

The Woman's Sphere

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Our recent national elections have brought to the fore the perennial question of woman's suffrage, or more particularly whether the Christian woman's calling is to vote.

There seems to be quite some disagreement on this point. It might, therefore, be interesting and instructive to listen in on a discussion Mary and Martha are having on this very question:

Martha: "I heard recently, Mary, that you don't vote because you believe it is not a Christian woman's calling to vote and I, being a much younger woman than you are, thought I'd ask you about it."

Mary: "Yes, Martha, that's true, I don't vote because I believe it's contrary to Scripture. I'm glad you asked me about it because it is alarming how many women in our own churches neglect or fail to see the scriptural place of the woman."

Martha: "I'll admit I don't see the principle and I have heard or read very little on these matters. Don't you think matters such as these, affecting our practical godliness, receive very little emphasis in the preaching and writing of most of our ministers?"

Mary: "Yes, the fact that this matter of the woman's proper sphere is so widely misunderstood is proof in itself. Our younger women especially, I presume, receive very little help in regard to some of these questions?"

Martha: "Well I voted because I think it is our duty to use the privilege we have received in this country."

Mary: "I don't believe you have used the proper Christian starting-point to arrive at your view. A Christian should always subject all his views and actions to the word of God before coming to a conclusion or a positive course of action. Our desire should be to know the will of the Lord in order that whatever we do may be pleasing in His sight. The government may impose duties and grant "privileges" to its citizens with which we cannot comply, or of which we cannot take "advantage".

Martha: "Oh, I know that the government isn't always a reliable guide for our Christian conduct, but in this case I don't see that a women's voting is contrary to God's will. I voted favoring clean government and an end to corruption and communism in high places. It may even be that very important questions affecting us as Christians may someday come up. Then we will certainly be happy that we may vote."

Mary: "Your reasoning reminds me of the Roman Catholic theory, that the end justifies the means, or as Scripture has it, to do evil that good may result. It is established by Scripture that it is not a woman's place to vote, it surely wouldn't do to recommend that she vote nevertheless, because the occasion demands it, or the seriousness of the question to be voted upon warrant it. God expects our obedience and He assured us that the results are safely left to Him."

Martha: "I somewhat see your point, Mary, and I assure you I don't want to do anything of which God disapproves." Mary: "I'm sure you don't and that's why I want to make plain to you that God has decreed a definite sphere for the man and a definite one for the women, and that the one is not to trespass on the sphere of the other. By this I don't mean that the man is superior to the women but that each has his God given sphere, the man having been created the head and the woman his helpmeet."

Martha: "Do you, then, think that by voting a woman steps outside of her own sphere and

trespasses on that which God assigned to the man?"

Mary: "Yes, when God created man to be the head and women to be his helpmeet, it implies that he is to rule and he is to speak with the authoritative voice, representing the woman and his own family. Gen. 2:24, speaking of man and woman's relationship says that they shall be one flesh and I Cor. 11:3 says that the head of every man is Christ and the head of the woman is the man and the head of Christ is God. Eph 5:22-24 says: "Wives submit yourselves unto your own husbands as unto the Lord. For the husband is the head of the wife even as Christ is the head of the Church; and he is the savior of the body. Therefore as the church is subject unto Christ so let the wives be to their own husbands in everything. Now Scripture presents and pictures it thus— Christ is the head of His church and the church is his body. They are one. Christ only rules and speaks authoritatively. The church does not speak authoritatively (as Rome falsely teaches) but only echoes and re-echoes what Christ her head says. Now in marriage the man and the woman are the beautiful type of Christ and His body—the church. They are one flesh just as Christ and His body are one. Just as Christ only speaks with authority, so the man speaks with authority and the woman is in submission to him in all things. How can there be two voices in one body?"

Martha: "Why is it then that in recent years especially, this matter of women's emancipation, including women's suffrage, has gained such support?" (Mary: "It is undoubtedly, the result of the general trend of worldliness: an anti-christian tendency: a desire to be like the world and a failure to submit all our ideas and practices to God's word! Martha: "Well, Mary, you certainly have given me something to think about." Mary: "Don't think that this little discussion of ours exhausts the subject but if it may, as you say, give you something to think about and humbly search His Word if these things are so, I will be deeply thankful for having had the privilege of talking to you about it."

Will you also follow Martha's example and think about it?

Originally Published in:
Vol 13 No 4 January 1953