nor will she invite another to fall into sin by uncovering her face. For this is the wish of the Word, since it

is becoming for her to pray veiled (1 Cor. 11, 5). They say that the wife of Aeneas, through excess of propriety, did not even in her terror at the capture of Troy uncover herself, but, though fleeing from the conflagration, remained veiled."

Tertullian (born about 150 A. D.) says: "As, then, in the masculine sex, under the name of 'man,' even the youth is *forbidden* to be veiled, so, too, in the feminine, under the name of 'woman,' even the virgin is bidden to be veiled. Equally in each sex let the younger age follow the discipline of the elder." — "Put on the panoply of modesty; surround yourself with a stockade of bashfulness. . . . Wear the full garb of *woman* to preserve the standing of *virgin*. . . . Walk in accordance with the will of your espoused. Christ is He who bids the espoused and wives of others veil themselves, [and] of course, much more His own." — "It is not permitted a woman to speak in the church; but neither [is it permitted her] to teach, nor to baptize, nor to offer, nor to claim to herself a lot in any manly function, not to say [in any] sacerdotal office." Cyprian also argues at length that women ought not to speak in the church.

In the *Apostolic Constitutions* it is said: "We do not permit our women 'to teach in the church,' but only to pray and hear those that teach; for our Lord and Master, Jesus Christ Himself, when He sent out the Twelve to make disciples of the people and of the nations, did nowhere send out women to preach." Bear in mind that women of bad character often addressed, and disputed in, audiences of Gentile men, and frequently behaved in an inmodest and unseemly manner. It would not do to allow Christian women to be mistaken for them.

The question which principally concerns us is: Are the commands which Paul imposes upon the women of the primitive Church binding upon the women to-day? Was it a perpetual or a temporary restriction? If silence is still enjoined, why not the veiling of the head? The difference is that between *custom* and *principle*. The Apostle Paul taught the obligation of woman in his time to have her head veiled in the religious assembly (1 Cor. 11, 5. 6). In the phrase, "with her head un-

covered dishonoreth her head" (*R. V.*), the word "uncovered" means "unveiled"; and in "let her be covered" the last word means "veiled." Paul says of being unveiled (1 Cor. 11, 16) : "We have no such *custom*, neither the churches of God." Going unveiled being a *custom*, therefore being veiled was a custom. This custom was not an end in itself, but it was a means to the end of woman's honoring her husband (v. 5) and acknowledging the leadership, headship, or authority of man (v. 10). Veiling — a custom — was subservient to a *principle*, which was and is that "The head of the woman is the man" (v. 3). Thus veiling fulfilled the office of a *custom* in woman's acknowledgment of the *principle* of man's headship. Removed from Oriental life, it is now nearly universally believed that woman is released from the duty of wearing the veil in the churches. An occasional exception exists. One of the American Episcopal bishops has near lady relatives who regard the primitive direction as binding still, and who scrupulously wear the veil in religious assemblies. But why the almost universal change from the practise that prevailed in the New Testament period? Because veiling the head is a changeable custom. Why did the Apostle require it? Because then and there woman's freedom from "shame" (1 Cor. 11, 3) — her reputation and modesty — demanded it; and because "woman is the glory of the man" (1 Cor. 11, 7), receiving her place and higher honor by her relation to him, and thus reflecting his honor. Man is unveiled; she should be different — veiled. The veil is a little-used article in our time and clime. In our modern Western conditions it is entirely devoid of the significance attached to it in the Orient, and does not in the least express the things which it did at Paul's time. It has long been understood that some commands of Scripture pertaining to customs are not binding upon us if other current customs involve the same sentiments and principles. We have the definite affirmation of the Savior: "Ye also ought to wash one another's feet" (John 13, 14). And the Apostle puts "washing the saints' feet" (1 Tim. 5, 10) along with other "good works" as an index of noble character in woman. The climate, the

dusty roads, and the sandals for the feet made frequent foot-washing imperative. It was a significant and symbolical act. Some have made foot-washing a sacrament, and a few still so observe it. But Christendom generally perceives that Christ did not institute it as a perpetual ordinance. Yet He Himself exemplified it with His apostles and enjoined it as at that time a proper and expressive symbolic custom. The Christian principles signified by it—humility and love for the brethren—are now manifested by other acts. Climatic change often changes foot-washing to foot-clothing or foot-warming. Luther recommended in place of it a bath for the poor. The *principle* of humble love remains, the *custom* has passed away.—The Apostle James enjoins prayer for the sick by the elders, “anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord” (James 5, 14). The ancients used unguents for the promotion of health. Orientals now in warm countries do the same. Many Christians after the apostolic age continued the custom of anointing the sick. As a curative, in cool climates, its use now is generally displaced by other remedies. The *duty* of prayer for the sick and of the use of means for their recovery continues; the *custom* of anointing with oil is superseded. In like manner the necessity of woman’s veiling herself is in most countries annulled. Women go about everywhere with uncovered face, and their sitting in church unveiled does not seem to us in the least immodest or suggestive of rebellion against the authority of man.

But how about the “silence” feature? Was that, too, merely a custom? As far as the absolute silence in the presence of men in public meetings is concerned, we may answer with a qualified “yes.” There is no doubt that in apostolic times absolute silence was enjoined upon women in the public meetings of Christians, whether of a purely religious or partly business nature. To address a larger assembly meant that the woman would have to arise in her place and remove her veil in front of her mouth and face in order to give free utterance, and that was considered decidedly unseemly, as it smacked of the freedom of the courtesan and rebellion against the authority



of man, and the apostles sternly checked any such tendency. Woman's silence was to give token of her modest and retiring nature and of her acceptance of her appointed relation to man. To the Corinthians the Apostle says: "It is not permitted unto them to speak; but let them be in subjection" (1 Cor. 14, 34). "But" shows contrast; breaking silence by speaking was casting off the symbol of their relation to man. "It is shameful for a woman to speak in the church" (v. 35), because there it was the violation of her symbolic profession of virtue, modesty, and faithfulness. "Let a woman learn in quietness with all *subjection*" (1 Tim. 2, 11). The implication is that "subjection" then required absolute quietness, silence. "I permit not a woman to teach, nor to have dominion over a man, but to be in quietness" (1 Tim. 2, 12). A woman's public teaching was an approach to ruling over the man and belonged in the same category. Breaking of silence meant an attempt to rule. The Apostle gives a reason for his position: "For Adam was first formed, then Eve" (v. 13); hence, Adam was to be the "head" and Eve "an help meet for him." At Paul's time woman's silence was necessary to her acknowledgment of her relation. Not the silence, but the subjection, was the principal object. As Lange says: The speaking "involved a sort of intercourse with men on the part of women and a renunciation of their dependence upon their husbands."

But, argues the modern woman, things are different now. A woman need not now conceal her face at the approach of men, though female modesty yet reigns. Woman may to-day go where she pleases, even alone, without laying herself open to the charge of immodesty or something worse. She may be free and unrestrained in the social intercourse with men. She is gaining more and more influence on the affairs of the day. Her position in the family is different from that of woman in the days of Paul. She may occupy the best part of her own house, and not yield it to her husband, while she lives in the kitchen. She is not barred from the acquaintance of gentlemen that visit at her own home; she may teach her own children, and is often

appointed the teacher of others. Young women may pursue the same studies as young men, recite in the same classes, and a woman may teach them all. She is prominent in the business world. She is often the employer of many men. Also in church relations her position is greatly altered. She is teacher in the schools, in the day-schools as well as in the Sunday-schools. She is not separated from the men in the service by a high wall, but is permitted to mingle with them. In many churches the men no longer commune first and then the women, but they approach the Lord's Table promiscuously. In the Bible-classes they may ask questions, even in the presence of man. What would most congregations do without the women? Usually they far outnumber the men. The Ladies' Aid Society is a vital and often indispensable force. In organizations connected with church-work, like hospital and orphanage associations, women have a vote, have a voice in the policy of the organization. The same holds good in mission-societies and in the recently organized Lutheran Education Societies. An Oriental of Paul's time would have died of horror in such a meeting. All around, times and conditions have changed regarding woman. Some States have granted her equal suffrage with men. She goes to the polls and casts her ballot. Why not let down the bars in the administrative affairs of the church? Why not permit her to vote with the men on affairs of the church? Why not let her hold office or represent the church at synodical conventions? Some churches are ordaining women to the ministry and giving them pastorates. We do not want to go so far, but grant us at least a voice in the church-affairs in which we are so vitally interested, — perhaps more than most of the men. Many of us are contributors aside from what our husbands contribute. Yes, many of us are unmarried or widows. You ask for our money, yet we have no jurisdiction over the disposition of it, no voice in the election of the man who is to handle it. Surely we are just as much interested in the calling of a new pastor as the men are. He is the shepherd also of our souls, we are just as much the sheep of his flock as are the men. We are perhaps

in general more faithful in the performance of our religious duties than the men. Why, then, this old-fashioned, Oriental discrimination against our sex? No taxation without representation! Give us the vote — *Stimmrecht!* You surely do not mean to say that we will not make use of it as intelligently and faithfully as the men!

The appeal of woman for a voice in congregational affairs sounds just and plausible enough, and there are congregations that have granted her equal rights with men in the administration of congregational affairs. The question with us is not, Is it *wise* to adopt such a course? but, Is it right and permissible? If not, why not? It is not enough to say: "Es ist bei uns immer so gewesen; wir wollen keine Neuerung schaffen." We cannot put off intelligent women with such answers. Neither will arguments of reason and advisability, the arguments of the antisuffragette, be always convincing. If we have reasons for not granting woman this demand, which is going to become more and more persistent, they must be taken from the Word of God, the real constitution governing congregational affairs. We believe there are such reasons. In the early stages of meditation upon this troublesome paper, which was imposed upon us by a heartless and thoughtless conference, we were much inclined, if only for the sake of argument and discussion, to take the radical stand that woman might be granted equal rights with man in the administrative affairs of the church, but upon maturer consideration of the subject we saw that such a viewpoint could not be brought into accord with Holy Writ, much as we love the ladies and are naturally disposed to give them everything they want. After all, the Lord is the final arbiter in all questions relating to Christian life, and against His verdict and judgment there is no appeal.

The point upon which we think the decision hinges is whether the silence of woman in the church demanded by Paul is only a *custom* denoting virtue, humility, and subservience to the rule of man, as was the veiling, or a *principle* binding for all times. It may be interesting, although not entirely con-

vincing as far as our decision in the matter is concerned, that men prominent in the church have ever regarded it as a principle, the abolition of which would mean the destruction of that relationship between man and woman which is of divine ordination.

Chrysostom, born 347, commenting on 1 Tim. 2, 11—15, says: "Thus they will show submission by their silence."

Luther, on 1 Cor. 14, 34, says: "To teach in public is an exercise of a certain kind of lordship in the place of Christ; and it is so much the less suitable for women, since there is in men much to be rebuked. At home they [women] may instruct their own, as far as they know and can."

Bengel, born 1687, on the same passage, says: "In your churches, where men are present that can speak, *let them ask*. Men alone are to put questions in the assembly."

Grotius, born 1583, held that a woman was allowed to speak in public only when she had special divine appointment for it.

Doddridge, born 1702, says: "Let your women be silent in your religious assemblies if they have not some extraordinary revelation; for it is not commonly permitted them to speak on such public occasions; but it is their duty to be in subjection to the superior authority of the man; as the law also says; . . . for it is evidently an indecent thing for a woman to speak in the church, and suits very ill with that modesty and reserve which is so universally esteemed an ornament to the sex."

Neander, born A. D. 1789: "Teaching and preaching to men; mental receptivity and activity to women."

Alford, 1810, says: "Their speaking in public would be of itself an act of independence, of teaching the assembly and, among others, their own husbands."

Ellicott, 1819 (English professor and commentator), says: "Every form of public address or teaching is clearly forbidden as at variance with woman's proper duties and destination."

Prof. Chas. Hodge, 1797, Princeton: "The fact that in no Christian church was public speaking permitted to women

was itself strong proof that it was un-Christian, *i. e.*, contrary to the spirit of Christianity." So also Lange, Meyer, Farrar, Schaff, Cowles.

We fully agree with the reply an editor made to a questioner in a religious weekly. The questioner wants to know whether the prohibitions contained in 1 Cor. 14, 34. 35 and 1 Tim. 2, 11. 12 apply to the women of the nineteenth century. The editor answers: "We know of no reason why the portion of the New Testament referred to should not be interpreted like any other portion of it. If so, then it is of general application, unless there are limiting clauses. But we not only find no limiting clauses in this case, but we find supporting statements which indorse the obvious meaning. Thus 1 Cor. 11, 3—9. 13—15 the Apostle, aside from all rules as to mere conduct, lays down the general principle that 'the head of the woman is the man,' supported by the two considerations: 1) that she was secondary in origin, and 2) ancillary in intent. So also his reference to the Old Testament (14, 34), 'As also saith the law,' adds force in the same line, by the well-known teaching of the Old Testament that women do no ministerial office in the Temple. The same doctrine occurs in the other epistles, as, for example, Eph. 5, 22—24. 35: 'As the Church is subject to Christ, so let the wives also be to their husbands in everything,' and again, Col. 3, 18: 'Wives, be in subjection to your husbands, as is fitting in the Lord,'—*i. e.*, as befits Christianity. So also Paul was careful to say to Titus (2, 5) the same thing, in substance, which our correspondent refers to as said by him to Timothy; *viz.*: 'Being in subjection to their own husbands, that the Word of God be not blasphemed.' Still further, Peter speaks to the same point (1 Pet. 3, 1), where he says that wives ought to 'be in subjection to their own husbands'; and he further says (3, 6) that they ought to be in such subjection 'as Sarah obeyed Abraham, calling him lord,' and (3, 7) that husbands ought to 'give honor unto the woman as unto the weaker vessel.' Now we have all these passages from these two apostles—and there are none of an opposite spirit—which,

combined together, show that in the divine idea woman stands in a certain relation of inferiority, dependence, and subordination to man, a relation which, when cordially recognized and lived up to by both parties on Gospel-principles, insures the happiest possible family life. The only passage which can be pleaded as apparently an incongenial utterance—Gal. 3, 28: "There can be neither Jew nor Greek, there can be neither bond nor free, there can be no male and female; for ye are all one in Christ Jesus"—has no bearing upon the exact question in hand, because the Apostle is not talking about 'rights' of any kind, but is describing the absolute identity, in point of need and privilege of salvation, of all classes and conditions before the cross.—As to why some conservative ministers have changed their views on this subject, we have no knowledge. We cannot change ours, because the Bible is to us so perfectly plain in its teaching of them that it would be the worst kind of rationalism for us to modify their tone because the fashion is now the other way." We agree with the unknown editor. The marriage relation, with the man as the head of the wife, is an abiding principle, and it is this which the Apostle seeks to conserve in his letters. Granting woman equal rights with man would surely destroy it.

The subjection of woman to man is a Biblical principle. Gen. 3, 16; 1 Cor. 11, 3; Col. 3, 18; 1 Pet. 3, 1; Titus 2, 5; Eph. 5, 22.—Even human *reason* teaches what Luther says: "For such difference also nature and God's creation makes, that women, (much less children and idiots) should and can have no rule, as experience teaches and Gen. 3, 16 says. The Gospel does not annul this natural law, but confirms it as God's ordinance and creature." And again: "That women may claim the same right as men is altogether contrary to reason and experience; for even a blind person can see that nature has not at all given to women the gifts to rule and govern, and therefore even an atheist must admit that woman has not got this appointment or calling." This difference in nature, temperament, physique, etc., this difference which God has made,

this natural inaptitude of woman to rule, will remain as long as the world stands, may the suffragettes protest and rage as they please. You cannot change cats into dogs, or gooseberry bushes into oak-trees. Scripture gives us the reason why this subordinate position is given to woman. 1 Tim. 2, 13: "For Adam was first formed, then Eve." Here the Apostle seems to indicate that even if the human beings had not fallen into sin, the women would never have been in every particular the equal of man; that Eve already in the state of innocence was the weaker vessel, created as a helpmeet and not the equal of Adam. We do not make this a definite assertion; we merely say Scripture seems to indicate such a construction.

The second reason we find 1 Cor. 11, 8: "For the man is not of the woman, but the woman of the man"; v. 9: "Neither was the man created for the woman, but the woman for the man." Here the Apostle draws attention to the creation of man and woman and the relationship between the two. — The last reason we find in 1 Tim. 2, 14: "And Adam was not deceived, but the woman, being deceived, was in the transgression." Here the Apostle draws attention to the Fall. Who was it that fell into sin first? Not man, but woman. The first instruction which woman gave to man had evil consequences. Therefore the dictum of God, "Thy desire shall be to thy husband, and he shall rule over thee," was for Eve a punishment, to remind her of the Fall, and is for the whole female portion of the human race a perennial curb. For the pious Christian woman this subjection is no longer a punishment. In Christ Jesus there is neither man nor woman. Men and women are participants in the same grace. The relationship between man and wife can and should be a source of great happiness. But Christianity does not in the slightest degree annul the difference between man and woman as laid down in the record of creation.

But the woman might argue: I admit the duty of wifely subjection, but how far does female subjection go? Is the woman to be subject only to her husband or to man in general? The proper answer to this question is important. It cannot be

denied that most of the passages of Scripture treating of the subjection of woman have reference primarily to the marital relation. In many cases Scripture expressly adds the pronoun. Col. 3, 18: "Wives, submit yourselves unto your own husbands." 1 Pet. 3, 1: "Ye wives, be in subjection to your own husbands." It would certainly be doing violence to Scripture if from such passages we were to conclude the subjection of woman to other men.

But aside from this, the Lord has made special restrictions regarding the place of woman in the church. We have already repeatedly quoted the passages in question. Again and again the Apostle impresses the principle of subjection. And for justification of his injunction he refers to the law ("as saith the law"). Surely he can have in mind only a passage such as Gen. 3, 16: "Thy desire shall be unto thy husband, and he shall rule over thee." He does not say the woman shall be subject in the congregation, but she shall keep silence in the congregation. Why? The law already prescribes her subjection. And of the general law he but makes an application as to the position of woman in the church.

But immediately the question arises: To whom shall she be subject, unto *her* husband, or unto men *in general*? If we were to apply these words as referring only to *her* husband, and claim that woman should be silent only because of her subordinate position to *her* husband, we would immediately be forced into untenable conclusions. Then a woman who has no husband could speak and teach in the church. Then a woman could teach as long as her husband is absent from the church, or if she has an unbelieving husband who is not connected with the church. Then women could preach sermons as long as they left their husbands at home. Surely that is not the meaning of Paul's words. No, woman shall be silent because she is subject to men who are assembled. She is not to teach her own husband nor other men publicly in the congregation, and is to submit without murmur to the resolutions the men may adopt. The subordinate position has a wider scope than the mere



marital relationship. The argument that the silence refers only to preaching, to public teaching, does not hold good, since the principle which the Apostle emphasizes is womanly subjection, the submission under the rule of men, and that holds good in business meetings as well as those of a more devotional character.

To refer once more to the contention that woman is to be subject only to *her* husband, look at the passage 1 Tim. 2, 12 again: "But I suffer not a woman to teach, nor to usurp authority over *the* man"; not *her* man, but in general, the man. And then follows the reason: "For Adam was first formed," etc. Woman should be silent in the church, not because public speaking is unseemly in the *church*, but because it is a divine ordinance and unseemly anywhere. The subordinate position which woman is to take is a general command, binding upon all women in the world. In meetings of Christians, in political meetings, in general social intercourse with men, the woman must never forget that she is a woman and must not usurp the position of man. We might here bring forward the well-worn statement of the proper sphere of woman as a home-maker and home-builder, the great influence she wields quietly and silently in Church and State, or the fact that she is really the chief pillar of society, etc.; but the arguments are too well known to need further expatiation.

But, insists woman, how about the right to vote in meetings? Does Scripture forbid us to vote? We don't want to hold office; we merely want a voice in congregational affairs. We must admit that there is no Bible-passage that forbids the women to vote. To vote to express one's opinion in oral or written form, to lay a ballot into the box or hat, is not expressly denied women. Such an action does become sinful when thereby woman desires to emerge out of her subordinate position and with the men desires to participate in the actual church-government. We, therefore, distinguish between voting *per se* and voting *right*. The demand of the ballot in church as a *right* cannot be brought into harmony with the Bible. In the Ladies' Aid Society women may vote. Yes, there may be cases, condi-

tions, and circumstances in a congregation where the mere voting of women would not necessarily denote active participation in the church-government, where it would not conflict with the divinely appointed relationship of woman to man. It happens in the home. Surely there the man is the head (or at least ought to be), and yet he values highly in domestic affairs the opinion of his wife, and frequently consults her. Her sentiments are often the determining factor. And the woman can freely give vent to her opinion, and yet not in any way violate the true wifely attitude. Sensible men leave some matters entirely in the hands of their wives. Such circumstances may arise in a congregation. Sometimes a congregation leaves a certain matter, let us say a matter of church decoration and the like, entirely in the hands of the women or a society of women, and upon occasion permits them to vote. In spite of this, the leadership, the government, the control of the church, remains entirely in the hands of the men. In my own ministry I remember an occasion when I permitted the women to vote with the men. In the introduction of the Duplex Envelope System we devoted one pocket to current expenses and the other to church debt fund. The debt was of considerable proportions, and the contributors were repeatedly encouraged to deposit regularly and liberally in the pocket devoted to the reduction of the church debt. In the course of time the provision proved unwise, unexpected expenses depleted the church treasury, and the voters were compelled to take the money collected for reduction of church debt to meet the financial pressure. I held that they could not do this honorably without the consent of the contributors, among them many women. They had given the money for a definite purpose, perhaps at some personal sacrifice, and to use it for another purpose without consulting them looked very much like a breach of confidence and misappropriation of funds. A meeting of contributors was called, and the women voted. There was no opposition, but had there been, and the women had voted the matter down, I would have held that we were bound to leave things as they were. That is

the one time in my experience when women voted. It may happen at mission-places, where men are few and far between, that the counsel of certain prosperous women is sought and the right given them to vote whether a church shall be built or not, and how big the church is to be. They are permitted to help determine whether this or that plan is to be adopted. And that is right, since their money is depended upon to a great extent for building the church. We do not believe that women sin when in such cases they voice their sentiments. To us it does not seem incompatible with the divinely appointed station of woman when in congregational affairs the voters seek to determine the sentiments of the women members on certain questions. When a meeting of communicant members has been called, we cannot see anything sinful in having the sentiments on a certain question determined by a vote in which the women join. Of course, the final disposition of the question lies with the men. Our women are a force in the church over which we ought not to ride rough-shod. But this principle must be maintained, that also in congregational affairs man is the head, the ruler, and woman the helpmeet. We ask her opinion. We value it. It may determine our action. I remember as a boy that the question was discussed at home. My father at the time maintained that in the majority of cases the opinion of the voters was formed at home under the clever manipulation of the wives, and that the sentiments of the women were given full expression. But in our modern conditions the majority of the women have not this opportunity to exert such an influence in congregational affairs. Their husbands are not members, — or perhaps the female members are unmarried. A determination of their sentiments can do no harm. It pays also here to be wise as the serpents. Of course, many of the conditions in our modern church-life could not be transplanted to Corinth and Ephesus at the time of Paul. They would have been violently offensive. Conditions of the day and time demanded the complete self-effacement of woman in order to uphold the principle for which Paul was contending. That same principle holds good to-day,

and we must zealously maintain it; but the stringency of method necessary in Paul's time is no longer necessary to-day.

Let us summarize our contentions once more. Christians all agree:

1. That women shall be subject to men;
2. That there is no express Bible-passage which denies woman a vote;
3. That wherever the voting of woman is a stepping out of her subordinate position, it is contrary to Scripture.

Only this question may be variously judged and interpreted, whether the voting of woman in certain cases and under certain conditions is a departure from the station which God has assigned her.

In conclusion we wish to state that we personally are grateful to the Lord that through the mouth of the apostles he has defined the position of woman in the church. We tremble to think of a voters' meeting in which both sexes are represented. It is sometimes enough to keep peace in the family of the church council composed only of men. Imagine a mixed council. You cannot. It staggers imagination. Imagine women deacons, or rather deaconesses, taking up the collection. What an opportunity to display the dressmaker's art or the latest concoction in the millinery line! But let's stop. The question is not one for levity. As in all things, so also in this, God is wise, and for the welfare and prosperity of His Church He has provided wise regulations. We are happy to see that the women in the Lutheran Church have not yet been permeated to any great extent with the general modern spirit of female restlessness. They have, as true daughters of the Lord, always proved amenable to the instruction of the Word, and will in the future, no doubt, abide willingly by its precepts. We owe them much also in our church-work. Let us with them, in the light of the Word, with love and consideration, continue to do the Lord's work with singleness of heart.

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