

Women Speaking in Church

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A 5 Part Exegetical Study of 1 Cor 14:33-35



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Women Silent in “All the Churches”?

Part 1: A Study of 1 Corinthians 14:33-34

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Does _____ matter? Yes!

1 Cor 13:33-34 (One translation)	1 Cor 13:34 (Another translation)
For God is not a God of disorder but of peace. As in all the congregations of the saints, women should remain silent in the churches.	For God is not a God of disorder but of peace, as in all the congregations of the saints.
<i>Implication: Women should remain quiet in all the churches.</i>	<i>Women should remain silent in the churches</i>
	<i>Implication: There should be orderly conduct in all the churches.</i>

What does “in all the congregations of the saints” modify?

God is not a God of disorder but of peace.



“as in all the congregations of the saints”



Women should remain silent in the churches

The Challenge:

The languages of Greek and Hebrew have no _____ marks. This leaves a challenge for modern day translators to determine the marks via context.

- 1) The Context STRONGLY favors the issue of _____.
 - “one at a time” (v. 27)
 - “if no interpreter the speaker should keep quiet” (v. 28)
 - take turns in bringing a prophetic word (v. 30)
 - prophesy “in turn” (v. 31)
 - prophetic words are under the self-control of those who have a word (v. 31)
 - God is not a God of disorder but of peace (v. 32)
 - women ask husbands at home if you have questions (v. 35)
 - everything should be done in an orderly way (v. 40)

2) Some ancient manuscripts¹ connect v. 34 to v. 35, implying that they too did not connect this with v. 33

For this reason the majority of modern day translations with the oldest Greek texts connect “as in all the congregations of the saints” to “orderly worship,” with the exception of a few.

Orderly Worship...in all the congregations of the saints.	Women be silent...in all the congregations of the saints
KJV NKJV NASV NIV NLT	ESV HCSB ASV NIV (Older versions)

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YouTube: <https://youtu.be/4ose8ljSes>

¹ Hamilton, David, *Why Not Women?* YWAM Publishing, 2000, p 269.



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Women “Be Silent” in the Church? Part 2: A Study of 1 Corinthians 14:34a

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1 Cor 14:34 “**Women should remain silent in the churches.**”

It’s important to remember when studying the issue of this text is that “church” happened in homes, sitting on mats and cushions, discussing, worship, praying and mutually sharing gifts.

What is going on here in the Text?

The context of this verse is the issue of _____ (or lack thereof)

Who Was the Focus of this Text?

There were _____ offending parties.

- 1. The Tongue Speakers (14:28)
- 2. The _____ (14:30)
- 3. The Women asking questions (14:34)



Now look very closely:

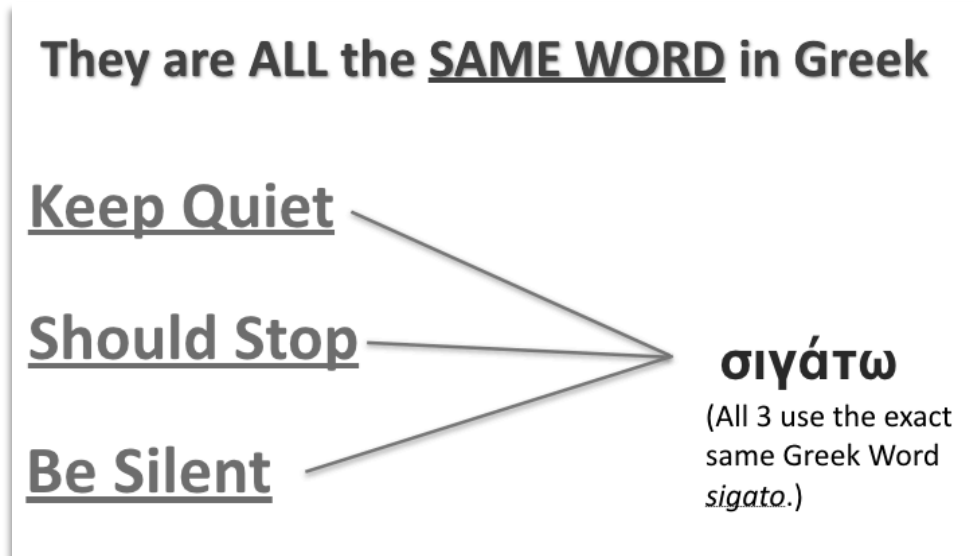
1) Tongue Speakers - If there is no interpreter, the speaker should _____ in the church and speak to himself and to God.

2) Prophets - And if a revelation comes to someone who is sitting down, the first speaker _____.

3) Women - Women should remain _____ in the churches

Let’s Review:

1. *Tongue Speakers* – Keep Quiet (v. 28)
2. *Prophets* – Should Stop and Wait (v. 30)
3. *Women asking Questions* (v. 34) – Be Silent



Why is this important?

Each are encouraged to continue to speak/exercise gift, just in an orderly way...

Those prophesying disorderly (get correction)

But _____ (14:39)

Tongue-speakers disorderly (get correction)

But _____! (14:30)

Women being disorderly (get correction)

??? (**Will get to in a bit**)

The Point for This Lesson:

- Clearly the word *sigato* in Greek did not mean “be completely silent”
- In this context it meant, “hush,” “be quiet,” “be respectful of others.”
- This serves well the context of the strong emphasis on being orderly in worship.

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Women Silent in “All the Churches”? Part 3: A Study of 1 Corinthians 14:34b

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“They are not allowed to speak, but must be in submission, as the law says” (1 Cor 14:34b)

Not Allowed to Speak – No speaking at all, for all time?

1) Doesn't fit the context

- The very fact that he had to say this shows that they were speaking
- “Everyone” was told to come with something to edify the body (v. 26)
- There were prophesying (v. 29-32) and we know from 1 Cor 11 that some of the women were prophesying

2) Example

- A mother telling her daughter to stop talking with her mouth full—situational.

Submission

1) This is the only place in the NT where the word “submission” does not have an object

- “Submit to one another” (Eph 5:21)
- “Submit to God” (Jms 4:7)
- Submit.... (1 Cor 14:34b)
 - This is middle/passive – “Submit oneself”
 - This fits the same instruction to the prophets (v. 32)

2) But what about a husband?

- Husband has not been mentioned yet
- Husband is not the object of the verb
- Up to this point it has only been orderly worship

As the Law Says

1) The Law never teaches in the OT submission to husbands

2) Law does talk about orderliness

3) Where it talks about orderliness/peacefulness the LXX uses the word “hupotasso” - Ps 37:7; 62:1, 5



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Women Silent in “All the Churches”? Part 4: A Study of 1 Corinthians 14:35a

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“If they want to inquire about something, they should ask their own husbands at home;” (v. 35)^{1a}

Review:

- Context is strongly the issue of disorderly worship
- The word “silent” (*sigato*) did not mean never speak
- The contextual meaning, recognizing that they were speaking participants of the worship service (1 Cor 11) more aligns with they should not “speak up or out” and disrupt the service.

But what about asking husbands and the disgrace of a woman speaking in church?

Historical Context

- Women did not have the same educational opportunities as men, and very much moreso with religious education. They were dramatically behind
- In the context of the verse they were clearly asking questions and it was causing disruption in the service
- Paul exhorts them that their perhaps (constant) questions were disruptive, and it was ok to learn and know, but they should ask their husbands at home
- This actually was both an admonition for women to learn, and for men to bring the women up to speed



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Women Silent in “All the Churches”?

Part 5: A Study of 1 Corinthians 14:35b

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“for it is disgraceful for a woman to speak in the church’ (v. 35)

- As is – Their disruptive questions were disgraceful
- Or perhaps a missed quotation mark is highly likely
 - Mei parts
 - “It is disgraceful for a woman to speak in church” Nonsense...Did the word originate with you
 - Fits Greek context
 - Fits chiasmus
 - Fits immediate context of parties were disciplined and told not to be forbidden
- Regardless both admonitions are the same—You’re disrupting worship with your questions, you need to get your questions answered at home so it’s not disruptive. And “everything should be done in a fitting and orderly way.