

## The Power of a Woman's Voice

### I. Introduction

When we talk about a woman's voice, we are not merely speaking of the tone and pitch of her voice. We are talking about influence and empowerment. In fact, if we women would just focus on ways our voices can empower, we'd enjoy our gender more!

Like males, women want to be appreciated for their brains, work ethics, spiritual progress, even contributions to a church, yet women can be careless with their words. Women even try to silence other women whose voices command respect (or whose voices they just don't want to hear). That's brutal!

Though a woman's voice had a role in sin entering into the world (Gen. 3:17), this study will primarily focus on women who used their voices wisely, and the fact that our Lord and others gave women a voice.

**Question: Have other women ever attempted to silence you? How so?**

- II. Women silencing women. Ever heard anyone (or maybe you) say to or about another woman:
  - 1. "She needs to just shut up."
  - 2. "Don't no body wanna hear her."
  - 3. "People are tired of hearing that same woman."
  - 4. "She don't know what she talkin' about."
  - 5. Ways to silence a woman's voice: Injustice, Insults, Overwork, Domestic violence and abuse, Murder (character assassination)

**Question: How can character assassination silence a woman?**

- III. Eve – A Voice that Changed the World for the Worse
  - 1. Not much is said about Eve's voice, but God makes mention of it in addressing Adam in Genesis 3:17. "Then to Adam He said, 'Because **you have listened to the voice of your wife** ... cursed is the ground because of you ...'"
  - 2. So Eve didn't just extend the fruit to Adam. She **SAID** something; as a result, Adam disobeyed God and ate – and the entire human race inherited a sinful nature at birth (Read Rom. 5:12).
  - 3. One of the curses God levied on Eve (and all women) was: "... your desire will be for your husband, and he will rule over you" (Gen. 3:16).
    - a. In his Study Bible, John MacArthur wrote: "Because of sin and the curse, the man and woman will face struggles in their own relationship. Sin has turned the

harmonious system of God-ordained roles into distasteful struggles of self-will. Lifelong companions, husbands and wives, will need God's help getting along as a result. The woman's desire will be to lord it over her husband, but the husband will rule by divine design (Eph. 5:22-25)" (pg. 21).

- IV. "Death and life are in **the power of the tongue**, And those who love it will eat its fruit" (Prov. 18:21).

**Question: Discuss a time when your tongue was an instrument of life (to encourage, uplift, etc.).**

**Question: Now discuss a time when your tongue was an instrument of death (maybe death to a once healthy relationship, someone's reputation, self-worth, etc.).**

- V. An Historical look at Women and their voices in the Old Testament
1. Sarah and the internal voice (that God can hear!). Gen. 18:9-17.
  2. Job's wife and the poison tongue. Job 2:9-10. (Notice phrases: **speak as one of the foolish women speaks, did not sin with his lips...**)
  3. Bathsheba and the persuasive, noble voice. I Kings 11-22.
    - a. Bathsheba had obviously earned respect as a woman whose voice was respected.
    - b. Is it better to be attractive or respected for speaking wisely?
  4. Jezebel – the treacherous voice. I Kings 19:1-2; 21:1-4, 7-10, 15
    - a. Writing is a voice. Jezebel wrote a lie that led to murder!
    - b. Be careful what you write, for it is like speaking aloud.

- VI. A look at women and their voices in the New Testament

**1. Jesus gave women a voice.**

- i. Mary Magdalene, first to proclaim the resurrection of the Christ. Read John 20:1, 17-18
  - a. Read *Leaders in Heels*, "Mary and the Great Commission," pgs. 105-106.
  - b. Jesus elevated women in society. Read *Leaders in Heels*, Pg 93-94
- ii. Priscilla, with a teacher's voice, instructed Apollos. Acts 18:26, Rom. 16:3, I Corin. 16:19

**Question: What would happen if all older women remained silent, stepped aside, and allowed younger women to do all the serving, teaching, and praying in a local church?**

**Question: Are younger women who try to silence the voices of older women silencing their own voice? How so?**

VII. The voices of older women

1. Paul gave older women a voice, a ministry, to younger women. Titus 2:3-5
2. In this generation, some younger women resent older women. Yet, in His Word, God gave older women a voice, a ministry to disciple younger women. Those who try to silence this ministry invite divine discipline into their lives.
3. I Tim. 2:11-12: Paul forbade women from being the primary teacher in a church assembly, i.e., pastor-teachers. He did not forbid them from using their spiritual gift to teach the Word in appropriate “conditions and circumstances” (MacArthur, pgs. 1832 & 1833; Tony Evans Study Bible, pg. 1433).

VIII. Scriptures about how to use our words, our speech

1. Be slow to speak, quick to listen. James 1:19
2. Let your words be few before the throne. Eccl. 5:2
3. Speech seasoned with grace. Col. 4:6
4. Euodia and Syntyche in Phil 4:2-3. (Think their spat might have involved their voices?) “...Help these women,” the Apostle Paul wrote!
5. If a woman is able to control her tongue, she will be able to control her body. James 3:2

IX. Points to ponder

1. Women must learn to focus less on prohibitions and more on freedoms.
2. If a woman is bitter, jealous, contrary, resentful, it is impossible for her voice to utter words of wisdom, comfort, and encouragement (without coming off as shrill and hypocritical).
3. Societies / entities that aim to silence women suffer consequences.
4. It is NOT as we grow in Bible knowledge, but as we grow in our love for the Lord that our voices become healing to troubled souls.
5. A woman who wants to be appreciated for her intellect and words must take care to first nourish her spirit and soul with scriptural meditation and time walking in the power of the Holy Spirit.
6. It takes a while for a person to begin to use their voice for the good of others.