

# Does the Bible Oppose Women in Leadership?

Philip B. Payne, Ph.D. The University of Cambridge

Author: *Man and Woman, One in Christ*

*The Bible vs. Biblical Womanhood*

Teacher: Cambridge, Trinity, Gordon-Conwell, Bethel, Fuller

# 1. The Bible teaches male headship

This is based on English translations of 1 Corinthians 11:3:

**"man is the head of woman"**

In English the word **"head"** often implies **authority over**

In Greek Paul meant, "the man is the **source** of woman"

Adam was the source from whom God formed Eve

# 1. "Male headship"

Church fathers overwhelmingly interpret all three occurrences of "head" in 1 Corinthians 11:3 to mean *source*, not *authority*

Cyril of Alexandria (died 444), *de recta fide ad Arcadium et Marinam* 1.1.5.5(2).63:

"The **source** of man [is] the Creator God. Thus we say that "the **head** of every man is Christ," for man **was made** through him and brought into existence ... "And the **head** of woman is the man," **because she was taken out** of his flesh and so indeed has him as her **source**. Similarly, "the **head** of Christ is God," because he is **from** him according to nature: for the Word was begotten out of God the Father.

# 1. "Male headship"

Cyril of Alexandria, *de recta fide ad Pulcheriam et Eudociam* 5<sup>2</sup>.131D:

"Of our race he became the first **head, which is source**,... Christ ... has been appointed **head, which is source** of those who through him are being formed anew

... he himself our **source, which is head** ... For the Word, by nature God, was begotten from him. **Because the head means the source** ... The man is said to be the **head of woman, for she was taken out of him.**"

Theodore of Mopsuestia (ca. 350–428), *Commentary on 1 Corinthians* 11:3:

"we regard Adam **head, from whom we have received existence** ... we regard Christ **head, from whom we have existence** free from suffering. He speaks similarly of the woman from the man. since she has **received existence from him.**"

# 1. "Male headship"

Athanasius (ca. 296–373) quotes the Arian *Symb. Sirm. 1 anath. 26* (PG 26:740B):

"For the **head, which is the source** of all things, is the Son; and the **head, which is the source** of Christ is God; for thus we reverently lift up all things to the One without beginning, the **source** of everything that exists through the Son."

Athanasius, *Syn. Armin. 26.3.35* quotes the "Macrostich" Arian Confession (344 CE)

"the Son to have been generated before ages, and in no wise to be ingenerate himself like the Father, but to have the Father who generated him **as his source**—

**'The head of Christ is God'.**"

# 1. "Male headship"

Cosmas Indicopleustes, (sixth century) *Topographia Christiana* 5.209 (PG 88:224A):

"For just as Adam is **head** of all people in this world, **because he is their cause**  
and

father, in this way also is the Lord Christ according to the flesh **head** of the church  
and the **father of the age to come**"

Cyrillus Hierosolymitanus (died 386), *catech.* 11.14:

"Neither is the source two. But the Father is **head** of the Son, the **source** is one"

# 1. "Male headship"

Eusebius (ca. 265–339), *Eccl. Theol.* 1.11.2–3:

The great apostle teaches that God is head of the Son himself, and the Son of the church, in one place saying, "God is the head of Christ," and in another saying concerning the Son, "and he gave him, head over all things, to the church, which is his body." Therefore, he [the Son] would be the **originator and head** of the church, **and the Father of him** [the Son]. Thus, the one God is Father of the only begotten Son, and the one head even of Christ himself. Since there is one **source and head**, how could there be two gods? Is not that one alone, the one above whom no one is higher? Neither does he [the Son] claim any other **cause** of himself, but he has acquired the familial, unbegun, unbegotten deity from the monarchical authority, and he [God] has given to the Son his own divinity and life; who through him **caused all things to exist.**

# 1. "Male headship"

Photius (ninth century):

"For Christ is the **head** of us who believe ... **being made by him** ... But the **head** of Christ is the Father, **as procreator and progenitor** and of like substance with him.

And the **head** of the woman is the man because he is her **procreator and progenitor** and of like substance with her"

"Ambrosiaster (c. 375):

"God is the **head** of Christ **because he begat him**; Christ is the **head** of the man **because he created him**, and the man is the **head** of the woman **because she was taken from his side**"



# 1. "Male headship"

"Head" meaning "source" is commonly listed in Greek dictionaries since the 12<sup>th</sup> century

"Authority" was **not** an established **meaning** of the Greek word for "**head**" *kephalē*

Liddell Scott Jones, *Greek-English Lexicon*, lists **49** figurative **meanings** of *kephalē*, but **none conveys "authority"**

# 1. "Male headship"

Most dictionaries of ancient secular Greek don't cite **any** example of **kephalē** meaning "**authority**"

The **earliest** native Greek citation meaning "**authority**" I've seen in a secular Greek dictionary is from the **fourth century AD**

Dictionaries identify the meaning "**authority**" as **Byzantine** (LSJ) or **Medieval** (Dhimitrakou)

# 1. "Male headship"

"**Zeus the head** ..." is by far the **most commonly cited** metaphorical use of "head" near Paul's time

"Zeus the **head**" parallels "Zeus himself **first cause** of everything" in the oldest Greek literary papyrus, 340 to 320 B.C., the **Derveni Papyrus**, in **Orphic fragment 21**, and in writings by **Proclus**, AD 5 *Commentary on Plato's Timaeus* [28C] 1:313 line 21 and 23b, **Stobaeus**, AD 5 *Eclog.* 1.23.2 and 6, **Porphyrius** AD 3, and **Eusebius** AD 4 *Praep. ev.* 3.9.2.

Scholia explain that Zeus the **head** "is himself **the cause of all things**" and "**is the source, as the producing cause**, and he is the end as the final cause" Kern, *Orphicorum*, 2:91, citing "Adnotat Scholiasta p. 451 Bekk. ... Cetera v. fr. 22."

# 1. "Male headship"

Some of its citations of "Zeus the head ..." end, "**from Zeus all things exist**":

*Orphic fragment 168*

Pseudo-Aristotle, *On the Cosmos* 7 p. 401 at 27–30

emphasizing that Zeus is the source from whom all things come into existence.

Citations of "Zeus the head" by **Plutarch** *De Def. orac.* 436D.8–9 (48.379.T.9); *Moralia* 5:491; *Comm. not.* 31.385, 1074E, **Josephus** *C. Ap.* 2.190 Achilles Tatius, *fr.* 81.29, 32–3, and **Proclus**, *Theology* 6.8.363

**substitute "source" for "head."**

# 1. "Male headship"

The standard New Testament Greek Dictionary (BDAG)

*kephalē* entry is chuck full of **errors**

**None** of its **alleged instances** of "head" meaning "superior rank" in secular Greek actually mean this

The only authority BDAG cites for "head" **not** meaning "source" (J. Fitzmyer) **affirms the meaning "source"**

# 1. "Male headship"

The Greek translation of the Hebrew Scriptures widely used in Paul's day confirms that "authority" **was not an established meaning of "head"**

It almost **always** translates Hebrew references to a physical head with *head* (*kephalē*) but **almost never** when "head" means "leader"

**English versions translate most of the 180 cases**  
where the Hebrew word for "head" means "leader": "**head**"

# 1. "Male headship"

LXX Greek Old Testament uses *kephalē* clearly as a metaphor meaning "leader" to translate **only 1 of the**

**180** cases where "head" (Hebrew *ro'sh*) means "leader"

# 1. "Male headship"

All other alleged cases were added by Origen in the 3<sup>rd</sup> century

are explained in context to mean something other than leader

or are translated *eis kephalēn* "as head" which Greek readers could understand to mean "like a head" rather than "is head"



# 1. "Male headship"

**None** of Paul's 12 "head" metaphors require the meaning "**authority**"

**Ten** naturally convey "**source**"

The other **two** naturally convey "**apex**"

# 1. "Male headship"

**Seven of the ten** people Romans 16:1–16 names as Paul's colleagues in ministry **are women:**

16:1-2 "**Phoebe**, deacon of the church of Cenchrea"  
and "leader of many, including me."

16:3 "**Priscilla** and Aquila, my co-workers in Christ"

16:7 "Andronicus and **Junia** ... outstanding among the apostles"

16:6 "**Mary**, ... 12 **Tryphena** and **Tryphosa**, ... 12 **Persis**...

# 1. "Male headship"

The standard New Testament Greek Dictionary (BDAG) says *prostatis* means "a woman in a supportive role, patron, benefactor"

None of the examples it lists clearly mean any of these

*Prostatis* comes from the verb *proistēmi*, "to exercise a position of leadership."

*Prostatis* combines "in rank before" and "standing"

# 1. "Male headship"

*prostatis* is the feminine form of the word for the "president" of a society, including synagogues.

Every other New Testament word that combines these two words, "in rank before" and "standing," and has a meaning that fits Romans 16:2, is about leaders

# 1. "Male headship"

Paul identifies **Junia**, like her husband, as "**outstanding among the apostles**"  
The unanimous credible testimony of the church's **first millennium** identifies Junia  
as a woman (Epp 31–36, 57)

**No Greek manuscript** unambiguously identifies Junia as a man (Epp 45–49)

**No early translation** identifies Junia as a man (Epp 23–24)

Junia was a common Latin woman's name (Epp 54, 57)

**No credible instance of Junias** has ever been found (Epp 24, 27, 34, 44, 57)

Epiphanius identifies both Junias and Prisca as men, so is not credible

Eldon Epp, *Junia: The First Woman Apostle* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 2005) 110–21

Richard Bauckham, *Gospel Women* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2002) 165–186

# 1. "Male headship"

Aegidius of Rome (ca. AD 1300) is the first reliably documented instance treating this as a man's name, Juliam (Epp 35)

The male name Junias first become popular with Luther's translation (Epp 38)

Junias was **first published in a Greek NT** by Alford in **1852** (Epp 23)

Junias was first published in English in 1833 (Epp 24, 66)

The Junianus name **contraction theory** is not only **unattested**, but standard contraction conventions would not result in the NT spelling (Epp 23–31, 39–44)

There simply is **no basis** for the seemingly arbitrary change to "Junias" (Epp 39)

Its only textual variant is **Julia** (ⲓⲗⲓⲁ 6 ar b vgmss bo), a more common woman's name

# 1. "Male headship"

Cranfield, Dunn, and Cervin argue that Junia's description "can only mean '**noteworthy among the apostles.**' "

Cervin, "Junia(s)," 463; and similarly, e.g., Epp, *Junia*, 69–78  
Cranfield, *Romans*, 2:789; Dunn, *Romans* 9–16, 894–95.

This is the way all surviving **patristic commentary** treats it

Paul of all people was not impressed with **name dropping**

"Noteworthy" applies naturally to **those distinguished** among the wider group of apostles in the early church

It is not natural to suppose that the apostles were **known** to have this **consensus** of judgment regarding Andronicus and Junia

# 1. "Male headship"

Every example of *en* meaning "in the eyes of" listed in the standard NT Dictionary

BAG 258, I. 3; BDAG 327 1e includes "in the eyes of"

There is **no** mention of "**their eyes**" in Romans 16:7

Eldon Jay Epp (*Junia*, 69–78)

Richard Bauckham (*Gospel Women*, 165–80)

Linda L. Belleville ("A Re-examination of Romans 16.7 in Light of Primary Source

Materials." *NTS* 51 (2005): 231–49

have thoroughly answered the "in the eyes of" interpretation

of Michael H. Burer and Daniel B. Wallace ("Was Junia Really an Apostle?

A Re-examination of Rom 16.7," *NTS* 47 [2001]: 76–91)



## 2. "Wives submit to your own husbands" Ephesians 5:22

The earliest manuscripts of **Ephesians 5:22** have **no verb "submit"**

Ⓜ<sup>46</sup> B

Clement of Alexandria, *Stromata* 4.8.64,

Origen, Theodore of Mopsuestia, Jerome

"submitting one to another out of reverence for Christ,  
wives to your own husbands ..."

2. “Wives submit to your own husbands” Ephesians 5:22

The **reciprocal** pronoun *allēlois* requires reciprocal (2-way) submission, so it can't refer to submission to superior rank

“submission in the sense of **voluntary yielding in love**”

BDAG 1042

2. "Wives submit to your own husbands" Ephesians 5:22

After "**submit**" first appears in Ephesians 5:22 circa AD 360 in Codex Sinaiticus (א), **no** surviving manuscript ever **removed** "**submit**"

Therefore, it is not plausible that "**submit**" was removed from **all** the earliest surviving manuscripts

2. "Wives submit to your own husbands" Ephesians 5:22

**Christ is the model for all believers** in giving himself up for us Ephesians 5:1–2

Ephesians 4:16 explains that Christ as "head" is the **source** of the body's growth

Ephesians 5:23 : "Christ **head** of the church,  
**Apposition** he **savior** of the body"

# Equality in Marriage: 1 Corinthians 7

## Mutual:

7:2 possession

7:3 conjugal rights

7:4 authority over the other's body

7:5 obligation to the other

7:10–13 prohibition of divorce

7:14 consecration and sanctification

# Equality in Marriage: 1 Corinthians 7

## Mutual:

7:15 freedom if deserted

7:16 potentially saving influence

7:28 choice in marriage

7:33–34a focus on pleasing the other

7:32, 34b focus on pleasing Christ

# Mutual Submission in Marriage

1 Timothy 5:14 tells wives to "**rule their homes.**"

1 Peter 3:7:

**"Husbands, in the same way, submit yourselves to your own wives,**

dwelling together wisely, recognizing her as a weaker feminine vessel, and lavish them with honor as coheirs with you of the so that gracious gift of life, your prayers won't be hindered."

BDAG 208, ***gynaikeios***, "feminine."

# Mutual Submission in Marriage

1 Peter 3:7:

“**submit yourselves** for the Lord’s sake to every human authority” (2:13)

“Slaves, in reverent fear of God **submit yourselves** to your masters” (2:18)

“Wives, in the same way **submit yourselves** to your own husbands” (3:1)

“Husbands in the same way [**submit yourselves** to your own wives]” (3:7)



3. "I do not permit a woman to teach or to have authority over a man" 1 Timothy 2:12

Taking this as a universal prohibition ignores the focus of this letter on the crisis of false teaching in Ephesus

The **only** people 1 Timothy identifies as **deceived** by the false teachers are **women**

This letter addresses this specific **local** problem

Furthermore, this **translation is doubtful** for **four reasons**

3. "I do not permit a woman to teach or to have authority over a man" 1 Timothy 2:12

1. *Authentein* is best translated: "**to seize authority**"
2. Paul typically uses the conjunction *oude* to join two elements to convey **a single idea**
3. "**I am not permitting**" is normally not universal
4. Treating this as a **permanent** prohibition **contradicts** the Bible's **many** affirmations of women teaching

3. "I do not permit a woman to teach or to have authority over a man" 1 Timothy 2:12

Paul permitted women to teach elsewhere:

Acts 18:26 "**Priscilla** ... explained the way of God more accurately"

Acts 21:8–9 "Philip ... had **four daughters** who prophesied"

1 Corinthians 11:5 "**every woman** who prays or prophesies..."

1 Corinthians 14:5, 24, 26 "**each has a word of instruction,**" 31  
14:39 "**Desire to prophesy**"

Colossians 3:16 to all: "**teach** and admonish one another with all

3. "I do not permit a woman to teach or to have authority over a man" 1 Timothy 2:12

Paul permitted women to teach elsewhere:

1 Timothy 3:1–2 "**Whoever** aspires to be an overseer ... must be ... able to teach"

3. "I do not permit a woman to teach or to have authority over a man" 1 Timothy 2:12

Titus 2:3 commands "teach the **women elders...**  
**to be teachers of what is excellent**"

The word for "female elders" (*presbytidas*) in Titus 2:3 is precisely the same form of the same word that the fourth-century Council of Laodicea canon XI used to forbid the appointment of "**female elders**"

In other documents besides the Bible, *presbytidas* also means "female presbyter"

My new Zondervan book explains **seven reasons** showing that Titus 2:1–8 addresses church **elders**

3. "I do not permit a woman to teach or to have authority over a man" 1 Timothy 2:12

Paul permitted women to teach elsewhere:

2 Timothy 2:2 "entrust **reliable people** who will be qualified to **teach** (*didaxai*)"

2 Timothy 1:5; 3:14–16 "your faith, which first lived in **your grandmother Lois** and in **your mother Eunice** ... from infancy you have known the Holy Scriptures"

Cf. Hebrews 3:1, 12; 5:12 "brothers and **sisters**...by now you ought to be **teachers**"

# Scripture revealed through woman

God revealed inspired **Scripture through women:**

- Exodus 15:21 the song of **Miriam**
- Judges 5:2–31 the song of **Deborah**
- 1 Samuel 2:1–10 **Hannah's** prayer
- 1 Samuel 25:24–31 **Abigail's** prophecy and blessing of David's enduring house
- Proverbs 31 'inspired' by King **Lemuel's mother**
- Luke 1:25, 42–45 **Elizabeth's** blessing
- Luke 1:46–55 **Mary's** Magnificat

3. "I do not permit a woman to teach or to have authority over a man" 1 Timothy 2:12

1 Timothy 2:12 addresses a specific problem of **deceived women in Ephesus** conveying false doctrine. It prohibits women in that church from **seizing authority to teach a man**

Women teaching with recognized teaching authority, like Priscilla, would not be **seizing** it

Paul does **not** prohibit **all women** from **teaching or having authority over men**



4. "Only males were elders, overseers, or pastors"

Apart from Christ (Hebrews 13:20; 1 Peter 2:25; 5:4)

the **NT does not name anyone**

**overseer** *episkopos*

or **pastor** *poimēn*

4. "Only males were elders, overseers, or pastors"

- **John** refers to himself twice as "**the elder**"

(2 John 1; 3 John 1)

- **Peter** (1 Peter 5:1) "**the fellow-elder and witness of Christ's sufferings**"

These do not specify a local church and may highlight their special status as **eyewitnesses**

4. "Only males were elders, overseers, or pastors"

The Bible gives **only one** person a local church leadership title:

**"Phoebe, deacon of the church of Cenchreae"** Romans 16:1

4. "Only males were elders, overseers, or pastors"

Paul encourages **all** believers to aspire the office of overseer by stating:

"**Whoever** aspires the office of **overseer** desires a noble task" 1 Timothy 3:1

4. "Only males were elders, overseers, or pastors"

- 1 Timothy 3's and Titus 1's subject is "**anyone**"

- There is **no "he" "him" or "his" or any other limitation to men** in either list in Greek, contrary to most English translations

- CEV & CEB have **no "he" "him" or "his"**

## 4. "Only males were elders, overseers, or pastors"

- Douglas **Moo** and Thomas **Schreiner** acknowledge that "man of one woman" does **not exclude women**
- **idiomatic phrase** for **fidelity in marriage**
- qualifications for "**women**" are included under deacons (1 Timothy 3:11) So "**man of one woman**"  
in the very next verse **must not exclude women**

4. "Only males were elders, overseers, or pastors"

- **John Chrysostom:** "'men of one woman' also applies to women deacons."
- Greek masculine forms **do not exclude women**
- Tim Friberg identified **7500 to 8000 masculine** forms in the New Testament that either **must or could include women**
- **Gordon Hugenberger:** it's common for biblical requirements for men **also to apply to women**

5. Did Paul write, "Let women be silent in the churches"?

**Ten** reasons from manuscripts and **eleven** reasons from the words in these verses convince me that they were not in Paul's original letter

I will now focus on just **three** of these 21 reasons



5. "Let women be silent in the churches" 1 Corinthians 14:34–35

1. 1 Corinthians 14:34–35 **contradicts:**

1 Corinthians 14:31 "**you can all prophesy** ... so that everyone may be instructed"

1 Corinthians 14:39 "brothers and **sisters**, be eager to **prophesy**"

1 Corinthians 11:5 "But **every woman** who prays or **prophesies**..."

5. "Let women be silent in the churches" 1 Corinthians 14:34–35

2. **No other passage** nearly this long occurs in manuscripts of Paul's letters **in two separate locations this far apart** with no obvious reason

3. The oldest **Bible marks these verses** as a **spurious** later addition

5. Did Paul write, "Let women be silent in the churches"?

Many say that Paul silences **only** disruptive speech  
or **only** judging prophecies

By these interpretations, verse **34 permits speech**  
**that** verse **35 prohibits:**

"asking questions out of a desire to learn"

5. Did Paul write, "Let women be silent in the churches"?

"**Western**" manuscripts **D E** (= 0319 a 9<sup>th</sup> century copy of D) **F G**

93 it<sup>a, b, d, e, f, g</sup> **Ambrosiaster** (AD 366–384) **Sedulius Scottus**

plus the **non-"Western"** 8<sup>th</sup> century Vulgate manuscript R

(**Reginensis** in the Vatican)

**88\*** has 14:34–35 after 14:40 It was evidently copied from a  
**non-"Western"** manuscript lacking 14:34–35

# "Western" Codex D (06) Claromontanus

Ὅστε ἀλλήλοισι ζηλοῦτε ἄλλήλους  
τὸ προφητεῖν φωνάζοντες ὡς  
καὶ τὸ ἄλλοι ἐπιλάθωσιν ἵνα  
μὴ κωλύετε τὴν ἰσχυρίαν  
πάντα δὲ ἐν ἰσχυρίᾳ καὶ κατὰ  
τὴν ἐσθῶν  
ἀγγυλιὰ καὶ οὐμῶν ἵνα ἴσως  
ἐπιλαθῶσιν κληρονομία τῶν  
οὐ γὰρ ἐπιτρέτε τὰ ἑαυτῶν  
ἀλλὰ ἐν ἰσχυρίᾳ ἵνα ἴσως  
ἀλλὰ ὑποτάσσεται ἡ  
κλῆροσ καὶ ὁ ἰσχυρὸς λατρεῖται  
ἐπιλαθῶσιν ἵνα ἴσως  
ἐπιλαθῶσιν τὸ ὑσχυρὸν ἵνα ἴσως  
ἀσχυροὶ γὰρ ἐστὶν ἡ ἀγγυλιὰ  
ἐν ἰσχυρίᾳ ἵνα ἴσως  
Γνωρίζω δὲ ὑμῖν ἅλα φωνάζοντες  
τὸ ὑσχυρὸν ἵνα ἴσως

Capit xv

5. Did Paul write, "Let women be silent in the churches"?

Bengel's First Principle:

"The text that best explains the emergence of all other texts **is most likely original**"

5. Did Paul write, "Let women be silent in the churches"?

No manuscript of any letter by Paul moves any other block of text nearly this far without an obvious reason

Ulrich Schmid: scribes were inclined to put "marginal material into the main text"

5. Did Paul write, "Let women be silent in the churches"?

Codex Vaticanus has **20** instances of old text  
in the margins of Matthew

**All but 3** are in the body text of virtually  
every

subsequent manuscript



5. Did Paul write, "Let women be silent in the churches"?

Greeks believed strongly that women should be silent in public congregations

So it's hardly surprising that a reader sometime before AD 200 added in the margin the

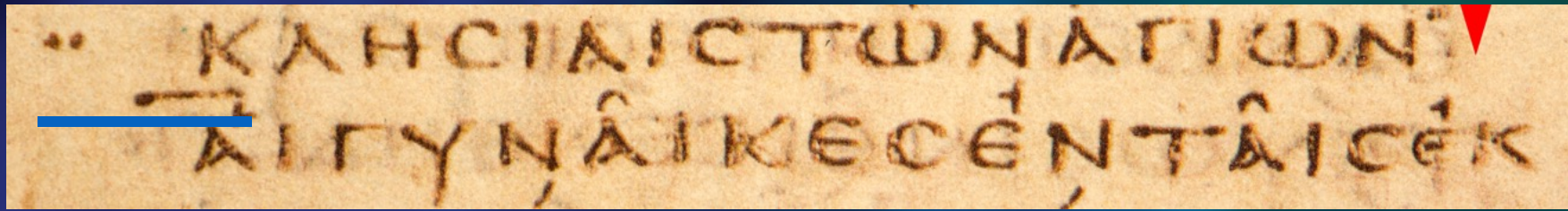
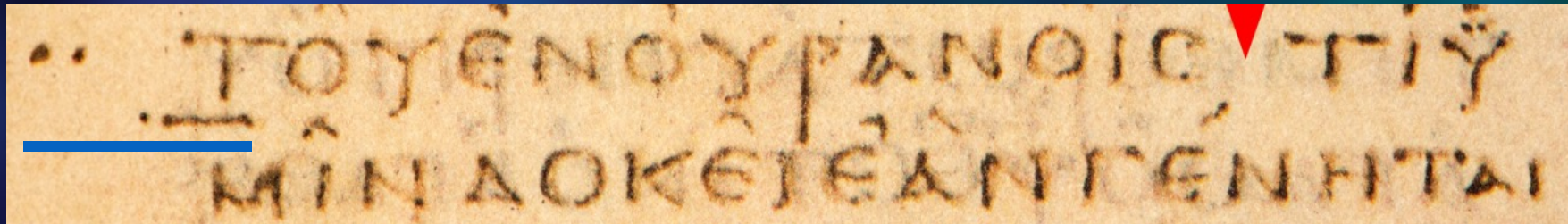
**"conventional wisdom"** these verses express

5. Did Paul write, "Let women be silent in the churches"?

Scribal convention argues that someone first wrote these two verses in the **margin** of a manuscript, and later copyists inserted them either after verse 33 or 40

Something **customary** is more likely to occur than something so **extraordinary** that no other instance is known

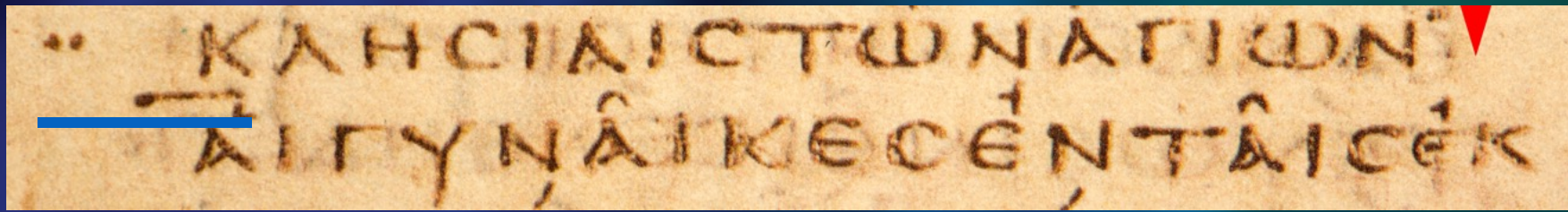
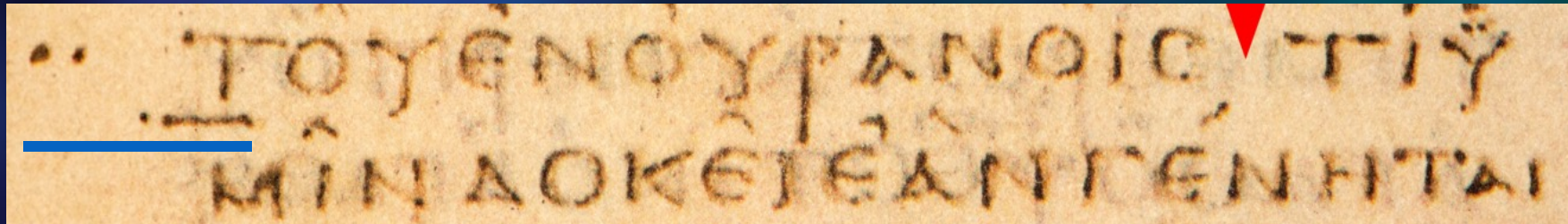
Vaticanus marks 14:34–35 as a spurious interruption



This symbol signals a **spurious block of text**

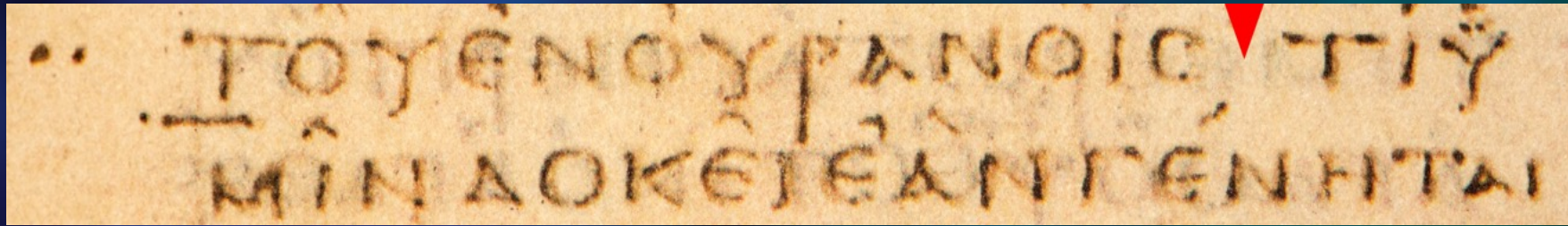
**Red Triangles** identify the **gap** at the precise point  
where the original text was **interrupted**

Vaticanus marks 14:34–35 as a spurious interruption

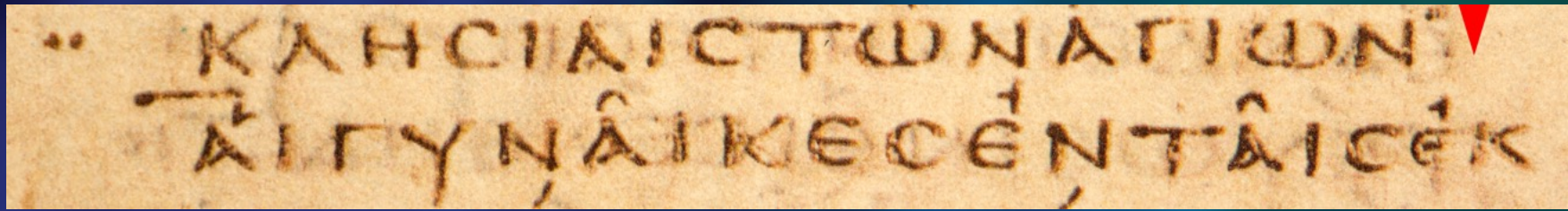


**15 times** in Vaticanus, this symbol identifies lines with a **gap** at the precise point the original text was interrupted

Vaticanus marks 14:34–35 as a spurious interruption



.. ΤΟΥ ΕΝΟΥΡΑΝΟΥΙΟΙΣ ΤΙΨ  
ΜΙΝ ΔΟΚΕΙΤΕ ΑΝ ΓΕΝΗΤΑΙ

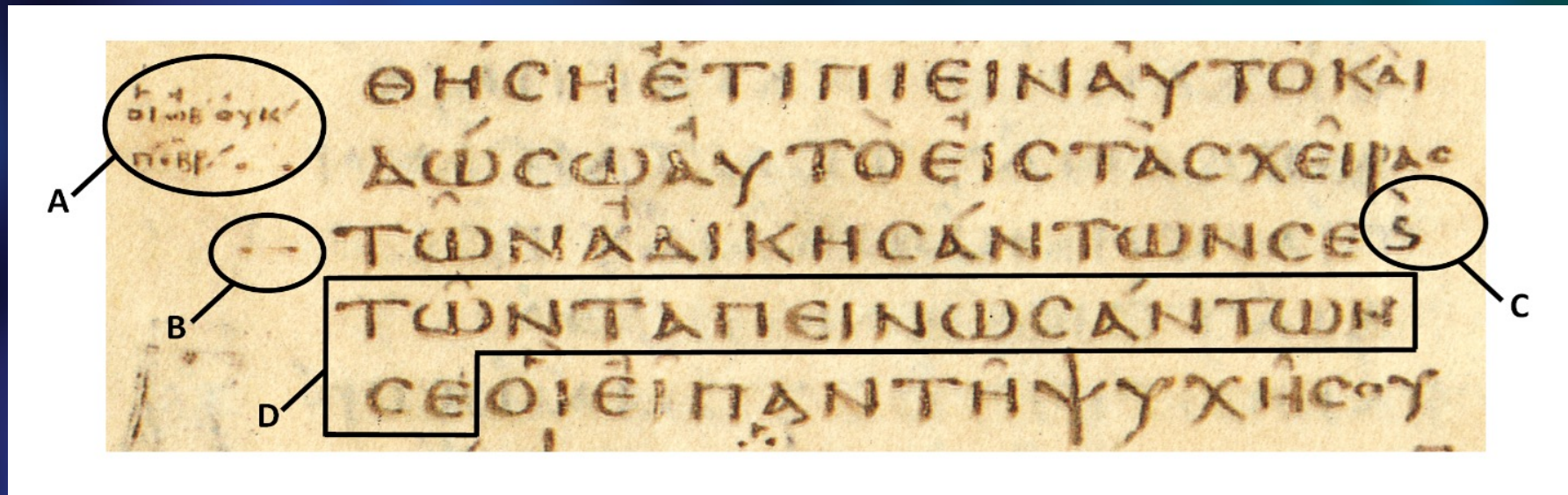


.. ΚΛΗΣΙΑΙΣ ΤΩΝ ΑΓΙΩΝ  
ΑΙ ΓΥΝΑΙΚΕΣ ΕΝ ΤΑΙΣ ΕΚ

Other manuscripts preserve interruptions of at least  
4 consecutive words **at all 15 gaps**

Such long interruptions occur **only once in 83.5 lines**  
of Vaticanus text. **Coincidence? Implausible!**

# Vaticanus marks 14:34–35 as a spurious interruption



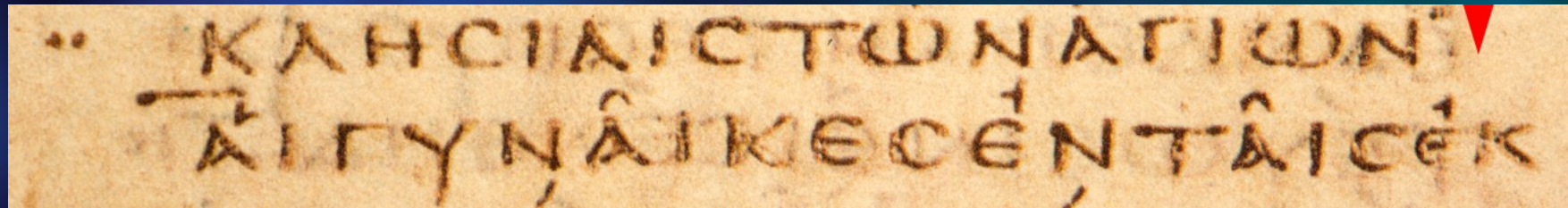
A Abbreviated Explanation of text added to Isaiah 51:23

B Horizontal bar

C Gap ("s" was not in the original text)

D Words Origen added to make the LXX match the Hebrew

Vaticanus marks 14:34–35 as a spurious interruption



Vaticanus's scribe's judgment should not be dismissed:

1. Both standard editions NA<sup>28</sup> UBS<sup>5</sup> agree with Vaticanus's scribe's judgment in every other case
2. Vaticanus's scribe had access to far more pre-Vaticanus text than we have today

**Vaticanus** marks them as spurious

Statements by **Clement of Alexandria** (c. 150–c. 215 CE)

**Irenaeus** and **The Acts of Paul and Thecla** written in the 100s

**Pseudo-Clement** probably writing in the 200s

**Victorinus** of Pettau (died c. 303–304) indicates 34–35's absence

**14:34–35 does not occur in all texts** as distinguished by their

separate manuscript symbols:

*om.* B<sup>2</sup>–88\* Fuldensis<sup>mg</sup> Cl Ir Vic

**No Apostolic Father cites 14:34–35**



Dan Wallace 'these verses occur in all witnesses to 1 Corinthians'

They're **not in Bishop Victor's witness** in Codex Fuldensis AD 546

doceo h̄s  
LXIII. MULIERES IN ECCLESIA  
CEANT NON EMPTERANT  
TURBARE ET LOQUI SED UT JLA  
ESSE SIC UT ILEX DICIT.  
Siquis autem uolunt discere  
redocant in uos uos in ter  
rocent. Turpe est enim  
mulieri loqui in ecclesia  
ANNA UOBIS UERBA AUDI PROCE  
SSIT NITIN UOS UOS PER  
UENIT. Siquis uidetur  
propheta esse aut spiri  
talis cognosce ut quales scri  
bo uobis quia dicitur in  
ANNA UOBIS UERBA AUDI PROCE  
SSIT NITIN UOS UOS PER  
UENIT. Siquis uidetur  
propheta esse aut spiri  
talis cognosce ut quales scri  
bo uobis quia dicitur in  
ORDINE FIANTE h̄s

DMX. Siquis autem uolunt  
RATI GNO RABITUR. Itaq  
FRATRES ACCUTANT IN PRO  
PHETARE ET LOQUI IN CUI  
NOLITE PROHIBERE. Oia  
NIA AUTEM HONESTE ET SE  
CUNDUM ORDINE FIANTE  
LXV. Notum autem est facio uobis  
FRATRES EUANGELIUM QUOD  
PRAEDICAUIT UOBIS QUOD ET  
ACCIPISTIS IN QUO ET ISTIS  
PER QUO ET SALUATI NI  
QUA RATIONE PRAEDICAUERIT

Dan Wallace 'they must have crept into ... the **original** document'

But 14:34–35's first citation was circa 200 by Tertullian

'**crept**' implies 'sneaky.' Insertion from margin was **scribal custom**

The **rapid universal adoption** of '**submit**' in Ephesians 5:22 shows

that a reader writing 14:34–35 in the margin of any manuscript of 1 Corinthians before late in the second century could **similarly**

5. Did Paul write, "Let women be silent in the churches"?

Joseph Fitzmyer "the **majority of commentators** today" No!

Kim Haines-Eitzen "**nearly all scholars** now" No!

David Bentley Hart "**almost certainly spurious**"

*BasisBibel* "probably **a later insertion ... contradicts** what Paul says in chapter 11"

5. Did Paul write, "Let women be silent in the churches"?

This symbol shows that Paul did not write 14:34–35, so did **not contradict** himself

The **original scribe** of Vaticanus **took great care** in copying manuscripts

The **Vaticanus Gospels text is so early** that it has virtually no sentence-ending periods

The Vaticanus Gospel's text is so early that it **does not include**

**any of the 13 blocks of spurious text** these symbols

## 6. Woman is Man's "Helper"

Genesis 2:18, 20 *'ēzer* = "**strength**, help, savior,  
rescuer, protector, might"

Elsewhere in Old Testament **16X** "**God is our help**"  
**3X** of a military protector

"as in front of him" *kěnegědô*

*kě* = as + *negěd* = in front of + *ô* = him

## 6. Woman is Man's "Helper"

Together this expression conveys:

"a strength as in front of him"  
(literal)

"a strength corresponding to him"  
(flowing)

## 7. "He will rule over you" Genesis 3:16

- A statement of what **will** result from the fall, **not** God's decree of what **should be**
- **Male rule comes from the fall**, not just harsh rule
- Both Hebrew Lexicons (*HALOT* 2:647–48 and *BDB* 605) analyze every OT occurrence of "rule" and list **no negative meaning** for it

7. "He will rule over you" Genesis 3:16

Since man's ruling over woman is a **result** of the fall, man must **not** have ruled over woman **before** the Fall

We should **not foster** any result of the fall, including man's rule over woman



# Objections to Equality Answered

The Bible Teaches:

1. Not male headship. Men and women should **share leadership**

2. **Submit to one another**

NOT just "wives submit to your husbands"

3. **Women may teach in church**

4. Paul encourages **all** believers to **aspire to the office of overseer**

**Phoebe** "deacon of the church of Cenchreae and leader of many"

# Objections to Equality Answered

The Bible Teaches:

5. **The Bible encourages women to speak in church**

6. Genesis 2:18 describes woman:

“I will make a **strength corresponding to him**”

NOT a subordinate “helper”

7. Genesis 3:16 “**He will rule over you**”

is something **NEW** resulting from the Fall

**NOT God's decree** of what should be

# Theological Principles Entail the Equality of Man & Woman

Man and woman are **equally**:

- created **in God's image**
- given **dominion** over the earth
- given the creation **blessing**
- given the creation **mandate**
- and are equally "**in Christ**"

# Theological Principles Entail the Equality of Man & Woman

- **Mutual submission** in the **church**
- Mutual submission in **marriage**
- The **oneness** of **Christ's body**
- The **priesthood of all believers**
- **Liberty** in Christ
- The **new creation**
- **Inaugurated** eschatology

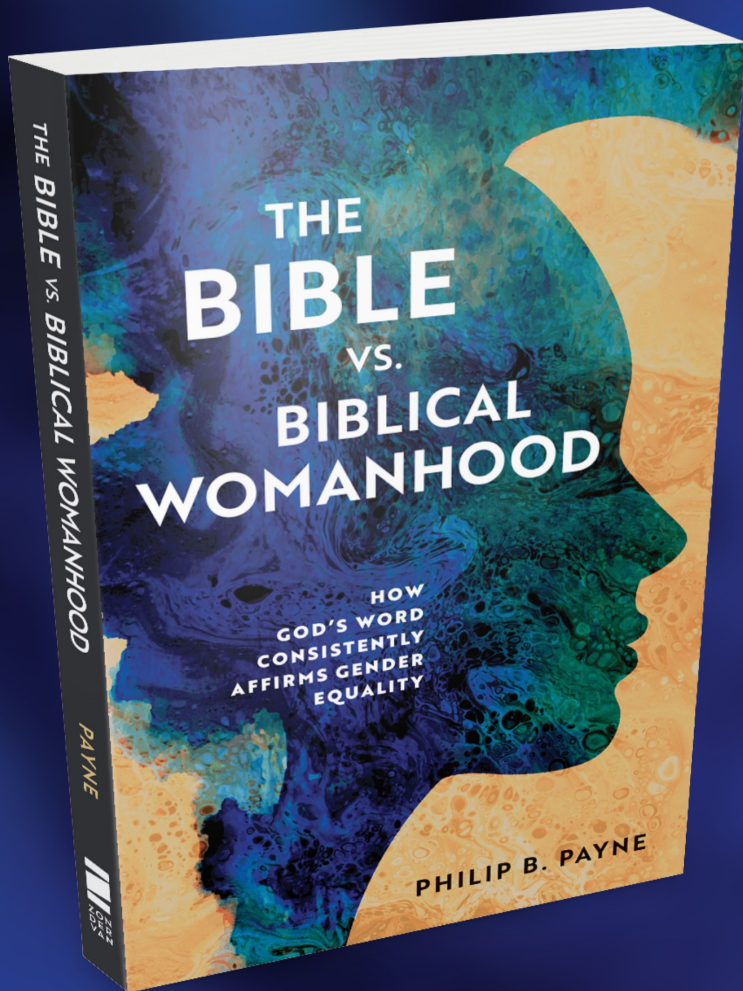
# Theological Principles Entail the Equality of Man & Woman

- The **Spirit gifts** all believers for ministry
- **Servant leadership** fits men and women
- “The important point, however, is that **woman** is **not separate from man**, nor is man separate from woman in the Lord” 1 Corinthians 11:11
- “There is **no male-female division** ... in Christ” Galatians 3:28

# Conclusion

- The Bible **approves** women in church leadership
- The Bible calls men and women to **share authority** and to **mutual submission**
- The Bible teaches the **equality of men and women** in the church and in the home

Want to dig deeper?



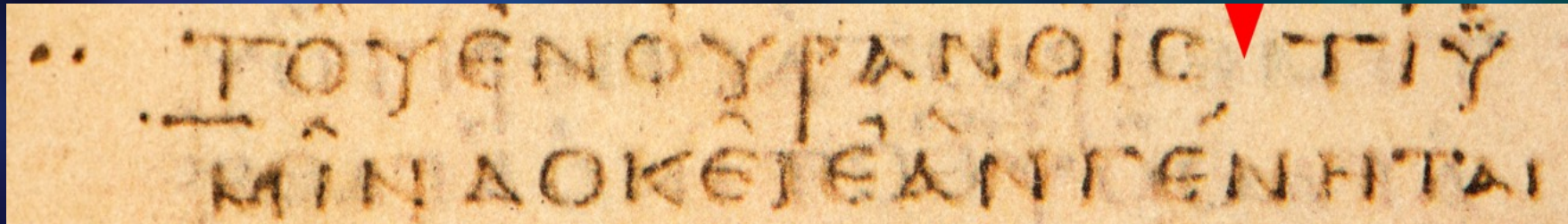
Find me on Twitter: [@philipbpayne](https://twitter.com/philipbpayne)

Read

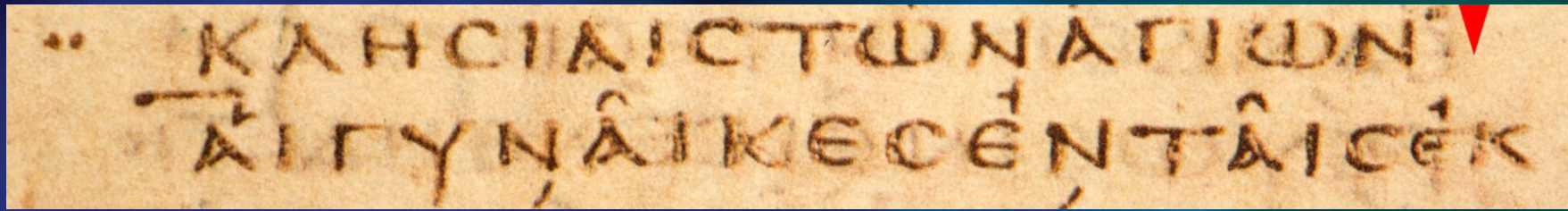
***The Bible vs. Biblical Womanhood***

Zondervan, 2023

Vaticanus marks 14:34–35 as a spurious interruption



.. ΤΟΥ ΕΝΟΥΡΑΝΟΙΟ ΤΙΨ  
ΜΙΝ ΔΟΚΕΤΕ ΑΝΤΙΓΕΝΗΤΑΙ



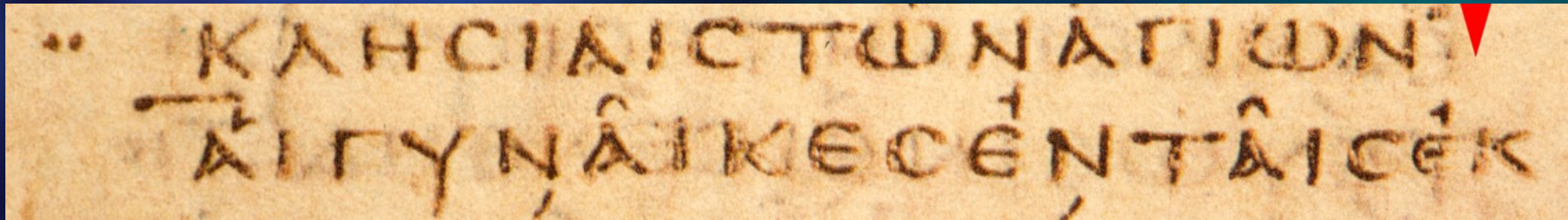
.. ΚΛΗΣΙΑΙΣ ΤΩΝ ΑΓΙΩΝ  
ΑΙ ΓΥΝΑΙΚΕΣ ΕΝ ΤΑΙΣ ΕΚ

The interruption is in the text of Vaticanus only here in 1 Corinthians 14. Why?

Scribe B copied the **Gospels** from a manuscript with a **much earlier text** than Vaticanus's epistles



Vaticanus marks 14:34–35 as a spurious interruption



Scribe B **faithfully copied the text** of the epistles without removing “let women be silent,” **but marked it as spurious**, later-added text, just like scribe B did 121 times in Vaticanus’s OT Prophets

## 8. “Only males were apostles”

- Jesus chose men **for symbolic parallel**, not to ban women leaders
- Luke 10:38–42 encouraged **female disciples** like Mary of Bethany
- John 20:14–18 commissioned Mary Magdalene to announce his resurrection and ascension

## 8. "Only males were apostles"

- Thomas Aquinas wrote that Mary Magdalene had the office of an apostle to the apostles
- Paul calls Junia "outstanding among the apostles" Romans 16:7

# 9. "Only males were priests"

- Deuteronomy 23:17's prohibition of cult prostitution provides **a cultural explanation for no women priests** in ancient Israel
- Exodus 19:6 The OT **ideal** was for **all** of Israel to be "A kingdom of **priests** and a holy nation"
- Isaiah 61:6 predicted a **future** when **all** of God's people "**Will be called priests** of the LORD, you will be named ministers of our God"

# 10. "The Creation Order Establishes Man's Priority"

Genesis's Creation Account Stresses Equality:

1:26–27 "God said, Let us make **mankind** in our image, in our likeness. So God created mankind in his own image, in the image of God he **created them**; **male and female** he created them. When God created mankind, he made **them** in the likeness of God"

1:26, 28–29, God gave **both dominion over the earth**

1:28; 5:2 "God **blessed them**" "And He **named them** 'Mankind'." Plurals are consistent throughout

# 10. "The Creation Order Establishes Man's Priority"

Genesis' Creation Account Stresses Equality:

2:23 same substance: "bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh"

2:24 In marriage they are "**united**" and "**one flesh**"

2:24 "a **man leaves his father and mother** and is united to his wife"

This is contrary to a male-centered culture

3:6–13 **Together** they face temptation and fail

**Both** hide from God      **Both** experience guilt

**Both** pass the blame

God speaks to **both** announcing specific consequences of their sin

**Both** are responsible for their own acts

## 11. "Old Testament Pattern of Male Leadership"

- God sent the prophetess **Miriam** "to lead" Israel  
Micah 6:4
- **Deborah** prophet, the highest leader in all Israel  
Judges 4:4–5
- Queen **Esther**, "Wrote with full authority  
Esther's decree confirmed these regulations"  
Esther 9:29–32

# 11. "Old Testament Pattern of Male Leadership"

- The leaders and the people accepted the prophet **Huldah**'s word as divinely revealed, sparking Israel's greatest revival

2 Kings 22:14 – 23:25; 2 Chronicles 34:22–35:19

- "would that **all** the Lord's people were prophets!" Numbers 11:29



## 12. "Women have Separate Roles"

1 Corinthians 11:11 "The important point, however, is that neither is woman **separate** from man, nor is man **separate** from woman in the Lord"

Context of Prophecy

Therefore, there must be **no gender-based separation** in church leadership

## 12. "Women have Separate Roles"

- Galatians 2:11–14; 3:28 Any **exclusion of women** as a class from participation in the church **is contrary to the gospel**
- Galatians 3:28 doesn't merely state that all can be saved. It calls for radically new social relations based on **equality in church**