



The Wesleyan Church affirms that women can be called and equipped for Christian service of all kinds, including preaching, ordination, and pastoral leadership. We hold this position on the basis of Scripture, which is the sole and sufficient foundation of Christian belief and practice.

- **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 correspondence. Ezer means help or rescue, and is usually a reference to God in the Old Testament. The woman is not created as the man’s subordinate.
- **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 is described as a prophet, one who has authority and responsibility to speak for God.
- **Judges 4-5:** Deborah is a prophet and judge who rules Israel.
- **2 Kings 22-23:** Huldah is a prophet with authority to speak forth God’s word.
- **Joel 2:28 and Acts 2:17:** The prophet and Peter declare that “sons and daughters will prophecy.” In the New Testament, prophesying is functionally the same as preaching.
- **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 are the first to discover the empty tomb and to proclaim the good news of the resurrection.
- **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 are among Jesus’ disciples in the Upper Room, receiving the indwelling of the Spirit at Pentecost.

- **Romans 16:1:** Paul identifies Phoebe as a deacon (diakonon), the same word used for ministers in other places in Paul's writing about ministerial leadership.
- **Romans 16:3:** Paul identifies Priscilla as a coworker, and he lists Priscilla before her husband in five of the seven times he mentions Priscilla and Aquila, indicating her prominent role in their ministry.
- **Romans 16:7:** Paul describes Junia as "outstanding among the apostles." Some translations say "well known to the apostles," but that is not the best translation of *episemoi en tois apostolois*.
- **1 Corinthians 11:15:** Paul describes women praying and prophesying publicly in a group that includes men, and he does not depict this as unusual or impermissible.
- **1 Corinthians 14:34-35:** In light of 1 Corinthians 11 and Romans 16, Paul is either contradicting himself or, more likely, is addressing a specific problem in a specific context. He is not setting a rule that women should never speak in church.
- **Galatians 3:28:** Male and female are one in Christ, a restoration and reversal of the effects of sin described in Genesis 3:16.
- **Philippians 4:3:** Paul describes Euodia and Syntyche as struggling with or alongside Paul in the work of the gospel. They are partners, not subordinates.
- **1 Timothy 2:11-12:** As in 1 Corinthians 14, Paul is addressing a problem in a specific church. His writing as a whole makes clear that he does in fact allow women to teach and hold authority.
- **1 Timothy 3:2:** Paul says an overseer should be a "one-woman-man" – the emphasis in the Greek is on marital fidelity, not on the sex of the overseer.
- **Titus 1:5-9:** The emphasis is on the character traits necessary for leadership. Male leadership is assumed, but not prescribed. Similarly, Peter's guidance for elders is 1 Peter 5:1-4 does not mention gender.

God has always called women and men to the work of the Kingdom. We walk in obedience when we do the same.



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