

Preparation for Session 8 – The Role of Women in the Church

Read I Timothy 5: 3 – 16, Titus 2: 3 – 5 and I Corinthians 7:1 - 40. Focus upon how these passages relate to the single woman in the church. You might also consider some single women who were prominent New Testament personages. Consider the following questions.

1. What problem is Paul addressing in I Timothy 5: 3 – 16?
2. What is meant by the “list of widows”? (5:9)
3. Who were to be included in the “list of widows?”
4. Why were the younger widows not to be put on the list?
5. What problem was Paul addressing in Titus 2: 3 – 5?
6. How widespread was the problem?
7. Regarding our topic of the role of women in the church, where might the controversy arise related to Titus 2: 3 – 5?
8. What were the responsibilities of the older women in the churches on Crete? What were the responsibilities of the younger women?

9. Paul appears to be responding to some specific questions in I Corinthians 7. What were those questions? Can we be certain about the questions?
10. Are the instructions to men compared to women in I Corinthians 7 significantly different?
11. How would you interpret the use of the term “good” in I Corinthians 7:1, 8, and 26? Does Paul mean morally good (in the sense of right and wrong)?
12. What is the sense of urgency to which Paul refers in I Corinthians 7:26 – 31?
13. How would you summarize Paul’s message in I Corinthians 7 in relation to women who are widowed, divorced or never married?
14. Is Paul really saying that the single state is to be preferred over the married state? If so, what are the implications for the church today? If not, explain your reasoning?
15. From your reading of these passages, summarize your views as to the status of single women in the church. Consider the role of singles in general (and compare with the New Testament church). Also consider key women in the New Testament.

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