

Seek The Old Paths

"Stand ye in the ways, and see, and ask for the old paths... and walk therein."
(Jeremiah 6:16)

Vol. 6, No. 2

February 1995

QUESTIONS REGARDING WOMEN TRANSLATORS/INTERPRETERS

We mentioned in last month's issue that we would be printing the answers we received to a list of 50 questions regarding the use of women interpreters. We mailed this list of questions to some brethren whom we knew supported the use of women interpreters, some we knew did not support their use and some that we did not know what they thought and ask them to answer these questions in view of us printing their answers in *Seek The Old Paths*. Well over six months has passed to allow for their reply. Everyone's answers are printed here in their entirety which necessitated us using much smaller print than usual. I wish more brethren who support the use of women in this capacity would have responded but they did not. It would have no doubt provided for a better study on the subject. None the less, here are the questions and the answers we received. To conserve space, initials are used instead of full names.

J.W. Jim E. Waldron has been involved in mission work around the world all his life and has used translators hundreds of times. He says, "the questions are answered in light of our work in Kiev, Ukraine." 1443 Drayton Woods Dr., Tucker, GA 30084.

C.P. Charles A. Pledge is a very capable and studious gospel preacher and author. 7 W Colorado, Sheridan, WY 82801.

J.R. Joseph A. Ruiz has worked in Taiwan nearly 15 years and has translated for others hundreds of times and knows well what is involved in translating. P.O. Box 27-114, Taichung, Taiwan R.O.C.

R.T. Robert R. Taylor, Jr. is well known for his many books, gospel meetings and question/answer sessions. P.O. Box 464, Ripley, TN 38063.

B.V. Ben F. Vick, Jr. is well known for his writing. He also has traveled abroad and used translators. 4915 Shelbyville Rd., Indianapolis, IN 46227.

K.Bu. Kenneth Bursleson is the head of the North West Florida School of Biblical Studies in Pensacola. He has used translators many times. 1644 Pine Lane Dr., Cantonment, FL 32533.

M.E. Melvin Elliott is a very capable student of the Gospel. 3815 Exmoor Rd., Craig, CO 81625.

H.N. Holger Neubauer has co-authored a tract on the subject of women interpreters. P.O. Box 1405, Forest Park, GA 30051.

K.Ba. Kent Bailey is well known for his defense of the faith in debate and other areas. 3095 Harrison Rd., Lenoir City, TN 37771.

We introduced the questionnaire with this sentence: "Let it be understood that the word "MAY" as is used in these questions indicates that a person may do a thing by the authority and approval of God."

1. Is Truth subjective?

J.W.: No.

C.P.: By the very definition truth; i.e., a standard by which all else is measured for its validity, etc., truth must be objective. Because Jesus identified spiritual truth as God's word, John 17:17, to view truth as subjective would deny one of the basic attributes of the word of God. Truth is not subjective.

J.R.: No.

R.T.: No.

B.V.: No (Jn. 8:32). The word of God is true whether men accept it or not (Rom. 3:2). Paul preached the same everywhere he went (1 Cor. 4:17; 16:1).

K.Bu.: No! Truth is absolute, therefore free from the subjective conditions of the people. Truth remains the same regardless of the conclusion people may draw about it. Truth is not dependent upon the reactions of the people.

M.E.: No.

H.N.: No, Jude 3 speaks of the "common salvation." Salvation could not be common unless it applied in the same way for all individuals.

K.Ba.: No - John 17:17.

2. Is Truth objective?

J.W.: Yes.

C.P.: Yes. By objective is meant that which stands upon its own merit without the need of external support, or strength. The Word must, therefore, be objective in order to

be all sufficient in the spiritual realm. Sufficiency of the word in spiritual matters is argued in II Timothy 3:16-17; Acts 20:32; II Peter 1:3, and in numerous other places. Because it is objective, it alone is given the authority to specify and deny the activities of life, Hebrews 2:1-4.

J.R.: Yes.

R.T.: Yes.

B.V.: Yes (Jn. 8:32).

K.Bu.: Yes! God's truth comes in the form of propositional truth. The Bible consists of true proposition. Truth is objective because it is something real not something existing only in the mind of a person's thinking. It is independent of the mind; real; actual.

M.E.: Yes.

H.N.: Yes, truth is the depiction of reality (John 8:32).

K.Ba.: Yes - John 17:17.

3. Does the "end result" of a thing justify the "means used" which accomplishes that thing?

J.W.: No.

C.P.: No. Because we must do all things in the name of, or by the authority of, Jesus Christ, Col. 3:17, whatever is done without his approval, or authority is sinful. Second, if the word is objective, it must also be absolute, or unchangeable, Psalm 119:89. Because it changes not, circumstances such as supposed "good" coming from an unauthorized action cannot possibly change the will of God. That Will must approve an action or that action is sinful.

J.R.: No.

R.T.: No.

B.V.: No. Some had slanderously reported that Paul practiced this. But he wrote, "(...as we be slanderously reported, and as some affirm that we say,) Let us do evil, that good may come? whose damnation is just" (Rom. 3:8). Later in this same epistle he shows that the end does not justify the means (Rom. 6:1-2, 15).

K.Bu.: No! If so, this would lead to accept some crime or gambling etc., if used for a good purpose.

M.E.: No.
H.N.: No. (Rom. 3:8)
K.Ba.: No - Col. 3:17; II John 9-11.

4. Is there scriptural authority for the use of women interpreters in a worship assembly? If so, where?

J.W.: No.

C.P.: No, unless it is incorrect to say that authority must be found in the scriptures before an action is done. If it is proper to argue, and it is, that authority is found only in statement, implication, or example (an approved action set forth for all to follow), then there is no authority to use women interpreters in a worship assembly. If there is authority, surely someone would have come forth with it and there would be no question. To argue by illustration and analogy is at best subjectivity and proves nothing.

J.R.: No.

R.T.: No.

B.V.: No.

K.Bu.: No.

M.E.: No.

H.N.: No. I Corinthians 14:23-35 makes it clear that women were not to interpret.

K.Ba.: The question does not make the proper distinction between **translation** and **interpretation**. In the Greek NT there are three different words that the KJV translates interpret: (A) **HERMENEUO** - "To explain, or interpret (**HERMENEUTICS**), and used of explaining the definition of words in a different language. (B) **DIERMENEUO** - A strengthened form of **hermeneuo** signifies "to interpret fully, to explain, to expound, to engage in didactic discourse." (C) **METHERMENEUO** - To change or translate from one language to another, to interpret." I am aware that some brethren do not believe that the assembly of I Corinthians 14 is the same assembly of I Corinthians 11, but rather was a special assembly where miraculous gifts were exercised. In looking at the total context of the book I do not accept that conclusion. It seems to me that all the evidence points to both chapters speaking of the same assembly from two different angles: (1) Acts of NT Worship, and (2) The regulation of miraculous gifts. Obviously the silence (**sigao**) under consideration in chapter 14 is relative, else the women could not even engage in singing. Such a silence was required concerning that of a type of interpretation (**diermeneuo**), i.e., **expounding, engaging in didactic discourse, fully or totally explaining NT revelation**. In answer to your question, **there is no authority for women interpreters (diermeneuo)** due to the fact that such would be inclusive of teaching over men (II Tim. 2:12). What about simple translation? Obviously there is generic authority for such in the NT requirements of Evangelism and Edification. If women are submissive to male preachers/teachers in giving only simple translation (**methermeneuo**) they are not teaching, but rather are generically authorized **expedients** used in submission to the control of male preachers/teachers. Whether or not such is a wise course of action to follow, due to the Feminist influence on society, is a different issue.

5. Why are women interpreters used instead of men interpreters?

J.W.: We don't use them.

C.P.: This is an excellent question since a sufficient number of men interpreters are available for use according to those in secular work in Russia and also brethren who use men to interpret rather than women. It would be interesting to know who arranges for all the interpreters and ask them that question.

J.R.: 1) Men are not available. 2) Women can do a better job.

R.T.: Those who use them would have to answer this. I do not think they should be used.

B.V.: It may be the case that brethren are so vitally interested in the salvation of lost souls that they feel such a practice is justified. Or perhaps, some brethren feel like they are justified in using a woman as a translator because no man is available. However, some have started and engaged in unscriptural practices and organizations, justifying them by the end results. The missionary society was started with the purpose of saving souls, but the organization itself was unscriptural. The end does not necessarily justify the means.

K.Bu.: That is a good question.

M.E.: I do not know.

H.N.: Brethren say they use women because men are unavailable.

K.Ba.: Again, I would make a distinction between translation and interpretation. I would oppose women assuming a teaching role over men whether it be in the making of comments or directing didactic discourse. As to why brethren use women in the role of giving a simple translation, I cannot speak from a universal perspective. I have not used women translators due to the influence of feminism in society. In other words I fear what it could possibly develop. One particular brother, whom I consider sound in the faith, has formerly used a woman to give a simple translation while preaching in Russia due to the fact that no male translators were available. Since that time men have been properly trained to work in such a capacity and therefore women are no longer used.

6. If a man is available to interpret, would you use him?

J.W.: We do.

C.P.: Yes, and if a man were not available I would not use a woman.

J.R.: Always.

R.T.: By all means.

B.V.: Yes. I would not speak, except in private studies, if there were no male interpreter.

K.Bu.: Why could they not find men to do the interpreting?

M.E.: Absolutely.

H.N.: Men should be used when other men are present.

K.Ba.: Yes.

7. Is it preferable to use a man to interpret?

J.W.: We use men.

C.P.: It is right, therefore, preferable.

J.R.: Always.

R.T.: Absolutely.

B.V.: "Preferable" is not the word to be used. It is necessary to use a man interpreter in public assemblies. It would be no violation of the scriptures for a woman interpreter to be used in private studies. Aquilla and Priscilla both taught Apollos by having taken him unto them (Acts 18:26).

K.Bu.: Sure it would be.

M.E.: No - it is mandatory.

H.N.: Not only is the man preferable but the scriptures teach only a man ought to be so used.

K.Ba.: Yes.

8. If it is preferable to use a man to interpret, why use a woman?

J.W.: We don't, except for women's classes.

C.P.: I have yet to hear of one reason offered why women are chosen over men to interpret.

J.R.: No justifiable reason.

R.T.: I do not believe a woman should be used in this capacity.

B.V.: I could not in good conscience use a woman translator except in private studies (Acts 18:26).

K.Bu.: I can see no need to use a woman.

M.E.: No scriptural reason can be given to use a woman.

H.N.: Because some seem to think that women will "do a better job."

K.Ba.: Because no qualified men were available to give simple translation.

9. If there is scriptural authority for a woman to interpret, why prefer a man?

J.W.: We don't.

C.P.: Such preference would have to be based upon either general superiority, discrimination, or other subjective reason.

J.R.: There is no scriptural authority for women to interpret.

R.T.: There would be no need to prefer the one above the other.

B.V.: This is a good question. If there is scriptural authority for the use of either a man or woman to translate, it would not make any difference, except that one would prefer to avoid any criticism of one's work and perhaps hurt financial support for it.

K.Bu.: There is no scriptural authority.

M.E.: "If" there was scriptural authority to use a woman then you could not scripturally prefer a man.

H.N.: There is no authority for women to interpret (I Tim. 2:12).

K.Ba.: Because of the effects of the Feminist movement, the misunderstandings non-Christians and new Christians may have, and the unnecessary division caused among sound brethren.

10. Is a woman in a position of leadership or authority when she interprets what is spoken by a man in the assembly?

J.W.: Leadership.

C.P.: Yes, in that there is no such thing as "word for word" interpretation from one language into another. The interpreter must

supply his/her own interpretation for a portion of the address. The interpreter must have some knowledge of the contents of the material in order to correctly translate into another language. But if this were not true, the interpreter is actually involved in the teaching process as the deliverer of the message. Although NT Scripture is called God's word, the word of Christ, and also said to be spoken by the Spirit of God, Paul also called it his gospel because he delivered it to the people (Rom. 2:16). It is also called the doctrine of the apostles in Acts 2:42. Therefore, because the people understand only the interpreter, it may correctly be called the message of the interpreter the audience hears.

J.R.: Indeed she is!

R.T.: Without doubt she is.

B.V.: Yes. Just as the Holy Spirit gave the words which he received from Christ and God and yet was teaching (Jn. 16:13; 14:26), so is the translator teaching when she interprets the message she has received. She would be teaching over any (including men) in the audience who know the language she is speaking.

K.Bu.: Sure she is.

M.E.: Yes. If what the man spoke was authoritative, when a woman repeats it she speaks authoritatively. The authority is in the scripture, so whether she repeats a man has no bearing on the matter in-as-much as she is repeating scripture – she speaks with authority. Did not Titus speak with authority when he spoke “these things” (Titus 2:15)? “These things” are what Paul wrote.

H.N.: Yes, speaking forth God's word in a worship assembly, though only interpreting is in fact declaring the counsel of God, and that violates God's laws concerning worship (I Cor. 14:34,35; I Tim. 2:12).

K.Ba.: If she only gives a simple translation – No; a didactic discourse – yes!

11. Which of these should be selected to interpret in a worship assembly? a. A Russian man who understood English better (having two master's degrees in English). b. A Russian woman who speaks Russian more fluently but understood English less perfectly (having only one master's degree in English).

J.W.: The question of degrees doesn't enter the picture.

C.P.: Only a man should be selected in all circumstances due to what has already been pointed out.

J.R.: A Russian man who understood English better (having two master's degrees in English).

R.T.: “A” by all means.

B.V.: “A.”

K.Bu.: The man should be, degrees do not make any difference.

M.E.: Obviously one must be capable of performing the assignment but secular qualifications are not the determining factor. Only the man is scripturally qualified to speak when the church is come together.

H.N.: “A.” Only the man, and in the worship assembly that man must be a Christian.

K.Ba.: The Russian man.

12. Is a woman 1) speaking, 2) humming or 3) whistling when she interprets? Which of the three?

J.W.: Speaking.

C.P.: She is speaking. Humming and whistling can't interpret but rather must be interpreted. All human understanding is based upon words. Other things which aid our understanding must have a word base in order to express a thought.

J.R.: Speaking.

R.T.: Speaking.

B.V.: She is speaking.

K.Bu.: Speaking.

M.E.: Speaking.

H.N.: Speaking.

K.Ba.: When she gives a simple translation she is speaking, but then again when she sings she also speaks.

13. May a woman present or deliver (speak) a didactic discourse in a worship assembly? (or none of these)

J.W.: No.

C.P.: None of these. There is no authority for such found in Scripture.

J.R.: No.

R.T.: I do not believe she can do any of these.

B.V.: No.

K.Bu.: None except singing which is authorized and she is not usurping authority in singing nor taking a leadership role.

M.E.: None.

H.N.: No, she may not with God's approval.

K.Ba.: No, a woman may not speak a didactic discourse without involving herself in sin.

14. If a man delivers a didactic discourse when he speaks, why is it not also a didactic discourse when the woman repeats (speaks) in another language what he said?

J.W.: It is.

C.P.: It is, in fact and actuality, a discourse. If it is not, then the character of what was first said must be changed. If the character is the same when it is repeated, the message is still a didactic discourse after interpretation as well as before interpretation. But if the character of the message is changed in interpretation, that means we can't have the word of God in an interpretation, therefore, all our discussion of spiritual matters based upon an interpretation is in vain.

J.R.: It is precisely the same!

R.T.: She is delivering exactly what he is.

B.V.: The woman who repeats a didactic discourse delivered by a man is giving a didactic discourse even though it be in a different language.

K.Bu.: She is.

M.E.: It is a didactic discourse when the woman speaks. She holds the same position to the audience as the man holds to his.

H.N.: This is precisely what is done

when one reads the scripture out of an English translation from the original Greek. When the scripture is read in a worship assembly, didactic discourse takes place.

K.Ba.: Not necessarily. If she does not make comments, does not expound upon the lesson, etc. If she only gives a simple translation of what HE stated she would not be teaching any more than the KJV translators engaged in teaching when they translated the KJV.

15. May a preacher whisper to a woman interpreter what to say in the assembly or must he speak “out loud” for all to hear?

J.W.: No.

C.P.: How he says it is irrelevant to the principle of the matter. It is still the case of a lack of authority for the woman to speak, or teach, in a mixed assembly.

J.R.: He must speak “out loud” for all to hear.

R.T.: I see no appreciable difference in his whispering or speaking out loud.

B.V.: Whether the preaching man whispers or speaks “out loud” to the woman interpreter makes no difference. The woman if she delivers the message is still teaching over men.

K.Bu.: Good question for those who use women interpreters.

M.E.: Those of another language could not hear (understand) if it was “out loud.” Whispering to the woman or “out loud” would in no way change the relationship of the woman to her audience i.e. whether she spoke with authority or not.

H.N.: Good question. Those that use women interpreters in the worship assembly could not consistently oppose a woman who simply took a manuscript written by a man and delivered to the assembly.

K.Ba.: No.

16. May a woman interpreter, in a worship assembly, read a manuscript of a sermon prepared by a man?

J.W.: No.

C.P.: No. It still remains a matter of authority. Where is there scriptural authority for such an action? But, if she may speak what a man vocally declares, she may also speak what a man writes. There is equal authority for each.

J.R.: No.

R.T.: No.

B.V.: No. She is still violating 1 Timothy 2:11-12.

K.Bu.: No! But according to those who use them it is O.K. because she did not prepare the message. If this be true I can prepare a manuscript and hand it to one of the ladies and let her read it each Sunday morning and Sunday night. If not, why not?

M.E.: No. If so, she could read a manuscript prepared by Peter, Paul, James and John – the Bible.

H.N.: No, she may not!

K.Ba.: No.

17. May a woman interpreter read a manuscript of a sermon (prepared by a

man) in a worship assembly if a man stood beside her?

J.W.: No.

C.P.: No, for the same reason stated in #16.

J.R.: No.

R.T.: No.

B.V.: Ditto.

K.Bu.: No!

M.E.: No. A man standing beside her does not alter the principle contained in I Tim. 2:12.

H.N.: No, she may not!

K.Ba.: No.

18. May a woman interpret in the assembly what is preached by a man via electronic media (satellite, video, etc.)? (Could she play a video tape and interpret it to the assembly or may the audience watch a live broadcast of a sermon from a remote location and she interpret it? What's the difference between it being "live" and on tape?)

J.W.: No.

C.P.: No, to all of this as it applies to a mixed assembly because of reasons already stated. There is no difference between "live" and "on tape" as it pertains to a woman interpreting to a mixed worship assembly.

J.R.: No. There is no difference!

R.T.: No. I see no difference in her doing it live or by tape.

B.V.: Whether the woman is before the audience live or through video equipment, she would still be teaching over the man. A few years ago, I opposed the playing of a recorded video message by a young woman to a mixed audience at Potter's Children Home in Bowling Green, Kentucky. It violated 1 Timothy 2:11-12.

K.Bu.: No! According to their reasoning they could. Let me insert here, that I have a big concern about using any interpreter in worship that is not a Christian. How do you know the interpreter is telling them what you are saying? He could be telling them anything. If one is to be a missionary, learn the language. Must not use a non Christian.

M.E.: I see no difference. In every case a woman who is before an audience of the whole church, speaking to them, is doing what is forbidden in I Cor. 14:34 & I Tim. 2:12. The circumstances does not change the principle.

H.N.: There is no difference between being live or on tape. The liberals have used denominational taped programs with the objections of faithful brethren.

K.Ba.: No, even in a situation of only giving a simple translation rather than an interpretation she would still be in control of the equipment which would indicate usurping control over the male preacher/teacher.

19. May a woman read scripture in a worship assembly?

J.W.: No.

C.P.: No, because this is in a leadership position and implies authority in the one so doing.

J.R.: No.

R.T.: Not when men are present.

B.V.: No.

K.Bu.: No.

M.E.: No. In Titus 2:15, Paul told Titus, "These things speak, and exhort, and rebuke with all authority..." "These things" are what he had written to him – the scriptures. I Tim. 2:12 forbids a woman to speak with authority over man, i. e. speak the scriptures.

H.N.: No, she may not. Our brethren have historically seen a difference between the worship assembly and the Bible study period. This distinction is based on the more restrictive teaching of I Cor. 14. For this reason a woman may not read a scripture in the worship assembly.

K.Ba.: No.

20. May a woman read scripture in a worship assembly if a man tells her what to read?

J.W.: No.

C.P.: No, for the reason stated in #19.

J.R.: No.

R.T.: No.

B.V.: No.

K.Bu.: No. The man does not have the authority to tell her to read.

M.E.: No. Man does not have the right to tell a woman to do what the scriptures do not authorize. In addition, this is specifically forbidden.

H.N.: No, she may not. There are some things that are not subject to delegation.

K.Ba.: No.

21. Would a man have to read the scripture first in his language before she read it in her language?

J.W.: We don't have the problem.

C.P.: Because she has no authority to read, it doesn't matter whether the man reads it or not. He could merely give her the reference if she had authority to read.

J.R.: No, She is not to read in worship period.

R.T.: His reading it first would not make right what she did later.

B.V.: No. It would be wrong for the woman to read the scripture in a worship service whether the man read the passage first or just had her to read it.

K.Bu.: I am not sure what those who use them would require.

M.E.: No. Such does not change, in any way, the principle involved.

H.N.: Those advocating women interpreters can not consistently oppose a woman reading scripture without it first being read by a man.

K.Ba.: No.

22. When a man reads scripture from his English Bible and a woman reads scripture from her Russian Bible, is she interpreting what he read?

J.W.: She is reading what the Russian Bible says.

C.P.: No. She is only reading from her Bible which may not be an accurate translation of what the man reads from an English Bible.

J.R.: Yes.

R.T.: Not unless the Russian Bible is just

like his English Bible.

B.V.: No.

K.Bu.: No.

M.E.: No, not only that, she is reading the authoritative word of God to her audience. Again, I Tim. 2:12 forbids her to speak with authority before the church and/or over the man.

H.N.: She is interpreting without a special spiritual gift which is directly parallel to a woman interpreting with a spiritual gift in the first century. She was not allowed to interpret in the first century and she may not today do so.

K.Ba.: No, she is only giving a simple translation.

23. If she is not interpreting what he read, why then would she not be able to read any scripture during the assembly?

J.W.: See 22.

C.P.: In reality, if the first part of the question is true, either she has no authority to read it in the first place, or, in the second place she would be equally authorized to read any passage in the worship assembly. Authority for the one would also authorize the other.

J.R.: She is interpreting!

R.T.: She is minus any authority for reading Scripture in the public assembly where both men and women are present.

B.V.: She is not to read any scripture audibly in the worship assembly.

K.Bu.: Good question for those who use the women. If she could read in her Bible what he read in his, then she could read in her Bible that which he does not read in his.

M.E.: She would be able. If she is interpreting, and if it is scriptural to do so, it would follow that she could read any scripture before the assembly.

H.N.: Good question. Whether she reads or interprets, the same dynamic takes place. The woman still proclaims the word of God to the assembly.

K.Ba.: Due to the fact that she would be assuming a position of control over the man.

24. Is a woman teaching when she interprets/translates?

J.W.: Yes.

C.P.: Yes, cf. #14, #4, #10.

J.R.: Yes!

R.T.: Yes. She either is or is not. If she is not teaching, what is she doing?

B.V.: Yes. When the Holy Spirit gave the words of Jesus Christ to the apostles and other inspired men, the Holy Spirit taught. Jesus said that the Holy Spirit would teach, but the message did not originate with him (Jn. 16:13). The fact that the message does not originate with the woman does not mean that she is not teaching. Accuracy in translating is beside the point. The Holy Spirit accurately revealed the message to the apostles; yet, he was still teaching. Again, the Lord spoke through Balaam's ass. Rebuking is a part of preaching (2 Tim. 4:2). Peter said that Balaam "was rebuked for his iniquity: the dumb ass speaking with man's voice forbad the madness of the prophet" (2 Pet. 2:16). Balaam's ass was simply translating the mes-

sage of the Angel of the Lord.

K.Bu.: Yes! She is the one they understand. They do not understand what the English speaker says, therefore, they could not be taught by him, they are taught by the woman.

M.E.: Yes.

H.N.: Yes. She teaches when she proclaims a message though not originating with her. The Holy Spirit spoke nothing original (John 16:13), never the less He taught (John 14:26).

K.Ba.: If she gives more than a simple translation, i.e., if she engages in didactic discourse, expounding upon the scriptures presented, etc., she would be teaching. If she only gives a translation like the translators of the KJV did in their work she would not be teaching.

25. Is teaching being done when no one in the audience understands the language being spoken?

J.W.: No.

C.P.: According to Paul in I Cor. 14:13-19, no understanding occurs if the language is not understood. If no understanding of the message takes place, there is no teaching being done by the words spoken.

J.R.: No.

R.T.: Not real teaching.

B.V.: No. It is confusion. Paul said, "For he that speaketh in an unknown tongue speaketh not unto men, but unto God: for no man understandeth him;... So likewise ye, except ye utter by the tongue words easy to be understood, how shall it be known what is spoken? for ye shall speak into the air. ... Else when thou shalt bless with the spirit, how shall he that occupieth the room of the unlearned say Amen at thy giving of thanks, seeing he understandeth not what thou sayest? ... If therefore the whole church be come together into one place, and all speak with tongues, and there come in those that are unlearned, or unbelievers, will they not say that ye are mad? (1 Cor. 14:2,9,16,23).

K.Bu.: No.

M.E.: No.

H.N.: The apostle Paul spoke about understanding the message (I Cor. 14:16). Without communication in an understandable language no real teaching takes place. The speaker or teacher speaks in "the air" (I Cor. 14:9).

K.Ba.: No.

26. Is teaching being done when one interprets?

J.W.: Yes.

C.P.: Yes, according to I Cor. 14:19. The teaching takes place at the understanding of the words spoken.

J.R.: Yes.

R.T.: Yes.

B.V.: Yes.

K.Bu.: Yes.

M.E.: Yes.

H.N.: Yes. Melchizedek's name is given by interpretation in Hebrews 7:2. Teaching takes place when one interprets.

K.Ba.: If by interpretation you mean didactic discourse or expounding upon proper

meaning of scripture, yes, which would be sinful. If you mean a simple translation, i.e., transferring words from one language to another, no.

27. If teaching is being done when one interprets, then why is not a woman teaching when she interprets?

J.W.: She is.

C.P.: She is teaching. If not, what principle prevents it? By what law of hermeneutics may we understand teaching to take place at this point when a man speaks, but not when a woman speaks?

J.R.: Indeed she is!

R.T.: She is teaching.

B.V.: She is teaching. See answer to number 24.

K.Bu.: She is.

M.E.: She is teaching.

H.N.: In fact a woman does teach as she interprets.

K.Ba.: When a woman gives only a simple translation she does not expound nor teach. Do you believe that the KJV TRANSLATORS taught when they gave us their translation?

28. Does it matter who originates the message when a woman interprets?

J.W.: We don't have the problem in our assemblies.

C.P.: No, since she has no authority to speak to a mixed assembly of worship, she sins when speaking regardless of who originates the message.

J.R.: No.

R.T.: No.

B.V.: No.

K.Bu.: It has nothing to do with the one who originates it.

M.E.: No.

H.N.: It matters in both the teacher and the interpreter.

K.Ba.: Yes.

29. Does it matter how the audience views what a woman is doing when she interprets? i.e., is it relevant regarding whether they believe she is or is not teaching?

J.W.: Yes, very much so, but we don't have the problem.

C.P.: No. Perception may not always be reality of fact. Perception is a subjective quality depending upon the perceiver, therefore, perception is not the standard of right and wrong.

J.R.: No.

R.T.: She is teaching regardless of how they view it if she is interpreting.

B.V.: No.

K.Bu.: No. But it seems to me that they will believe the one they understand is teaching. If they do not understand, how are they taught?

M.E.: No. The view of any audience (nor any man) does not alter the scriptures.

H.N.: No. Whether the audience has a perception of teaching or not, the matter is settled in the scripture.

K.Ba.: Yes, most definitely!!!!

30. If the audience did see or believe she was teaching, would what she is doing be wrong?

J.W.: We don't have the problem in our assemblies.

C.P.: It is wrong regardless of how people perceive her action. But if perception of wrong took place there would be a problem of influence added to the bigger problem.

J.R.: Is wrong because there is no authority.

R.T.: Wrong either way.

B.V.: It would be wrong whether the audience realized the woman was teaching or not.

K.Bu.: Yes. But what the audience believes has nothing to do with whether it is wrong or right.

M.E.: Yes - not because of the view of the audience but because the scriptures teach so.

H.N.: The audience is not the determining factor, yet, many in the audience would doubt the practice was scriptural. If some doubt, they are caused to sin (Rom. 14:23).

K.Ba.: Yes.

31. When a foreign language preacher preaches in America, could a woman interpret in our assemblies what he preaches?

J.W.: No.

C.P.: No. However, if such is scriptural in other countries, it would be scriptural here.

J.R.: No, God's law is international.

R.T.: No.

B.V.: No. But based on what some brethren believe and practice, she could. If not, why not?

K.Bu.: No.

M.E.: No.

H.N.: No. Those advocating the use of women interpreters probably would not be so bold in the U. S.

K.Ba.: I do not know of a situation in the U. S. with all of our educational opportunities that such a need would even exist. In fact, I find it very difficult to believe that in the educated regions of Russia qualified men are not available at all. No doubt there are some exceptional situations, especially where the church may not exist, or in congregations just a few weeks or months of spiritual age. However, the geographical situation is beside the point whether in the U.S., or Russia. We must remember in exceptional cases that simple translation is not detailed interpretation, didactic discourse, expounding, or teaching.

32. May a woman interpret a prayer in the assembly?

J.W.: No.

C.P.: No, all for the same reasons why she may not interpret a sermon.

J.R.: No, no authority for such.

R.T.: No.

B.V.: No.

K.Bu.: No.

M.E.: No.

H.N.: No, she may not. Prayers are to be offered by men (I Tim. 2:8).

K.Ba.: The same principle applied to

simple translation of preaching/teaching would apply here.

33. May a woman wait on the Lord's table in the assembly?

J.W.: No.

C.P.: No, this is a position of leadership in worship and is reserved for male members. We can find no authority for her serving the table.

J.R.: No, it is a leadership position.

R.T.: No, not if men are present.

B.V.: No. Why would a Christian woman want to do so?

K.Bu.: No.

M.E.: No.

H.N.: No, she may not. The posture of leadership is referred to with lifting up of holy hands in I Tim. 2:8. Though the position is a matter of indifference, men were the ones who were to assume any posture of leadership.

K.Ba.: No.

34. May a woman wait on the Lord's table if a man does the talking?

J.W.: No.

C.P.: No, for the same reason stated in #33.

J.R.: No, it is a leadership position.

R.T.: No.

B.V.: No.

K.Bu.: No.

M.E.: No.

H.N.: No, she may not.

K.Ba.: No.

35. May a woman wait on the Lord's table if a man tells her what to do and/or say?

J.W.: No.

C.P.: No, for the same reason stated in #33.

J.R.: No.

R.T.: No.

B.V.: No. I remember being at Harding College in the early 70's and two young ladies spoke in chapel on What Christ Meant to Them. I went to the Chairman of the Bible Department at that time and made my objections based on 1 Tim. 2:11-12. The fact that the one in charge allowed the ladies to speak to a mixed audience did not change the fact that they both were having dominion over men. The Chairman of the Bible Department shared in their violation of the scriptures.

K.Bu.: No.

M.E.: No. Man has no scriptural right or authority to tell a woman such.

H.N.: No, she may not.

K.Ba.: No.

36. Is a woman in a position of leadership/authority when she waits at the table?

J.W.: Yes, leadership.

C.P.: Yes. All positions of leadership in worship involves authority. It is impossible to separate authority from the leadership positions. There may be different levels of authority, but there is still authority involved regardless of who does the telling, or directing of activity.

J.R.: Yes.

R.T.: Yes.

B.V.: Because many people view waiting on the table as being in a leadership role, a woman should not be put in such a position. The fact that a woman stands before others and confesses her sins or faith in Christ does not place her in a leadership role. The ones waiting on the table, unless they are presiding, do not usually say anything. Yet, the New Testament teachings concerning the role of the woman would prohibit her from wanting to be out in front in such situations. The words "shamefacedness," "silence," and "subjection" would prohibit her.

K.Bu.: Yes.

M.E.: Yes.

H.N.: Yes.

K.Ba.: Yes.

37. May a woman interpret for the song leader in the assembly?

J.W.: No.

C.P.: No, all for the same reasons given why she has no authority to interpret his sermon.

J.R.: No.

R.T.: No.

B.V.: No.

K.Bu.: No. It seems that this would necessarily be simultaneous. She is leading the Russians and the English speaking song leader, leading the English speaking people.

M.E.: No.

H.N.: No, she may not. By interpreting the singing she also teaches because singing involves teaching (Eph. 5:19).

K.Ba.: A woman may NOT interpret (dierneneuo) the words of a song prior to the singing of that song due to the fact that such would be inclusive of teaching. A woman, under proper circumstances may simply translate (methermeneuo) without expounding upon those words which would not be teaching. Obviously, it would be sinful for a woman to even give a simple translation in her own language if by doing so she engaged in directing singing. The simple translation would have to occur before the singing began.

38. Isn't a woman directing the singing in her language when a man directs the singing in his language?

J.W.: Yes.

C.P.: Yes. The worshippers understand her and follow her rather than the man whom they do not understand. He can't teach and admonish (Eph. 5:19) and might as well remain silent.

J.R.: Yes.

R.T.: Yes.

B.V.: Yes.

K.Bu.: Yes.

M.E.: Yes both sustain the same position to their audience.

H.N.: Yes, she assumes a position of leadership.

K.Ba.: If she employed this means of simple translation such would be sinful due to the control she would be employing over the man.

39. Is a woman interpreter the same as a microphone and PA system to a preacher?

J.W.: No.

C.P.: No. The microphone and PA system merely amplify his voice in the same language he speaks and merely enables one to hear more clearly what is said. The interpreter must interpret; i.e., speak in one language what is said in another language. Therefore, the interpreter must be prepared to supply some of their own understanding of what the speaker said in order to speak in a different language what was said since there is no word for word translation of one language into another, especially English to Russian. Verbal interpretation is especially difficult with special problems written translations do not have.

J.R.: No.

R.T.: No.

B.V.: No. A woman conveys the message of the speaker, but not his voice. A microphone and sound system are the means of both the message and the speaker's voice. A speaker system does not speak nor teach, but simply transmits that which is spoken or taught. I have shown already that a woman interpreter teaches what she receives as the Holy Spirit taught what he had received. A sound system does not teach, but is the means used for teaching. It has been argued by the Christian Church that the pitch pipe or tuning fork is equivalent to the organ or other instruments used in worship to God. But faithful brethren have argued correctly in pointing out that the pitch pipe or tuning fork, used for getting the pitch for a song, always stops before the song begins; whereas the instrument keeps playing throughout the song. Likewise, the sound system stops when the preacher stops; but the interpreter begins when the preacher ends. I do not believe the sound system is parallel to the interpreter, contrary to the thinking of good brethren.

K.Bu.: No.

M.E.: No. PA systems enhances only the voice of the one speaking into it. A female interpreter introduces another person of the sex forbidden to speak authoritatively in the public assembly. Paul authorized the male of the species 'o do such (I Tim. 2:8; Titus 2:15) and forbade the female of the species to do such (I Cor. 14:34; I Tim. 2:12).

H.N.: No, a microphone magnifies the same voice while a woman speaks her own voice emanating from her person.

K.Ba.: No. She is human, the microphone is non-human.

40. If a woman interpreter is the same as a microphone and PA system, then why can't the audience understand when we use a microphone and PA system without an interpreter?

J.W.: She is not.

C.P.: Because this may be formed as a valid IF, THEN syllogism, because the THEN premise is true, the IF premise is also true. "If a woman interpreter is the same as a microphone and a PA system, then the audience can understand the speaker in another language when the speaker uses a micro-

phone and PA system." I know of no person who will affirm that proposition.

J.R.: They're not the same.

R.T.: This shows the sophistry of the contention.

B.V.: They are not the same. See answer to #39.

K.Bu.: Good question.

M.E.: They could if they were the same. An illustration does not teach truth but only clarifies truth if a proper illustration. This proves that the PA system is not an example of an interpreter.

H.N.: Good point. They are not the same.

K.Ba.: I agree with your point that there is an essential difference between amplification and that of translation.

41. Is signing for the deaf the same as interpreting into another language?

J.W.: Yes.

C.P.: If I understand the principles of sign language, then sign language is truly a language and the same rules apply as in any other language.

J.R.: Yes, signing is the language of the deaf!

R.T.: I think they fall into the same category and would not want a woman signing for me.

B.V.: Yes.

K.Bu.: Yes.

M.E.: Yes. (Comparable)

H.N.: Yes.

K.Ba.: Signing for the deaf in so far as translation would be parallel to simple translation in another language. In fact sign language is a different language!

42. Does signing for the deaf have anything to do with the discussion of women interpreters?

J.W.: Yes.

C.P.: I believe it does in that sign language is another language and the understanding takes place at the point of understanding that language. If it is spoken by a woman, the principle is the same as in verbal interpreting.

J.R.: Yes, men should be also used to do the signing.

R.T.: Yes.

B.V.: Yes. It is an exact parallel.

K.Bu.: Yes. This is their manner of speaking, if not, they cannot sing. "Speaking to yourselves in psalms and hymns and spiritual song." They could not confess. To be consistent and right we must say yes.

M.E.: Yes.

H.N.: Yes, in both cases one teaches those who need instruction.

K.Ba.: Signing for the deaf involves the same principle as women translators not interpreters.

43. Could we use a non-Christian to interpret in our assemblies?

J.W.: Yes.

C.P.: No. I do not know of any who disagree at this point, although I am certain some brother might. In Christian worship assemblies the only authority for speaking is granted to Christian males. There is no scrip-

tural authority found for non-Christians addressing a Christian worship assembly.

J.R.: No.

R.T.: No.

B.V.: No. Can we use an unbeliever to preach to us? Even if his message is the truth, we cannot have fellowship with him since he is not walking in the light (1 Jn. 1:7).

K.Bu.: No.

M.E.: No.

H.N.: No. any non-christian is not to be extended fellowship to.

K.Ba.: To interpret no, for such would involve teaching. Simple translation would not involve teaching, however, other areas of vital importance are indeed involved. I would wonder if the non-Christian would accurately translate the message presented and correctly represent the truth. Also, I would question as to whether or not he may think that I was extending fellowship to him as a fellow Christian when in reality he was not. I am aware that the use of the KJV involves the use of non-Christian translators, however, even those in the denominations do not equate the use of the KJV as the extending of fellowship to those serving as its translators. I would also question as to how new Christians or non-Christians present would view this activity. The use of non-Christians in simple translation without the taking of important precautions could lead to some very serious problems, and even with those precautions taken, one could never be certain of the outcome.

44. Could a woman in the 1st century, exercising a spiritual gift, speak (talk) in a mixed worship assembly?

J.W.: No, I Cor. 14:34-35.

C.P.: No, I Cor. 14:34-35; I Tim. 2:11-12.

J.R.: No.

R.T.: Not without violating I Cor. 14:34,35.

B.V.: No. There is no record of any doing so. In fact, they are prohibited (1 Cor. 14:34-35).

K.Bu.: No.

M.E.: No.

H.N.: No, she could not (I Cor. 14:34,35).

K.Ba.: No.

45. Could a woman in the 1st century, not exercising a spiritual gift, speak (talk) in a mixed worship assembly?

J.W.: No, I Cor. 14:34-35.

C.P.: No, I Cor. 14:34-35; I Tim. 2:11-12.

J.R.: No.

R.T.: Same answer as No. 44.

B.V.: No. There is no proof that the wives of the prophets in I Cor. 14 were endowed with spiritual gifts; yet, Paul tells the Corinthians that it is a shame for women to speak in the church.

K.Bu.: No.

M.E.: No.

H.N.: Not for teaching purposes.

K.Ba.: Women in the first century could not speak as to engage in expounding or teaching, they could speak by singing (Eph. 5:19; Col. 3:16).

46. If a woman was forbidden to

speak (talk) in a mixed assembly in the first century, then why is she not forbidden to speak (talk) in our assemblies today?

J.W.: She is.

C.P.: Again, this question can be stated in an IF, THEN syllogism: "If a woman was forbidden to speak in a mixed worship assembly in the first century, then a woman is forbidden to speak in a mixed worship assembly in this century." If it can be established that the woman could not speak in such an assembly in the first century (and it can be established), then it follows the woman can't speak in a mixed worship assembly in this century.

J.R.: She is forbidden to speak!

R.T.: I think she is without doubt.

B.V.: There were at least two reasons why Paul commanded silence in I Corinthians. First, the wives of the prophets (as well as other women) were not to utter a sound lest they cause confusion (1 Cor. 14:33). Second, the women were to be under obedience to their husbands (1 Cor. 14:34-35). Evidently, the wives interrupting their husbands during the assembly was a sign that they were not in submission to them. Though special assemblies in which new revelation was given, like those that were under consideration in 1 Corinthians 14, do not take place today, the principles discussed remain. Women are to be silent in the assembly when the word is being preached in order to avoid confusion and they are to be in submission to their husbands. In 1 Tim. 2:11-12, the word "silence," according to The Analytical Greek Lexicon means "silent attention."

K.Bu.: She is forbidden.

M.E.: She is forbidden today. The Bible has not changed.

H.N.: She is forbidden to speak both in the first century assemblies as well as our worship assemblies today.

K.Ba.: She is forbidden to talk in so far as her teaching over the man, i.e., engaging in didactic discourse or expounding. However, to assume that simple translation is equal to teaching over the man is begging the question and/or circular reasoning.

47. When a woman "sings" as commanded in Eph. 5:19 and Col. 3:16, is that the same "type of speaking" that is contemplated in I Tim. 2:11-12 and I Cor. 14:34-35?

J.W.: No.

C.P.: No, it is obvious from the context of I Cor. 14:26-35 in the use of the word translated "silence" that the utter silence, i.e., not making a sound, is restricted to part of the speaking portion of worship in that even prophets and those speaking in other languages were subject to the same command. Some object by saying that singing is speaking to one another. Yes, but all speaking is not singing. It is in part of the non-singing portion of worship that women are restricted to this command to keep utter silence; i.e., to not make a sound. But, remember that even some of the male prophets and some of those males speaking in other languages were subject to the same command. They were restricted in speaking, but women are forbid-

den in that. The force of the statement is restricted to part of the speaking portion, not in singing. In I Tim. 2:12 we have reference to delivering a didactic discourse. In addition, the force of the whole statement is in effect: "I suffer not a women to teach, nor in any other way to usurp authority over a man, but to be in silence."

J.R.: No.

R.T.: No.

B.V.: No. She is commanded to sing, as is everyone.

K.Bu.: No. Because she is not the leader nor one in authority.

M.E.: No, it is not. The silence in I Cor. 14:34 is used in reference to speaking (teaching). It is the same word used in verse 28 where the prophets were forbidden to speak without an interpreter. This word is limited by the context to speaking or teaching when the whole church is come together. The fact that teaching is an element of singing does not make the whole of singing teaching, so it would not apply in the case of singing.

H.N.: No, she is not speaking over men but with the men of the assembly when she sings.

K.Ba.: No.

48. When a woman "confesses faith in Christ" prior to being baptized, is that the same "type of speaking" that is contemplated I Tim. 2:11-12 and I Cor. 14:34-35?

J.W.: No.

C.P.: No. Those were verbal matters addressed from the woman to the audience. Confession of faith is from the one making the confession to God before an audience. This is commanded all who believe (Rom. 10:10). It is stated, not for the benefit of the hearers, but for the benefit of the one confessing.

J.R.: No.

R.T.: No. In neither is she in the role of leader over men.

B.V.: No. The New Testament commands everyone including women to confess Christ before men (Rom. 10:9-10; Acts 8:37). She is also to confess her sins publicly, if they be publicly known (James 5:16; 1 John 1:9).

K.Bu.: No.

M.E.: No.

H.N.: No, for if she began instructing the assembly as to why she believed in Jesus, she then would be violating I Cor. 14:34,35.

K.Ba.: No.

49. How many words or sentences (seconds or minutes) may a woman translator interpret before she must remain silent in order for the man to speak again?

J.W.: We don't have the problem.

C.P.: Before she may speak there must be found authority in Scripture for her to speak. Until that is brought forth in a clear and straightforward manner, she must forever remain silent.

J.R.: She is not to do any interpreting!

R.T.: Those who use this would have to answer. I do not believe she can function in this role and the interval, whether short or long, does not make what she is doing right.

B.V.: The woman cannot be a translator in the assembly of the saints and be in compliance with the scriptures.

K.Bu.: Good question for them.

M.E.: In the matter of teaching, she is to be silent at all times when the church is assembled in worship.

H.N.: The amount of words is not the determining factor.

K.Ba.: No more than would be necessary to give a simple translation.

50. If a woman interpreter can speak two sentences, can she speak four? If four, why not eight, sixteen, etc.? Why not the whole sermon? Wouldn't she be limited only by her ability to recall what she heard? If she can interpret for 10 seconds before she must listen again, may she speak for 30 seconds, 1 minute, etc.? Why not the whole sermon if she has it memorized?

J.W.: We don't have the problem.

C.P.: Yes to all if she has authority to speak two sentences. If not, why not? Remember, IF, THEN!

J.R.: An interpreter is only to translate what the main speaker has presented - however many words it would take to get the message

across as accurately as possible.

R.T.: Again, the interval of time is not the determining factor. Grant the premises of those who use such and she could speak the entire sermon upon remembering it. There would be no limit to what she could do if her position as interpreter is authorized which I do not believe it is.

B.V.: Yes, to all of the questions, if a woman can interpret in the public assembly. There would be no limits placed upon her if she could interpret. If she could deliver a didactic discourse publicly once, she could do it all of the time. Then, where is the stopping place? However, the fact that a woman speaks publicly in the assembly does not necessarily mean that she is teaching and usurping authority over the man. Peter asked Sapphira in the assembly a question. She answered him in the presence of men. Was she wrong in answering? Was Peter wrong in asking? When does it become wrong for a woman to speak in a mixed audience? When she gives a didactic discourse (that is what the word teach means according to Thayer's Lexicon). How many sentences make up a didactic discourse? I do not know, but a Christian woman would voluntarily refuse or have an indisposition to speak in the worship assembly. We should not place women into unscriptural positions just because it seems expedient. The time will come when women's place in such positions will not want to step down.

K.Bu.: Good statement in the form of a question. They must deal with this.

M.E.: The limitation of the number of sentences or that of time has no bearing on the principle to keep silent. The scriptures are the governing matter and they state when, "the whole church is come together into one place" (I Cor. 14:23) that women are to remain totally silent in the teaching process.

H.N.: The woman translator/interpreter violates God's word when she translates/interprets in the worship assembly.

K.Ba.: No more than would be necessary to give a simple translation.

Seek The Old Paths is a monthly publication of the East Corinth Church of Christ and is under the oversight of its elders. It is mailed FREE upon request. Its primary purpose and goal in publication can be found in Jude 3; II Timothy 4:2; Titus 1:13; Titus 2:1; II Peter 1:12. All mail received may be published unless otherwise noted. Articles are also welcomed.

Editor: Garland M. Robinson
Associate Editor: Jimmy Bates

Non-Profit Org.
U.S. Postage
P A I D
Permit No. 253
Corinth, MS

EAST CORINTH CHURCH OF CHRIST
1801 CRUISE ST.
CORINTH, MS 38834-5108

ADDRESS CORRECTION REQUESTED