

Where Does Verse 34 Begin?

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³⁴ *(As in all the churches of the saints) The women are to keep **silent** in the churches; for they are not permitted to speak, but are to subject themselves, just as **the Law** also says.*

The word translated "**silent**" (Gr. *sige*) means just that, namely, **to keep silent or to hold one's peace.** CONSTABLE

A woman could prophesy but not inquire as to explanation regarding other revelations in a public meeting.

The teaching of the **Law** on this subject is a reference to woman's subordination to the authoritative man in her family. Gen. 3:16

³³ *for God is not a God of confusion but of peace,*

1. Paul had just permitted others in the congregation to evaluate the comments that a prophet made 1 Corinthians 14:29 (NASB)
29 Let two or three prophets speak, and let the others pass judgment.
2. Now he qualified this by saying the women should not do so **vocally in the church meetings as the men could.**
3. We need to remember this is by the Holy Spirit as truly as any other part of the epistle. He said it through Paul, the inspired apostle.

The atmosphere of a public meeting is HOLY

- **Where man is as nothing**
- **Where God is everything**
- **Where God makes His presence and power known spiritually**

³⁵ *If they desire to learn anything, let them ask their own **husbands** at home; for it is improper for a woman to speak in church.*

- Rather than calling out a question in the middle of **some male or female prophet's message**, a woman was to wait and ask her husband about it at home after the service.
- Presumably, unmarried women would ask their fathers or some other man in the church after the service.

The most common view is that Paul prohibited some form of inappropriate speech, not all speech.

The basic issue is over what it means to be *pneumatikos* ('spiritual')

- They think it has to do with speaking in tongues.
- They have great zeal for this gift (v. 12).
- In their letter they have not only defended this practice, but by the same gauge have called Paul into question for his lack of '**spirituality.**'

Paul's response to all this has been twofold.

First, they are to recognize that being Spiritual people means a great variety of gifts and ministries in the church **for the benefit of the body** (chap. 12).

Second, the whole point of the gathered people of God is **edification**, the true expression of love for the saints.

*³⁶ Was it **from** you that the word of God first went forth?
Or has it **come** to you only?*

- They did not set the standard for how the church meetings should proceed.
- The Corinthian church was not the **mother church** nor was it the only church to which the gospel had come.
- Therefore, the Corinthian readers should submit to the apostle's direction (cf. 9:1-23).

The place of the church is **to be subject to the word of God**, remembering that the word of God comes **to, and not from**, the church.

*³⁷ If anyone thinks he is a **prophet** or **spiritual**, let **him recognize** that the things which I write to you are the Lord's commandment.*

Anyone could easily validate a Corinthian's claim to being a **prophet** or **spiritual**.

- He could do so by seeing if he or she **acknowledged that what Paul had written was authoritative** because he was an apostle of the Lord.
- Submission to apostolic authority was the test, not speaking in tongues.
- Submissiveness to the apostles and their teaching was an expression of submission to the Lord Himself (cf. 7:10, 25).

It still is.

³⁸ *But if anyone does not recognize this, he is not recognized.*

1. The Corinthians should not recognize as a prophet or as a person under the control of the Holy Spirit anyone who refused to acknowledge the apostle's authority.
2. Failure to recognize the Lord as the source of Paul's teaching would lead to that person's failure to be recognized.
(i.e., acknowledged with approval) by the Lord (cf. 8:2-3)

39 Therefore, my brethren, desire earnestly to prophesy, and do not forbid to speak in tongues.

"Desire earnestly to prophesy" repeats the imperative with which Paul began (v. 1).

Paul heartily encouraged the exercise of the gift of prophecy, but he only permitted the gift of speaking in tongues with certain qualifiers.

⁴⁰ *But all things must be done **properly** and in an **orderly manner**.*

Whatever form spiritual manifestations may take in the assembly, let all who take part ask themselves, “*Will it be in love, will it be for edification, will it be according to **divine order**?*”

The foundational principles that should underlie what takes place in church meetings are these:

1. **Christians should do everything in a decent and orderly manner,**
2. **everything should be edifying (v. 26),**
3. **and a spirit of peace should prevail (v. 33).**

