

Acts 2:17 And it shall come to pass in the last days, saith God, I will pour out of my Spirit upon all flesh: and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, and your young men shall see visions, and your old men shall dream dreams:

The GREAT Dilemma!

*Can Daughters really prophesy?
Rev. David P. Griffiths
seeks God for an answer*

I Cor. 14: 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.

Contents

Introduction	p.
Part 1: Can a Woman be a Prophetess?	p.
Gladys Aylward	p.
Biblical Example of Prophetesses	p.
Prophet and Prophetess?	p.
A Woman in the Lord is	p.
Part 2: If a Prophetess - can a woman Prophecy in Church? Can a Woman Have an office in Church?	p.
Example of Phebe	p.
Qualifications of a deacon	p.
Leadership offices	p.
Female Five Fold Ministry Activity	p.
Female Biblical Responsibilities	p.
Wives	p.
Teaching role for women?	p.
Examples of Priscilla's ministry	p.
Part 3: Ordination: Can a Woman be ordained as a Minister ?	p.
Ordination in certain areas?	p.
Proof	p.
Part 4: The Way Forward: A Distinction between the Offices of the Local Church and the Five Fold Ministry	p.
Prophecy with all freedom	p.
Plan of Reconciliation	

Introduction

The last place of British revival did not allow women to speak in the Church. Yet this Church housed two of the most powerful women of the twentieth century. The lesson we learn from this is that whatever views we hold on the role of women in the Church, these are unimportant when it comes to revival. God sees the heart and if our opinion is higher than our God given hearts - then are opinion is of nought!

Peggy and Christine Smith lived in a small village in Lewis called Barvas. They were 84 and 82 years old. Peggy was blind and Christine suffered with arthritis. God spoke to them;

Isa 44:3 For I will pour water upon him that is thirsty, and floods upon the dry ground: I will pour my spirit upon thy seed, and my blessing upon thine offspring:

<http://www.evanwiggs.com/revival/history/hebpray.html>

This examination from God's Word is not simply to prove one point over the other but to seek God for the answer to this great dilemma so we may all have the heart that Peggy and Christine had. Within the culture of not being allowed to speak in the Kirk they gave clear direction to the Kirk Minister the Rev. James Murray MacKay and ultimately to the Rev. Duncan Campbell who God brought to be a great instrument of this revival.

The Word of God does declare that our daughters shall prophesy, yet women seem to be disallowed to speak in Church. Can this really be so?

Part 1: Can a Woman be a Prophetess?

I remember as a little child being at the Southport Convention. I was not the only one who was little because popping her head over the platform speaking was Gladys Aylward the British Missionary led of the Lord to China.



I am so honoured to have recently heard that on one occasion this firehouse of God had stayed at the home of my Uncle Ted and Auntie Tessie near Liverpool. I believe she had even been to our house for tea!

To
Mrs & Miss Scott.
my friends,
with love
Gladys.

Gladys Aylward
Stayed with us for 10 days.

It was with joy that the great congregation at Southport greeted Sister Gladys and she stood there with all the authority of the Lord.

We find from study of the Old Testament that God had anointed even then women to prophesy and this I believe is the key to a woman's ministry, to be an empty vessel for the Lord to speak. (Please don't be clever and say it's the same for a man - this is irrelevant here - God is speaking about the role of women! Remove Satan from your thinking; Matthew 16.)

EXAMPLE 1: MIRIAM THE PROPHETESS: Ex. 15:20 And Miriam the prophetess, the sister of Aaron, took a timbrel in her hand; and all the women went out after her with timbrels and with dances.

21 And Miriam answered them, Sing ye to the LORD, for he hath triumphed gloriously; the horse and his rider hath he thrown into the sea.

EXAMPLE 2: DEBORAH THE PROPHETESS: Judges 4:4 And Deborah, a prophetess, the wife of Lapidoth, she judged Israel at that time.

5 And she dwelt under the palm tree of Deborah between Ramah and Bethel in mount Ephraim: and the children of Israel came up to her for judgment.

EXAMPLE 3: HULDAH THE PROPHETESS: II Kings 22:14 So Hilkiah the priest, and Ahikam, and Achbor, and Shaphan, and Asahiah, went unto Huldah the prophetess, the wife of Shallum the son of Tikvah, the son of Harhas, keeper of the wardrobe; (now she dwelt in Jerusalem in the college;) and they communed with her.

15 And she said unto them, Thus saith the LORD God of Israel, Tell the man that sent you to me,

16 Thus saith the LORD, Behold, I will bring evil upon this place, and upon the inhabitants thereof, even all the words of the book which the king of Judah hath read:

17 Because they have forsaken me, and have burned incense unto other gods, that they might provoke me to anger with all the works of their hands; therefore my wrath shall be kindled against this place, and shall not be quenched.

EXAMPLE 4: NOADIAH THE PROPHETESS: Neh. 6:14 My God, think thou upon Tobiah and Sanballat according to these their works, and on the prophetess Noadiah, and the rest of the prophets, that would have put me in fear.

EXAMPLE 5: ISAIAH'S WIFE THE PROPHETESS: Isaiah 8:1 Moreover the LORD said unto me, Take thee a great roll, and write in it with a man's pen concerning Mahershalalhashbaz.

2 And I took unto me faithful witnesses to record, Uriah the priest, and Zechariah the son of Jeberechiah.

3 And I went unto the prophetess; and she conceived, and bare a son. Then said the LORD to me, Call his name Mahershalalhashbaz.

It is clear from examination of women's ministry in the Old Testament that the clear ministry role is as follows:

- i) Sing unto the Lord as with Miriam, singing praises unto the Lord, declaring the triumph of the Lord.
- ii) To judge the nation as with Deborah.
- iii) To declare the wrath of God as with Huldah.
- iv) To bring about the fear of the Lord as with Noadiah.
- v) To be together as one with one husband as with Isaiah's wife.

It has to be remembered that at this time the Holy Ghost had not fallen upon "all flesh" but upon those whom God had selected for special service. We can then accept with New Testament theology that God's anointing is to increase through the blood of Jesus to a great intensity of great ministry as was witnessed through Gladys Aylward.

Haggai 2:9 The glory of this latter house shall be greater than of the former, saith the LORD of hosts: and in this place will I give peace, saith the LORD of hosts.

A woman, therefore, can be a prophetess and the answer is in the New Testament too!

EXAMPLE 1: ANNA, A PROPHETESS Luke 2:36 And there was one Anna, a prophetess, the daughter of Phanuel, of the tribe of Aser: she was of a great age, and had lived with an husband seven years from her virginity;

37 And she was a widow of about fourscore and four years, which departed not from the temple, but served God with fastings and prayers night and day.

38 And she coming in that instant gave thanks likewise unto the Lord, and spake of him to all them that looked for redemption in Jerusalem.

EXAMPLE 2: VIRGINS THAT DID PROPHECY

Acts 21:8 And the next day we that were of Paul's company departed, and came unto Caesarea: and we entered into the house of Philip the evangelist, which was one of the seven; and abode with him.

9 And the same man had four daughters, virgins, which did prophesy.

EXAMPLE 3: FELLOW LABOURERS WITH

PAUL: Phil. 4:3 And I intreat thee also, true yokefellow, help those women which laboured with me in the gospel, with Clement also, and with other my fellowlabourers, whose names are in the book of life.

These examples clearly show that women are very important to God. The examples show:

- i) A Married Prophetess is faithful to one husband, fasting and praying and speaking the Word of Redemption as with Anna.
- ii) Single Prophetesses keep themselves pure as with Philip's daughters.
- iii) Women work with an Apostle because if we read the word Prophets and Apostles are the foundations of the Church, or is there a distinction between a Prophet and a Prophetess?

Eph. 2:20 And are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone;

21 In whom all the building fitly framed together groweth unto an holy temple in the Lord:

22 In whom ye also are builded together for an habitation of God through the Spirit.

We, however, discover from these scriptures that all the building growth unto a holy temple in the Lord for a habitation of God and so this clearly includes women.

I Cor. 6:17 But he that is joined unto the Lord is one spirit.

18 Flee fornication. Every sin that a man doeth is without the body; but he that committeth fornication sinneth against his own body.

19 What? know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own?

20 For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's.

II Cor. 6:16 And what agreement hath the temple of God with idols? for ye are the temple of the living God; as God hath said, I will dwell in them, and walk in them; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people.

17 Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you.

18 And will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty.

If we accept that the above scriptures apply to women and why shouldn't we? The Lord Almighty has declared so in II Cor. 6:18. This means that a woman in the Lord is as follows:

- i) One Spirit.
- ii) Is pure.
- iii) Body is the Temple of the Holy Ghost owned by God with no human rights whatsoever.
- iv) God dwells and walks in the woman.
- v) Separate from the World.
- vi) Has a Heavenly Father.

There does not appear to be any distinction here between who a man is and who a woman is in the Lord. We do not however seem to find a female Apostle but we do find a Prophet or Prophetess. It would seem from scripture that the Apostle takes the leading role.

Part 2: If a Prophetess - can a woman prophesy in Church? Can a Woman have an Office in Church?

We have discovered that Prophetesses exist throughout the Old and New Covenant but can they speak and minister in Church? We also ask whether a woman can take an office in the Church which we examine first. We do this by using the example of Phebe.

Romans 16:1 I commend unto you Phebe our sister, which is a servant of the church which is at Cenchrea:

2 That ye receive her in the Lord, as becometh saints, and that ye assist her in whatsoever business she hath need of you: for she hath been a succourer of many, and of myself also.

It would seem from the Greek that the word "servant" could be translated "deaconess" and here we come to see

if there is Biblical backing for there being a female office in the Church which is outside the five fold ministry like deaconess.

These are the only two verses where Phebe is mentioned and so our information is limited but we do know that Cenchrea is near Corinth, the Church here being established on Paul's second ministry journey. It is clear that she worked with Paul but seemingly not as a Prophetess but as a "succourer of many". She is also described as being a "sister" which family term, and so she is part of the Church family. In a natural family a "sister" is no less important than a "brother" and likewise it is in the Church, but does that mean that Phebe is able to be a "Deaconess"? By being a "succourer" does this mean she is moving in the office of "Pastor" under Paul?

<http://www.prca.org/sermons/romans16.1-2.html>

1 Timothy 3: 8 Likewise must the deacons be grave, not doubletongued, not given to much wine, not greedy of filthy lucre;

9 Holding the mystery of the faith in a pure conscience.

10 And let these also first be proved; then let them use the office of a deacon, being found blameless.

11 Even so must their wives be grave, not slanderers, sober, faithful in all things.

12 Let the deacons be the husbands of one wife, ruling their children and their own houses well.

13 For they that have used the office of a deacon well purchase to themselves a good degree, and great boldness in the faith which is in Christ Jesus.

Paul gives the qualifications of being a deacon in his letter to Timothy. These are:

- i) Of high moral standard (can apply to male or female)
- ii) Blameless (male and female)
- iii) Husband of one wife (MALE ONLY)
- iv) Rule children and own houses well (MALE ONLY)
- v) Great boldness (male and female)

There are two areas that apply to male only and that is a wife cannot be a husband and that parental responsibility in the house ultimately belongs with the husband.

Gen 3:16 Unto the woman he said, I will greatly multiply thy sorrow and thy conception; in sorrow thou shalt bring forth children; and thy desire shall be to thy husband, and he shall rule over thee.

I Peter 3:1 Likewise, ye wives, be in subjection to your own husbands; that, if any obey not the word, they also may without the word be won by the conversation of the wives;

2 While they behold your chaste conversation coupled with fear.

3 Whose adorning let it not be that outward adorning of plaiting the hair, and of wearing of gold, or of putting on of apparel;

4 But let it be the hidden man of the heart, in that which is not corruptible, even the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit, which is in the sight of God of great price.

5 For after this manner in the old time the holy women also, who trusted in God, adorned themselves, being in subjection unto their own husbands:

6 Even as Sara obeyed Abraham, calling him lord: whose daughters ye are, as long as ye do well, and are not afraid with any amazement.

3 But I would have you know, that the head of every man is Christ; and the head of the woman is the man; and the head of Christ is God.

4 Every man praying or prophesying, having his head covered, dishonoureth his head.

5 But every woman that prayeth or prophesieth with her head uncovered dishonoureth her head: for that is even all one as if she were shaven.

6 For if the woman be not covered, let her also be shorn: but if it be a shame for a woman to be shorn or shaven, let her be covered.

7 For a man indeed ought not to cover his head, forasmuch as he is the image and glory of God: but the woman is the glory of the man.

8 For the man is not of the woman: but the woman of the man.

9 Neither was the man created for the woman; but the woman for the man.

I Peter 3:7 Likewise, ye husbands, dwell with them according to knowledge, giving honour unto the wife,

as unto the weaker vessel, and as being heirs together of the grace of life; that your prayers be not hindered.

It seems from scripture, therefore that there are leadership offices for the woman in the five fold ministry. Deborah and Huldah in the Old Testament brought judgement to the nation and New Testament prophetesses worked with Paul and there does not seem to be any disqualification for women being Prophets, Evangelists, Teachers and Pastors as long as there is a male leadership overseeing the activity.

We examine, therefore, the Old and New Testament examples of Five Fold Ministry activity by women followed by apparent proof for women's disqualification from Church Offices. We look to see if there is any evidence in favour of a woman taking a Church Office.

FEMALE FIVE FOLD MINISTRY ACTIVITY IN THE WORD

- i) In Exodus 15 Miriam followed the lead of Moses and was clearly a co-worker with him but was still able to give the WORD OF THE LORD. She held the office of "Prophetess".
- ii) Deborah operated powerfully judging Israel in Judges 4 but the Word is clear that she had a husband whom we can show was playing the leadership role - even though the wife seemed to be doing all the talking of the Lord.
- iii) The same applies with Huldah as with Deborah; II Kings 22.
- iv) In Nehemiah 6&7 Noadiah the Prophetess is mentioned with "the rest of the prophets" but the leadership positions are taken BY MEN.
- v) Isaiah's wife was a prophetess but it is clear that Isaiah was head of his household. Isa. 8

- vi) Anna had been devoted to her husband and a faithful widow under the male leadership in the temple and was able to bring forth the Word of the Lord; Luke 2.
- vii) The four daughters of Philip prophesied under the male leadership of their father.
- viii) Women were fellow labourers with Paul the Apostle.

In each and every case there is male leadership in relation to women's ministry, this leadership, however, not being a binding and suppressing thing, but a liberty giving freedom for the Prophetess to bring forth the Word of the Lord.

To be able, therefore to move successfully in the Five Fold Ministry Offices, except Apostle, a lady has to understand Biblical responsibilities that would ultimately seem to give her a different role than leadership in the Church. These are:

- i) Husband is the Head of the House under God.
- ii) In Obeying the Word rather than the "chatter of the wives" which Paul may be referring to when it comes to being silent in Church.
- iii) The "inner me" rather than the "outward appearance" is the priority.
- iv) Wife obeys the husband but only within the context of Christ being the head of the husband.
- v) There needs to be a sign within the culture of the day to show the woman's submission to bring understanding.
- vi) Honour from husband to wife has to occur with the realisation that the woman is the "weaker vessel." This brings the conditions for the woman to be strong in Christ Jesus.

Paul writing in the following passages to Corinth and to Timothy emphasizes particularly conduct for a certain group of women in the Churches.

I Cor. 14:33 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.

35 And if they will learn any thing, let them ask their husbands at home: for it is a shame for women to speak in the church. (relates to wives)

I Tim 2:11 Let the woman learn in silence with all subjection.

12 But I suffer not a woman to teach, nor to usurp authority over the man, but to be in silence.

13 For Adam was first formed, then Eve.

14 And Adam was not deceived, but the woman being deceived was in the transgression.

15 Notwithstanding she shall be saved in childbearing, if they continue in faith and charity and holiness with sobriety. (wives)

Gal 3:28 There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female: for ye are all one in Christ Jesus.

This tells us:

- i) The group of women being referred to are the wives. There is no mention of prophetesses being silent or other members of the Five Fold Ministry.
- ii) Letter to Timothy is in the context as the message being for wives too but the principles of submission to the man (whose head is Christ) apply
- iii) Dilemma! There is neither male nor female which is the context of there being scope for the Prophetess who speaks the Word of the Lord who is always related as being masculine! Gal. 2:20. Dilemma solved!

We see from the examples of Titus 2 and Priscilla and Aquila that there is a teaching role for women in the Church, the women being called to be silent in the letters to Corinth and Timothy being the wives within the Church. In other words within Church “wifely chatter” is not permitted - only the Word of the Lord.

Titus 2: 3 The aged women likewise, that they be in behaviour as becometh holiness, not false accusers, not given to much wine, teachers of good things;

4 That they may teach the young women to be sober, to love their husbands, to love their children,

5 To be discreet, chaste, keepers at home, good, obedient to their own husbands, that the word of God be not blasphemed.

From this we prove that the term “women” can relate to a particular group of women rather than “all women”. It is noted that aged women may teach in a particular context and Priscilla within the context of the Five Fold Ministry offices brought correction and teaching generally.

Romans 16: 3 Greet Priscilla and Aquila my helpers in Christ Jesus:

Acts 18:1 After these things Paul departed from Athens, and came to Corinth;

2 And found a certain Jew named Aquila, born in Pontus, lately come from Italy, with his wife Priscilla; (because that Claudius had commanded all Jews to depart from Rome:) and came unto them.

3 And because he was of the same craft, he abode with them, and wrought: for by their occupation they were tentmakers.

18 And Paul after this tarried there yet a good while, and then took his leave of the brethren, and sailed thence into Syria, and with him Priscilla and Aquila; having shorn his head in Cenchrea: for he had a vow.

19 And he came to Ephesus, and left them there: but he himself entered into the synagogue, and reasoned with the Jews.

20 When they desired him to tarry longer time with them, he consented not;

21 But bade them farewell, saying, I must by all means keep this feast that cometh in Jerusalem: but I will return again unto you, if God will. And he sailed from Ephesus.

22 And when he had landed at Caesarea, and gone up, and saluted the church, he went down to Antioch.

23 And after he had spent some time there, he departed, and went over all the country of Galatia and Phrygia in order, strengthening all the disciples.

24 And a certain Jew named Apollos, born at Alexandria, an eloquent man, and mighty in the scriptures, came to Ephesus.

25 This man was instructed in the way of the Lord; and being fervent in the spirit, he spake and taught diligently the things of the Lord, knowing only the baptism of John.

26 And he began to speak boldly in the synagogue: whom when Aquila and Priscilla had heard, they took him unto them, and expounded unto him the way of God more perfectly.

27 And when he was disposed to pass into Achaia, the brethren wrote, exhorting the disciples to receive him: who, when he was come, helped them much which had believed through grace:

28 For he mightily convinced the Jews, and that publicly, shewing by the scriptures that Jesus was Christ.

Rom 16:3 Greet Priscilla and Aquila my helpers in Christ Jesus:

4 Who have for my life laid down their own necks: unto whom not only I give thanks, but also all the churches of the Gentiles.

I Cor 16:19 The churches of Asia salute you. Aquila and Priscilla salute you much in the Lord, with the church that is in their house.

II Tim 4: 19 Salute Prisca and Aquila, and the household of Onesiphorus.

Acts 8:4 Therefore they that were scattered abroad went every where preaching the word

We learn from these examples of Priscilla's ministry the following:

- i) With her husband helped Paul, her name being given first place on occasions. This action is alien to the culture of the day.
- ii) Priscilla with her husband were tentmakers. Male and female having same natural skills.
- iii) When Priscilla expounded the word with her husband, his name came first meaning that in expounding the Word, she had to have male covering.
- iv) Priscilla was involved in bringing correction to the Preacher but only whilst under the covering of her husband.
- v) No selfish ambition in Priscilla - prepared to give her life.

We want more of this kind of women's ministry. The daughters shall prophesy, the Five Fold Ministry Offices shall include women but not the office of Apostle and Church leadership positions.

I Timothy 3 clearly places the Office of Bishop and Deacon into male hands but what about Evangelist, Teacher, Pastor, and Prophet for in the Bible we see all four offices in the hands of women.

Part 3: Ordination: Can a woman be ordained as a Minister?

I Cor. 12:12 For as the body is one, and hath many members, and all the members of that one body, being many, are one body: so also is Christ.

13 For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles, whether we be bond or free; and have been all made to drink into one Spirit.

14 For the body is not one member, but many.

15 If the foot shall say, Because I am not the hand, I am not of the body; is it therefore not of the body?

16 And if the ear shall say, Because I am not the eye, I am not of the body; is it therefore not of the body?

17 If the whole body were an eye, where were the hearing? If the whole were hearing, where were the smelling?

18 But now hath God set the members every one of them in the body, as it hath pleased him.

19 And if they were all one member, where were the body?

20 But now are they many members, yet but one body.

21 And the eye cannot say unto the hand, I have no need of thee: nor again the head to the feet, I have no need of you.

22 Nay, much more those members of the body, which seem to be more feeble, are necessary:

23 And those members of the body, which we think to be less honourable, upon these we bestow more

abundant honour; and our uncomely parts have more abundant comeliness.

24 For our comely parts have no need: but God hath tempered the body together, having given more abundant honour to that part which lacked.

25 That there should be no schism in the body; but that the members should have the same care one for another.

26 And whether one member suffer, all the members suffer with it; or one member be honoured, all the members rejoice with it.

27 Now ye are the body of Christ, and members in particular.

28 And God hath set some in the church, first apostles, secondarily prophets, thirdly teachers, after that miracles, then gifts of healings, helps, governments, diversities of tongues.

29 Are all apostles? are all prophets? are all teachers? are all workers of miracles?

John 15:16 Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you, and ordained you, that ye should go and bring forth fruit, and that your fruit should remain: that whatsoever ye shall ask of the Father in my name, he may give it you.

17 These things I command you, that ye love one another.

18 If the world hate you, ye know that it hated me before it hated you.

19 If ye were of the world, the world would love his own: but because ye are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you.

Eph. 4: 11 And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers;

12 For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ:

Examination of these scriptures shows that ordination is open for a woman but only in certain areas. Proof follows

- i) Women are part of the one body as the scripture refers to “all”.
- ii) Members of the body whom we think to be less honourable are higher.
- iii) Within the context of “all” comes the Five Fold Ministry, and ordination in John’s Gospel, although other passage of scripture limits the ordination to certain areas.
- iv) Five Fold Ministry is for the perfecting of the saints and for the edifying of the Body of Christ and these roles are clearly witnessed in the Biblical ministers we have shown in this paper.

Part 4: The Way Forward: A Distinction between the Offices of the Local Church and the Five Fold Ministry

I suggest very strongly that there be a greater emphasis on the five fold ministry in Churches. Every office seems to have been covered by a woman whilst under male leadership, with the exception of Apostle in the Bible.

Over the years this subject has been greatly debated and so to solve the schism I suggest a distinction be made between the Church Offices of Bishop, Elder and Deacon be made, these offices being for men and the Five Fold Ministry Offices which are clearly open for all except Apostle.

This way our daughters can prophesy in all freedom and through the act of ordaining women in a five fold ministry office, the World can see that a prophesying woman has been fully recognised in her role as clearly Anna was in the New Testament.

I really believe God has a plan of reconciliation in this whole area of women's ministry in the last days. He is calling the daughters to prophesy and preach the Word of God and be in a strong position for ministry. His will is to ordain women ministers with Biblical boundaries that give freedom to the Prophetess who has submitted herself to God given order in the home and the Church.

**And ye shall know the truth,
and the truth shall make you free.**

www.sonsofgod.org.uk

NETWORK

An LCMI Ministry: Charity Commission No. 1065192

P.O. Box 106, Colwyn Bay, Wales, LL28 4XJ

Tel. 01492 544394; Fax. 01492 543442.

E.Mail. lcmi1@aol.com