

Women Speak

Merciful Lord, You know the fears and concerns we harbour in our hearts and minds. We desire to be faithful to Your word yet we often fear the ridicule of the world. Help us to listen carefully to others and teach us to measure what they say against the Holy Scriptures. Give us a spirit of courage and humility as You use us to benefit Your church on earth; through Jesus Christ our Lord, Amen.

1 a. Pamphlet 9 contains the personal testimonies of a number of women on the topic of ordination. Pam Williams begins by saying no one lacks gifts to serve God. What does Paul say about spiritual gifts in 1 Corinthians 12:4-11? What is the purpose of every Christian's calling, see Eph 2:10?

b. Pam raises the issue of resistance to authority. Why do we obey leaders according to Heb 13:17? See also 13:7. What blessings come from obedience to those properly placed in authority, Rom 13:3-5; 1 Cor 11:2-16.

2 a. The second contributor writes, "*Deep in our heart and soul was a sense that the arguments for the ordination of women were not valid.*" Equating 'heart and soul' with conscience discuss the role of the human conscience in discerning what is right and wrong. See Acts 24:14-16; 2 Cor 4:2; 1 Tim 1:18-19, and 1 Tim 3:9. Can our conscience err? Who/what corrects our conscience?

b. The writer also has concerns that the issue of women in the ministry will divide Christians. Do you think this should be a primary concern? Defend your answer biblically. These Scriptures may be helpful in your discussion: Matt 5:17-19; John 17:13-19; Eph 4:3-13; Rom 16:17-18 and Acts 5:27-32.

3 a. The third part of pamphlet 9 contains a testimony from Sara Low. She makes reference to "*Jesus' cultural conditioning*" that some claim prevented his appointment of women to the public ministry. What do you make of the claim that Jesus was conditioned by His culture? What does the biblical evidence show? Consider such Scriptures as Matt 5:21-48; John 4:1-32, and Matt 19:3-12.

b. Mrs Low also says, "*I have listened patiently to talk of prayerful, thoughtful majorities...*" Discuss a biblical perspective on majority vs minority decisions. In what types of matters do we have the Christian freedom to follow the majority **or** minority view? In what types of matters is it "irrelevant" whether or not the majority supports it? See Rom 14 and Gal 2:1-5.

Through all the passing years, O Lord,
grant that, when church bells are ringing,
many may come to hear God's Word
where He this promise is bringing:
I know My own, My own know Me;
Ye, not the world, My face shall see;
My peace I leave with you, Amen
(LHS 188, stanza 5)

