

South Baton Rouge Church of Christ

Women in the Church

November 2019

As Elders of the South Baton Rouge Church of Christ, we desire - above all else - to lead in a way that seeks our Father's will. Though not easy, we must be a family that boldly addresses subjects that may make us uncomfortable and may challenge our past traditions in an effort to seek what God desires. Both our church family at South and the entire Restoration Movement at large were built on this belief. For this reason, where we are today is not the same place we were 50, 100, or 150 years ago. With prayerful discernment and the Holy Spirit's guidance, we have moved as God and His Spirit have moved.

That discernment and guidance has continued over the past several years; and as a result, we decided it was important to have a congregational study regarding Women in the Church in order to share with the church insights we have gleaned over the course of these and prior studies.

Over the past several weeks we have considered together:

- Women in the Old Testament
- Jesus and Women
- Women in the early church (Acts and Romans)
- I Timothy 2
- I Corinthians 11 and 14
- Genesis and the Creation account
- And most recently Galatians 3:28

----- Each of these classes have been recorded and are available on our church website.

We believe the Bible. Our views have been shaped by trying to look broadly at the all the varied texts related to this topic. We believe there are good, contextual grounds for considering the texts in I Corinthians 14 and I Timothy 2 as specific responses suitable at that time to particular worship situations in those churches, rather than universal declarations regarding worship for all churches, at all times.

We want to live out to the best of our abilities what God has communicated to us through scripture. And so, after over a year of individual and group prayer, discussions, and fasting, it seems good to us and the Holy Spirit that all men and women should use their gifts and talents to build up Christ's church and serve God - in all aspects of church family life. We believe this is a better understanding of what God desires of us as his church. The elders are unified and unanimous in this regard.

At this time, for the sake of unity within the church family, it is our judgment that only the services of elder and full-time pulpit minister are to be reserved for men.

What's next? Discussions will continue and an implementation plan will be developed.

We anticipate these changes will be implemented gradually. We also anticipate these changes will occur at a different pace in our First Service than in our Second Service. But we are not being specific about any changes nor their timeline, because that has not been developed yet. The Worship Committee of each service will have a major role in helping us with these upcoming changes.

We ask and pray that all of us will seek the unity of this body as we work together; worship together; and make these changes together. Unity is crucial to our family life as a church and to our witness to the world for the advancement of the gospel.

Elders of the South Baton Rouge Church of Christ