

Women and men in church



1 Corinthians 14:34-35

The text – 1 Corinthians 14: 34 - 35

1. What is your initial response to the words of 1 Corinthians 14:34-35? To whom is Paul addressing these words? What is he commanding and why? What are the grounds of these commands?
2. Read 1 Corinthians 14:26-40. This provides the wider context for the words of 14:34-35. What are some of Paul's main concerns for the church in Corinth in 14:26-40? Does this wider context change the way you understand the meaning of 14:34-35?
3. In 14:34, the NIV translation states: "They are not allowed to speak, but must be in submission, as the law says." In submission to what? The NRSV translation of the same portion of the text is: "For they are not permitted to speak, but should be subordinate, as the law also says." Subordinate to what? Discuss the possibilities.

The Scriptures – 1 Corinthians 14: 34 – 35 as a portion of the Scriptures

4. Read 1 Corinthians 11:2-5. Are women completely silent in the church meetings in Corinth? In what speaking ministries are the women participating? How do you reconcile Paul's words in this passage with those in 14:34-35?
5. Discuss what is meant by Paul's words in 1 Corinthians 14:40: "But everything should be done in a fitting and orderly way." What is meant by "order"? Throughout Scripture God brings order out of chaos. This was what happened at creation and subsequently in God's dealings with Israel. What is the nature of order? What is the purpose of order?
6. God's wisdom and living wisely are major concerns throughout this letter. How do listening and speaking exhibit God's wisdom? Consider statements about wise speech from other portions of Scripture including Proverbs 17:27 and James 1:19-20.
7. Read and discuss Titus 1:10-11. Some of the same language that is used in 1 Corinthians 14:34-35 is found here, particularly "silence" and also "shame", translated in the NIV by the word "dishonest".

Our lives – walking the way of Jesus in response to 1 Corinthians 14: 34 – 35 as a portion of the Scriptures

8. What are the main issues this study has raised for you?
9. What will you do in response to what you have learned from the Scriptures that we have considered in this study?
10. How can we pray for you and encourage you in your discipleship?