



INDIANA WESLEYAN UNIVERSITY

School of Theology and Ministry

The School of Theology and Ministry at Indiana Wesleyan University affirms, on the basis of Scripture, that women can be called and equipped for Christian service of all kinds, including preaching, ordination, and pastoral leadership.

- **Genesis 1:26-27:** Male and female are created together in the image of God. Both are given dominion over creation without hierarchy or role differentiation.
- **Genesis 2:18:** The woman is described as “ezer *knegdo*,” which connotes partnership and equality. *Ezer* means help or rescue and most frequently a reference to God in the Old Testament. The woman is not created as the man’s subordinate or helper.
- **Genesis 2:23:** The man recognizes the woman as his equal, “bone of my bones, flesh of my flesh” and does not subordinate her in acknowledging her difference from him.
- **Genesis 3:16:** The man ruling over the woman is described as a consequence of the Fall, not prescribed as God’s design. Gender-based hierarchy is a symptom of sin, and if we are in Christ we are no longer ruled by sin.
- **Exodus 15:20:** Miriam was a prophet, one with authority and responsibility to speak forth God’s word.
- **Judges 4-5:** Deborah was a prophet and judge who ruled Israel.
- **2 Kings 22-23:** Huldah was a prophet with authority to speak forth God’s word. Kings sought her counsel.
- **Joel 2:28 and Acts 2:17:** The prophet and Peter declare “sons and daughters will prophecy.” In the New Testament, prophesying meant preaching God’s word.
- **Matthew 28:19-20:** Jesus commands *all* Christians to disciple, baptize, and teach.
- **Mark 16:15:** Jesus commands *all* Christians to preach the Gospel.
- **Luke 24:10:** Women were the first to discover the empty tomb and proclaim the good news of the resurrection. God entrusted the Gospel to women.
- **John 4:39:** The Samaritan woman recognizes Jesus as the Messiah and proclaims this to her neighbors, who believe her and become followers of Jesus.
- **Acts 1:14:** Women were among Jesus’ disciples in the Upper Room and received the indwelling of the Spirit at Pentecost.



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- **Romans 16:1:** Paul refers to Phoebe as a deacon (*diakonon*), which is translated “minister” throughout Paul’s letters.
- **Romans 16:3:** Paul calls Prisca a coworker, and lists her name before her husband’s in five of the seven times he mentions them, indicating her leadership in their ministry.
- **Romans 16:7:** Paul describes Junia as “outstanding among the apostles” (*episemoi en tois apostolois*), identifying her as an apostle herself.
- **1 Corinthians 11:15:** Paul describes women praying and prophesying publicly in a group that includes men, and does not depict this as unusual or impermissible.
- **Galatians 3:28:** Male and female are one in Christ. The effects of the Fall, including gender-based hierarchy described in Genesis 3:16, are healed.
- **Ephesians 5:21-33:** Paul instructs husbands and wives to be subject to one another. The cultural norm of marital hierarchy is an analogy for Christ and the Church.
- **Philippians 4:3:** Paul describes Euodia and Syntyche as struggling with or alongside Paul in the work of the gospel. They are his partners, not subordinates.
- **1 Corinthians 14:34-35 and 1 Timothy 2:11-12:** In light of 1 Corinthians 11 and Romans 16, Paul was most likely addressing specific problems in specific churches, not setting a universal rule that women should never speak in church. His writing as a whole makes clear that he does in fact allow women to teach and hold authority.
- **1 Timothy 3:2, Titus 1:5-9, and 1 Peter 5:1-4:** Paul says an overseer should be a “one woman man” (*mias gynaikos andra*). The emphasis is on marital fidelity, not on the sex of the overseer. He emphasizes character traits necessary for leadership. Male leadership is assumed, but not prescribed.



A Wesleyan
View of Women
in Ministry



The Biblical
Case for
Women in
Ministry by Dr.
Sandra Richter



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