

Answering Christian Apologists: The bible clearly prohibits women to teach men



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Answering Christian Apologists: The Bible Prohibits Women to teach Men

Evangelical feminists refuse to accept the Bible's plain words which forbid teaching of men by women, and are unable to adequately explain why Jesus himself did not appoint any women as apostles before his crucifixion, or after his resurrection. In this article we refute claims that Priscilla was a minister, Phoebe was a deacon, and Paul didn't really mean it when he said that women weren't allowed to teach men.

In his address to the Corinthians, and in his letter to Timothy, Paul makes it clear that women are not allowed to teach men, and it is the man who is to do the instructing:

1 Corinthians 14:34-35

Let your women keep silence in the churches: for it is not permitted unto them to speak; but they are commanded to be under obedience as also saith the law. And if they will learn any thing, let them ask their husbands at home: for it is a shame for women to speak in the church.

1 Timothy 2:11-12

Let the woman learn in silence with all subjection. But I suffer not a woman to teach [*didaskhein*], nor to usurp authority over the man, but to be in silence. For Adam was first formed, then Eve. And Adam was not deceived, but the woman being deceived was in the transgression.

In other words, Paul is saying, "I'd never let a woman teach man; don't forget it was a woman who was so foolish that a garden snake was able to trick her." Paul emphasizes in his Corinthians letter that women are not allowed to teach men--or to have any kind of authority of men, and states in his Timothy letter that the reason for this is that Adam was first, and since he was not deceived, he is the one who should have authority. Clearly, Paul didn't want women to teach men anywhere, any time; that's just as perfectly plain as any Christian doctrine can be, but the plain truth is hard to for some people to see--especially those who embrace evangelical feminism, pretend not to see what's there for all to see, and deliberately engage in false teaching to promote their own social agenda.

False Teachings Alleged:

Catherine Kroeger, author of *I Suffer Not a Woman*, argues that Paul's remarks don't have universal application; Paul, she claims, only forbids women teaching men *false* teaching. This notion is soundly rejected in a review of Kroeger's book. Catherine Kroeger's book was reviewed in the Winter 1993 issue of the *Wisconsin Lutheran Quarterly*, pages 73-74. In a 300 page book, *Women in the Church: A Fresh Analysis of 1 Timothy 2:9-15*, Andreas Koestenberger and other Evangelical biblical scholars demonstrated at length that both the linguistic and the historical claims in Kroeger's book are untrue. Those interested in an in-depth technical study of this issue should refer to this book.

Review of Kroeger's book:

Kroeger contends that when Paul tells women not to teach (*didaskein*), he is forbidding them to teach false teaching. But if this is what Paul had meant he had a much better verb to use to forbid false teaching, *heterodidaskalein*, which literally means "teaching something different." Two other times in this very letter when his intent to forbid false teaching, Paul uses this verb *heterodidaskalein* not *didaskein* [see below]. When Paul forbids false teaching in his pastorals letters, there is a clear indication in the verb which he chooses or in its object that false teaching is his concern:

As I urged you when I went into Macedonia, stay there in Ephesus so that you may command certain men not to teach false doctrines [*heterodidaskalein*] any longer" (1 Timothy 1:3).

If anyone teaches false doctrines [*heterodidaskalein*] and does not agree to the sound instruction of our Lord Jesus Christ and to godly teaching [*didaskein*]...(1 Timothy 6:3).

[These false teachers] must be silenced, because they are ruining whole households by teaching [*didaskein*] things they ought not to teach" (Titus 1:11).

The only time Paul uses *didaskein* when referring to teachers who are teaching falsely is in Titus 1:11, where he twice makes it clear that he's speaking of teachers who are teaching false things and ruining households, that they should be silenced, and if that's not clear enough, he tells us that they're teaching things they should not teach. Thus, Paul knew how to describe false teaching in two ways: Using the word *heterodidaskalein* without further qualification, and by using *didaskein* unambiguously with triple qualification. Paul's use of *didaskein* without qualification in 1 Timothy 2:11-12 in referring to women makes it perfectly clear that he meant that women weren't to try to teach man anything, period.

Paul's Teachings Were Universal in Scope:

Not wishing to give up so easily, liberal Christians insist that maybe Paul's remarks were directed only to certain women in that church, not to all women everywhere...that he was addressing a temporary problem of a local nature at the church at Corinth having to do with women chattering during services, or interrupting services with emotional outbursts, or speaking about certain specific things in church. However this is a transparent contrivance that's hardly worth rebutting, especially since there's no evidence from the first century that any such condition existed. If this situation had occurred, and this was what Paul was referring to, who could imagine that Paul would not choose words that would allow us to know what he really meant? After all, he allegedly was a writer inspired by an omnipotent and omniscient god--an all-powerful, all-knowing god, who would have known that you and I would take Paul's words in their natural state--at face value, without having to twist them.

If Paul was only concerned with a local problem with muttering women, he would have made that very clear to us; neither he, nor the Bible's God, if it ever existed, would have wanted the Bible's readers to be in any doubt about that, especially since the consequences of our misunderstanding would be that women would be kept away from the pulpit for 2000 years. In any case, there can be no doubt that Paul's message was a universal one. Near the end of his first letter to Timothy, Paul explains (below) the purpose of his letter, and makes it clear that his comments applied not just to one church, but to "the household of God...the church of the living God," that is, all churches for all time:

1 Timothy 3:14-15

I hope to come to you soon, but I am writing these instructions to you so that, if I am delayed, you may know how one ought [*dei*] to behave [*anastrephesthai*] in the household of God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and bulwark of the truth

Samuele Bacchiocchi, writing in "Women in the Church", explains:

The precise wording used here by Paul indicates that he considered his instructions to be normative beyond the local situation of the Ephesus church. The impersonal verb *dei* ("one ought") generally emphasizes a strong necessity, usually deriving from a divinely established moral obligation. Similarly the present infinitive form *anastrephesthai* ("to behave"), which takes no person or number, suggests a general rather than a restricted application...Paul's use of this generic language indicates a general application of the instructions...This conclusion is also supported by the fact that Paul's explicit purpose is to give advice on how to order and direct not merely the church at Ephesus, but "the church of the living God, the pillar and bulwark of the truth"... The implication is clear. Whatever is said about church order in the epistle applies to the universal church.

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Prophecy Women ?

In their continuing struggle to extract egalitarianism from the Bible, some Christians claim that Paul's teachings have been misinterpreted; they point to the passage below in which we find women "prophesying":

1 Corinthians 14:3-5

But I would have you know, that the head of every man is Christ; and the head of the woman is the man; and the head of Christ is God. Every man praying or prophesying, having his head covered, dishonoureth his head. But every woman that prayeth or prophesieth with her head uncovered dishonoureth her head: for that is even all one as if she were shaven.

Proponents of women in the ministry say that this shows that women were allowed to serve in the role of teacher. We will show, however, that prophesying by women was commonplace. For proof of this one only has to look at 1 Corinthians above, where we find Paul referring very cavalierly to "every" women who "prophesieth": these persons, who some wish to make out to be quite special, better be sure to keep their heads covered. This is the only time Paul refers to women who prophesy; if this prophesying is to be an indication that women were to be accepted as teachers of men in the first century, God would have known Paul's condescending words about head-coverings would be misunderstood, and therefore would have had him at least say there--or elsewhere--that women were accepted as teachers. God--and therefore Paul--evidently didn't mean for us to believe what the evangelical feminists want them to mean.

Prophecy in the New Testament often means nothing more than showing signs of being possessed by the Holy Spirit, or speaking the words of the Lord. It doesn't mean "teaching," or foretelling the future; prophesying was relatively ordinary and commonplace. The few examples below show that "prophesying" was something that everyone would do in the last days, as well as servants and handmaidens before then.

Luke 1:67-68:

And his father Zacharias was filled with the Holy ghost, and prophesied, saying, Blessed be the Lord God of Israel; for he hath visited and redeemed his people...

Acts 2:17

And it shall come to pass in the last days, saith God, I will pour out of my Spirit upon all flesh: and our sons and your daughters shall prophesy

Acts 2:17-1

And on my servants and on my handmaidens I will pour out in those days of my Spirit; and they shall prophesy

Acts 21:8-9

And the next day we that were of Paul's company departed, and came unto Caesarea: and we entered into the house of Philip the evangelist, which was one of the seven; and abode with him. And the same man had four daughters, virgins, which did prophesy

Liberals say that the "prophesying" passage above shows that women were allowed to express their opinion, and that this is evidence that women in New Testament times were considered to be the equal of men. However, this is nothing but hopefulness. Allowing women to speaking out in praise of the Lord--prophesying--is something that ALL people were allowed to do; it was like speaking in tongues. The women mentioned above are merely those who are possessed by the spirit of the Lord and singing the praises of God. Being possessed with the Holy Spirit can happen to anyone and doesn't connote status: it happens to sons, daughters, servants, and even handmaidens, and virgins, and the acceptance of this in women cannot be taken to mean that they were accepted as ministers; if that were the rule, then *anyone* who had the Holy Spirit would be accepted as a minister.

Phoebe wasn't a minister:

Proponents of the notion that Paul's message was egalitarian cite a verses about Phoebe which they say--if properly translated--would show that Phoebe was a minister, not a "servant". They point to the word *diakonos*, which they note is translated 20 times as minister or deacon in reference to men, but the one time it's used for a woman, it's translated as "servant," or "helper". However, we will provide evidence below which shows that in every case where men were described as ministers or deacons with the word *diakonos*, the naming follows a word pattern which is absent in the case of Phoebe. Here is the verse about Phoebe:

Romans 16:1-2 KJV:

I commend unto you Phoebe our sister, which is a servant (Greek: *diakonos*) of the church which is at Cenchrea: That ye receive her in the Lord, as becometh saints, and that ye assist her in whatsoever business she hath need of you: for she hath been a succourer of many, and of myself also.

Romans 16:1-2 Worldwide English Translation

I want to tell you good things about our sister Phoebe. She helps in the church in Cenchrea. I want you to take her in because she is a Christian. That is what God's people should do. Help her in any way she needs help. She has helped many people and has helped me too.

The word *diakonos* is used 27 times in the New Testament: 18 times it's translated as "minister", twice as "deacon," and seven times as "servant". Wherever it is translated as "minister" or "deacon," it applies to a particular man, and always with words that indicate greatness or divinity--or some sort of intimate connection to Jesus or God. The single time *diakonos* is used to describe a woman, it's used to describe a "servant of the church" [*diakonos ekklesia*]; in the 20 times it refers to a man, the man is never described as a *diakonos ekklesia* of the church; instead, the *diakonos* is qualified with words that connote divinity, or greatness. This diakonos-greatness naming pattern is absent when Phoebe is described. The evidence is given below:

-Diakonos Used as Minister for Men:

Reference to Men as Ministers	Divinity or Greatness Described	Reference to Men as Ministers	Divinity or Greatness Described
Mathew 20:26	Great among you	2 Galatians 2:17	Christ
Mark 10:43	Great among you	Ephesians 3:7	Grace of God
Romans 13:4	Minister of God	Ephesians 6:21	Of the Lord
Romans 15:8	Jesus	Colossians 1:7	Of Christ
1 Corinthians 3:5	By whom ye believed	Colossians 1:23	Paul
2 Corinthians 3:6	Of the new testament	Colossians 1:25	Paul according to God
2 Corinthians 6:4	Of God	Colossians 4:7	In the Lord
2 Corinthians 11:15	Of the righteousness	1 Thessalonians 3:2	Of God
2 Corinthians 11:23	Of Christ	1 Timothy 4:6	Of Jesus Christ

The word “diakonos” is translated as “deacon” in two places; once again, we see that the work "diakonos" is used in conjunction with descriptors which connote greatness or divinity--attributes which are lacking in the description of the "diakonos" Phoebe.

-Diakonos as Deakon:

Reference to Men as Deacons	Divinity or Greatness Described
Philippians 1:1	Saints in Christ
1 Timothy 3:8-13	Great boldness in the faith which is in Christ Jesus

In the single place where "diakonos" is used to describe a woman, Phoebe, there is no suggestion of divinity or greatness; all that is said of Phoebe is that she gave aid and comfort to people.

In summary, the phrase “servant of the church" occurs *only* in reference to Phoebe. If the Bible writer wanted us to believe that Phoebe was a minister or deaconess, he would have followed the minister-naming pattern used in 20 verses to describe the men as ministers or deacons; he didn't do that, which strongly suggests that "diakonos" as applied to Phoebe didn't mean minister or deaconess; it meant "helper" or "servant".

If one wishes to advance the argument that Phoebe was a "minister," one must explain why the 20 examples of men described as "ministers" or "deacons" don't include the phrase "of the church"--a phrase which is used ONLY with Phoebe, and why the Phoebe verses don't allude to the type of greatness or divinity that is in virtually every single case attached to the verses about men.

Why not Pais or Doulos ?

Feminists Christian apologists sometimes argue that Paul would have used one of the other Greek words meaning servant, such as *pais*, *doulous*, and *oiketes*, in reference to Phoebe. But, if one checks the context in which these words are used, one finds that they are usually in the context of a servant-master relationship, as in the following verses:

Matthew 8:6

"Lord," he said, "my servant *pais* lies at home paralyzed and in terrible suffering."

Matthew 10:25

It is enough for the student to be like his teacher, and the servant *doulos* like his master.

Since Phoebe clearly wasn't a "servant" in the sense of having a master, or being a maid, these words would have been inappropriate for her. Evidently, diakonos means "one who serves or is supportive of a cause," and is the word which would have been much more appropriate for Phoebe than *pais* or *doulos*.

Junia wasn't an Apostle:

Those who want to believe that Christian fathers allowed women to occupy positions of power think that Paul said that a woman name Junia occupied the exalted position of apostle. We first present the verse in which this alleged statement was made, then we will show that the claim is false.

Romans 16:1-15 KJV

I commend unto you Phoebe our sister, which is a servant of the church which is at Cenchrea: That ye receive her in the Lord, as becometh saints, and that ye assist her in whatsoever business she hath need of you: for she hath been a succourer of many, and of myself also. Greet Priscilla and Aquila my helpers in Christ Jesus: Who have for my life laid down their own necks: unto whom not only I give thanks, but also all the churches of the Gentiles. Likewise greet the church that is in their house. Salute my well-beloved Epaenetus, who is the firstfruits of Achaia unto Christ. Greet Mary, who bestowed much labour on us. Salute Andronicus and Junia, my kinsmen, and my fellow-prisoners, who are of note among the apostles, who also were in Christ before me. [Paul then introduces about twenty other Christians and the rest of the saints.]

Notice that before Paul even gets around to mentioning Junia, he first introduces a string of ordinary Christians: Pheobe; Priscilla; the worshippers who gather at Priscilla and Aquila's house; Aquila; Epenetus; Mary, and Adronicus. Only then does he introduce Junia, who Paul says is well known to the apostles; then he introduces about twenty other persons by name and "all the other saints in the crowd". Hopeful proponents of women in the ministry assert that the phrase "of note among the apostles" doesn't mean just that the apostles merely took note of the good Christian, Junia but that Junia *herself* was an apostle, a *notable* apostle! At least two translations make it perfectly clear that Junia was not an apostle, just well known to the apostles, and at least one even thinks that Junia was a man:

New English Translation:

Greet Andronicus and Junia, my compatriots and my fellow prisoners. They are well known to the apostles and they were in Christ before me.

Worldwide English Translation:

The apostles thought they were good men.

For the sake of argument, we shall not dispute that Junia was a women. In order to force the interpretation they hope for, the feminists have to have Paul saying that the "apostle" Junia is not just an apostle--as exalted as that position is, but an apostle more "notable"--more distinguished--than even the average apostle. This is simply not credible: How could it be that this Junia, who is not mentioned anywhere else in the New Testament, be one of the better-known apostles ? If that were true, surely someone besides Paul would have mentioned this; no one did, so Junia most likely was not an apostle, and almost certainly not a "notable" apostle; she was only a good Christian whom the apostles noted.

Furthermore, if this person was an apostle, why in the world would Paul show such disrespect as to introduce her only after he'd mentioned several other ordinary Christians first, then follow her introduction with introductions of many other ordinary Christians? And this is doubly problematic if the apostle was a notable apostle: At the very least he would have introduced the notable apostle first, or last, saving the best for last.

In conclusion, we see that in order to force the hope-for interpretation from the words of Paul, the feminists have to insist that the words "of note among the apostles" mean that Junia was a notable apostle, instead of meaning only that the apostles took note of her. Then they must overlook the fact that even though one must believe that this was an above-average apostle, in the sense that "she" was better-known, she was never mentioned elsewhere in the New Testament. Then, they must ignore the fact that Paul's reference to her is quite ordinary--contrary to what one would expect would be befitting a "notable" apostle: She's introduced as just one of a few dozen other Christians somewhere near the middle of the list, not at the beginning as would be expected for one who is an exalted servant of God, or alternatively at the end, saving the best for last. Finally, for those who believe that Paul's words were inspired by God, we have to wonder why, if God and Paul wanted us to know that women were apostles, they didn't make an unequivocal statement to that effect somewhere in the Bible? Why did they force us to jump over several hurdles of implausibility before we're in a position to speculate that Junia was an apostle ? They would have know then would happen, wouldn't they? We conclude that there are just too many implausibilities for one to give serious attention to the claim that Junia was a woman apostle, or even an apostle.

Practice of Jesus Confirms No Women Apostles:

When reminded that even Jesus appointed no women apostles, feminists assert that Jesus was concerned that if he had done so, people would discount his message, that accepting women as apostles would be a cultural change too radical --to revolutionary--for people to accept, and that they would have turned away from Jesus and his message. That's preposterous, given the fact that Jesus' activities and teaching were already so revolutionary; who would worry about the women helping Jesus? Furthermore, Jesus as the son of an omnipotent God had the power to do whatever he wanted, and that included making anyone accept as truth anything he wanted them to believe; if Jesus had appointed women as apostles, he would have found a way to make a woman apostle acceptable to the people to whom he preached, that's a certainty.

Bruce Waltke makes a similar point in his article “The Role of Women in Worship in the Old Testament”:

Jesus...was a revolutionary in his age own with regard to the role of women in worship...[but he] confirmed the Old Testament patriarchy by not appointing a woman as an apostle, though women followed him, ministered to him, and were his close friends. It is nonsense to argue that the counter-cultural Jesus appointed only male apostles because he was culturally conditioned. Is it not plausible to think that had he intended to empower women to have equality with men in leadership he would have called a woman to be an apostle, either before or after the resurrection ?

The Husband of one Wife:

1 Timothy 3:2

A bishop then must be blameless, the husband of one wife, vigilant, sober, of good behaviour, given to hospitality, apt to teach

House Churches:

Proponents of women in the ministry point to four women who lived in houses used as churches as examples of women who occupied high positions in the church and were even accepted by Paul as ministers. We will discuss these women now, and show that there's zero evidence that any of these women were thought of as ministers.

Lydia's Church:

The first woman is Lydia, about whom nothing of significance is said other than that Christians met at her house. This doesn't even come close to showing that Lydia occupied a high position; Christians may have met there only because her house was spacious, or because she served good wine; we will never know. Here is the Lydia story:

Acts 16:40 Worldwide English Translation

On the Sabbath day we went out of the city to the river. We thought this was a place where people met to talk with God. So we sat down and talked to the women who had come there. One woman named Lydia listened to us. She was from the city of Thyatira, and she sold red cloth. She worshipped God. He worked in her heart and she believed what Paul said. She and all the people in her house were baptised. Then she begged us and said, 'If you really feel that I believe in the Lord, come and stay at my house.' And she would not allow us to say no. (Acts 16:13-15 Worldwide English Translation)....When Paul and Silas came out of prison, they went back to Lydia's house. They saw their Christian brothers and talked to them. This helped the Christians to believe more strongly. Then Paul and Silas went on their way.

Priscilla's Church:

In Paul's addresses to the Romans and the Corinthians, he tells us that Christians met in the house of Aquila and his wife Priscilla, and Luke tells of one time Priscilla and her husband spoke to a visitor about the ways of God. Feminists want us to believe that speaking in their home with her husband to a guest about God makes Priscilla a minister, but common sense will tell us this is a ridiculous exaggeration.

1 Corinthians 16:19 Worldwide English Translation

I send greetings to Priscilla and Aquila, who worked with me for Christ Jesus. They almost died to save me. I am not the only one who thanks them. All the churches who are not Jews thank them also. Give my greetings also to the church in their house. (Romans 16:3-5 *Worldwide English Translation*)...Aquila and Priscilla and the Christians who meet in their house send you many Christian greetings.

Acts 18:1-28 Worldwide English Translation:

After this Paul left Athens and went to the city of Corinth. There he met a Jew named Aquila, born in Pontus. A short time before this he and his wife Priscilla had come from the country of Italy. They left Italy because Claudius the ruler had ordered all the Jews to leave to Rome. This was the big city in Italy. Paul went to the house of Aquila and Priscilla. Paul's work had been making of tents, and that is what they did. So he stayed with them.

....A Jew came to Ephesus. His name was Apollos. He was born in Alexandria. He spoke with power and was able to explain the holy writings well. This man had been taught the way of the Lord. He was strong in spirit as he talked to people. What he taught them about the Lord was true. But he knew only about the baptism of John. He began to speak without fear in the meeting place. When Aquila and Priscilla heard him, they took him to their house. They explained the way of God so that he knew more about it. Apollos decided to go into Achaia. The Christian brothers wrote to the disciples there and asked them to receive him. When he reached Achaia, he helped very much those who believed. They believed because God was kind to them. He talked strongly with the Jews before the people. He proved to them from the holy writings that Jesus is the Christ

The fact that Priscilla her husband one told someone in their house what they knew about God doesn't mean that Priscilla either formally or even informally held office as a minister, if we were to reach this conclusion of "evidence" of this nature, we'd be forced to believe that any women who ever spoke about to anyone about God in her house was automatically a minister. Thus we see that feminists are grasping at straws in their fervent hope of finding in the Bible the evidence they need to show that it teaches that woman were accepted as ministers in first century Christianity.

Richard and Catherine Kroeger (the feminist), writing in Women Elders, have a different--and far more heroic--view of Priscilla's activities:

We find that Paul himself allowed women to teach in the ministry of the Gospel. Priscilla, for example, seems to have been more instrumental in setting Apollos' theology straight than her husband, Aquila, and with Paul's blessing (Acts 18:24-28).one of Paul's six major associates in ministry was Priscilla. She instructed Apollos "more perfectly" (Acts 18:1-4, 18-28) so that he preached Christ with great power.

Translation: "We'd really like to believe that Priscilla took the lead here, but we have no evidence of that; it just seems like a good thing to believe." The Kroegers show they have quite an active imagination as they offer a view of Priscilla which greatly--and unjustifiably--amplifies and glorifies her role in "teaching" of Apollos; they see things in statements by Paul and Luke that others cannot. The reader will see that there's nothing in the above verses which can be used to justify the Kroegers' claim that Priscilla was a great teacher of Christian doctrine, as the Kroegers seem to claim. Luke says that Aquila and Priscilla *together* explained things to Apollos; there's no indication whether Priscilla's role was anything other than minimal, but since Luke doesn't say that she *didn't* do most of the explaining to Apollos, the Kroegers charge through this opening and assert without evidence that Priscilla did almost all of the "teaching" and therefore deserves most of the glory.

The Kroegers also shamelessly beg the question of women in ministry by assuming as fact the very thing they're obligated to prove, which is that "Paul allowed women to teach in the ministry." Readers may look as closely as the wish, but they will not find words which show that Paul considered Priscilla a teacher, let alone a minister; the most we can conclude--from Luke in Acts--is that on one occasion Priscilla helped her husband explaining some of the ways of God to a guest in their home. Especially lacking are the words which would let one conclude that Priscilla played the dominant role in the explaining--not her husband, as the Kroegers state. Paul says nothing about Priscilla explaining anything to anybody, or about her being a teacher, and certainly nothing about her being a minister; all we're told about Priscilla is that she --together with her husband--explained the ways of God to Apollos, so that he understood the ways of God better than he did before; there's no implication by Luke that the teaching of Apollos was "perfect," or at all extraordinary, as the Kroeger's state; Apollos left knowing more about God than he knew before, that's all.

In conclusion, the statement above by the Kroegers is the result of imaginative and hopeful speculation, wishful reading between the lines, and making things up; there's no evidence that Priscilla was minister, and there's not a single word which would suggest that Priscilla was the leader in the conversation she and her husband had with Apollos. Priscilla is an heroic minister only in the imaginations of the people who want to believe that that the Bible teaches that women are equal to men and are acceptable as ministers.

Nympha's Church:

The same comments above about the house of Lydia being used by Christians applies to Nympha's church: The fact that church people--Christians--meet there doesn't mean that Nympha occupies either a formal or informal position of minister.

Colossians 4:15 Worldwide English Translation:

Give my greetins to the brothers at Laodicea, and also to Nympha and the church people who meet in her house.

It's often the case even today that a Christian minister will move from one town to the next, ministering to his flock temporarily in the houses of Christians who are proud to serve Jesus in this way. None of the owners of these houses would be considered ministers, so why should anyone believe that Lydia was a minister, when there is zero evidence that she did anything other than live in the house used by Christians ? Why ? The answer is, some people desperately want to believe the Bible teaches that women in first century Christianity were accepted as ministers. However this isn't taught anywhere in the Bible--quite the contrary, so these folks have to twist, massage, and squeeze Bible verses to imply something that's simply not there.

Apphia's Church:

The comments made above in reference to Lydia, Priscilla, and Nympha apply equally well to Apphia. Paul tells us that Christians met in Apphia's house, but this doesn't mean that Apphia was minister just because she lived in the house used by Christians.

Philemon 1:1-2 Worldwide English Translation:

I am Paul. I am in prison because i belong to Christ Jesus. Our brother Timothy and I send greetings to you, Philemon. We love you very much. And your work with us. We also send greetings to our sister Apphia; to Archippus who is worker in God's army as we are; and to the people who meet as a church in your house.

There's absolutely no evidence from these descriptions of Lydia, Priscilla, Nympha, and Apphia that any one of them did anything more than allow their houses to be used as meeting places by Christians, except in the single case of Priscilla who, with her husband, once told a visitor about God's ways, though there's no clear indication Priscilla's contribution wasn't minimal. No right-thinking person--Christian, or otherwise--can objectively believe that these stories in any way imply that women were accepted as ministers in first century Christianity.

Conclusion:

In his address to the Corinthians, and in his letter to Timothy, Paul makes it clear that women are not allowed to teach men, and it is the man who is to do the instructing. In other words, Paul is saying, "I'd never let a woman teach man; don't forget it was a woman who was so foolish that a garden snake was able to trick her." Paul emphasizes in his Corinthians letter that women are not allowed to teach men--or to have any kind of authority of men, and states in his Timothy letter that the reason for this is that Adam was first, and since he was not deceived, he is the one who should have authority. Clearly, Paul didn't want women to teach men anywhere, any time; that's just as perfectly plain as any Christian doctrine can be, but the plain truth is hard to for some people to see--especially those who embrace evangelical feminism, pretend not to see what's there for all to see, and deliberately engage in false teaching to promote their own social agenda.

1 Timothy 2:11-12

Let the woman learn in silence with all subjection. But I suffer not a woman to teach [*didaskhein*], nor to usurp authority over the man, but to be in silence. For Adam was first formed, then Eve. And Adam was not deceived, but the woman being deceived was in the transgression.

1 Corinthians 14:34-35

Let your women keep silence in the churches: for it is not permitted unto them to speak; but they are commanded to be under obedience as also saith the law. And if they will learn any thing, let them ask their husbands at home: for it is a shame for women to speak in the church.

Some Christians who are ashamed of “1 Corinthians 14:34-35”, try to save face by claiming that these verses are “later insertions”. However the verses are found in the “oldest and best” manuscripts of Sinaiticus and Vaticanus, and they are found in the RSV, NRSV, ESV, NASB, NIV, NKJV and Holman as well.

...the view that verses 34-36 contain a major gloss is so much a minority report, especially since all manuscripts include the passage, that until recently most discussions and refutations could afford to be cursory. In short, most were satisfied that, whatever the textual complexities, the evidence that these verses are original and in their original location (and not, as in some manuscripts, with verses 34-35 placed after 14:40), is substantial.

Sources:

Cf. Bruce M. Metzger, *A Textual Commentary on the Greek New Testament* (London: United Bible Societies, 1971), p. 565; and esp. E. Earle Ellis, “The Silenced Wives of Corinth (1 Cor. 14:34-35),” in *New Testament Textual Criticism: Its Significance for Exegesis*, Festschrift for Bruce M. Metzger, ed. J. Eldon Epp and Gordon D. Fee (Oxford: Clarendon, 1981), pp. 213-220

Moreover “1 Corinthians 14:34-35” is in perfect harmony with the old testament and Paul's other teachings in “1 Timothy 2:11-12”. So women according to the Bible cannot teach men and cannot have any leadership positions which would give them authority over men. The verses and its context are clearly general, which is confirmed by renowned classic Bible commentaries, which I shall quote now.

John Darby's Synopsis of the New Testament , 1 Timothy Chapter 2

Paul has plainly now laid the foundations, and he proceeds therefore to details. Men were to pray everywhere, lifting up pure hands, without wrath, and without vain human reasonings. Women were to walk in modesty, adorned with good works, and to learn in silence. A woman was forbidden to teach or to exercise authority over men; she was to abide in quietness and silence. The reason given for this is remarkable, and shews how, in our relations with God, everything depends on the original starting-point. In innocence Adam had the first place; in sin, Eve. It was she who, being deceived, brought in transgression. Adam was not deceived, guilty as he was of disobeying God. United to his wife, he followed her, not deceived by the enemy but weak through his affection.

Source:

<http://bible.crosswalk.com/Commentaries/DarbysSynopsisofNewTestament/dby.cgi?book=1ti&chapter=002>

John Wesley's Explanatory Notes on the Whole Bible The Book of 1 Timothy Chapter 2

2:12

To usurp authority over the man - By public teaching.

2:13

First - So that woman was originally the inferior.

2:14

And Adam was not deceived - The serpent deceived Eve: Eve did not deceive Adam, but persuaded him. "Thou hast hearkened unto the voice of thy wife," Genesis 3:17. The preceding verse showed why a woman should not "usurp authority over the man." this shows why she ought not "to teach." She is more easily deceived, and more easily deceives. The woman being deceived transgressed - "The serpent deceived" her, Genesis 3:13, and she transgressed.

Source:

<http://bible.crosswalk.com/Commentaries/WesleysExplanatoryNotes/wes.cgi?book=1ti&chapter=002>

The bible teaches us in "1 Timothy 2:11-14" that only eve, as a woman was in transgression and not the man ! Therefore all women in christianity are viewed as not capable to teach men, which is confirmed moreover in classic bible commentaries of renowned christian scholars. Women in the bible are viewed as the gender whose easily deceived and therefor not fit to teach men. Moreover the bible in "1 Corinthians 14:34-35" tells us that it as a shame for women to speak in the church or in public assemblies, which moreover proofs that women in christianity never can hold any position of leadership or teacher. In christianity women are not given this right. The bible commentary by of the renowned christian scholar Matthew Henry on the next page moreover confirms this:

Matthew Henry Complete Commentary on the Whole Bible , Chapter 14

Verses 34-35 Here the apostle,

1.

Enjoins silence on their women in public assemblies, and to such a degree that they must not ask questions for their own information in the church, but ask their husbands at home. *They are to learn in silence with all subjection; but,* says the apostle, *I suffer them not to teach,* 1 Tim. 2:11, 12. There is indeed an intimation (ch. 11:5) as if the women sometimes did pray and prophecy in their assemblies, which the apostle, in that passage, does not simply condemn, but the manner of performance, that is, praying or prophesying with the head uncovered, which, in that age and country, was throwing off the distinction of sexes, and setting themselves on a level with the men. But here he seems to forbid all public performances of theirs. They are not permitted to speak (v. 34) in the church, neither in praying nor prophesying. The connection seems plainly to include the latter, in the limited sense in which it is taken in this chapter, namely, for preaching, or interpreting scripture by inspiration.

And, indeed, for a woman to prophesy in this sense were to teach, which does not so well befit her state of subjection. A teacher of others has in that respect a superiority over them, which is not allowed the woman over the man, nor must she therefore be allowed to teach in a congregation: I suffer them not to teach. But praying, and uttering hymns inspired, were not teaching. And seeing there were women who had spiritual gifts of this sort in that age of the church (see Acts 22:9), and might be under this impulse in the assembly, must they altogether suppress it? Or why should they have this gift, if it must never be publicly exercised? For these reasons, some think that these general prohibitions are only to be understood in common cases; but that upon extraordinary occasions, when women were under a divine afflatus, and known to be so, they might have liberty of speech. They were not ordinarily to teach, nor so much as to debate and ask questions in the church, but learn in silence there; and, if difficulties occurred, ask their own husbands at home. Note, As it is the woman's duty to learn in subjection, it is the man's duty to keep up his superiority, by being able to instruct her; if it be her duty to ask her husband at home, it is his concern and duty to endeavour at least to be able to answer her enquiries; if it be a shame for her to speak in the church, where she should be silent, it is a shame for him to be silent when he should speak, and not be able to give an answer, when she asks him at home.

2.

We have here the reason of this injunction: It is God's law and commandment that they should be under obedience (v. 34); they are placed in subordination to the man, and it is a shame for them to do any thing that looks like an affectation of changing ranks, which speaking in public seemed to imply, at least in that age, and among that people, as would public teaching much more: so that the apostle concludes it was a shame for women to speak in the church, in the assembly. Shame is the mind's uneasy reflection on having done an indecent thing. And what more indecent than for a woman to quit her rank, renounce the subordination of her sex, or do what in common account had such aspect and appearance? Note, Our spirit and conduct should be suitable to our rank.

The natural distinctions God has made, we should observe. Those he has placed in subjection to others should not set themselves on a level, nor affect or assume superiority. The woman was made subject to the man, and she should keep her station and be content with it. For this reason women must be silent in the churches, not set up for teachers; for this is setting up for superiority over the man.

Source:

<http://bible.crosswalk.com/Commentaries/MatthewHenryComplete/mhc-com.cgi?book=1co&chapter=014>

Compare this to islam which allows women to be a mufti and teach men ! Read and compare this gift given to women in islam with the curse given tot hem (to be in silence and forbidden to teach men) by paul in christianity. Women in islam were scholars and teached men, see:

<http://www.islamfortoday.com/womenscholars.htm>

http://www.answering-christianity.com/karim/womens_education.htm

Women as Mufti and Qadhi

Interpretation of revelation was free of gender restrictions. A woman's legal opinion (fatwa) was just as valid and morally binding as the legal opinion of a man. Thus a woman could legitimately be a mufti, a legal expert whose task it was to communicate legal rules to non-specialists including, at times, judges and other holders of political power. There was complete agreement among Sunni jurists that women could be mufti. It was as a result of the law's acceptance of women as mufti, moreover, that al-Tabari was led to argue that a woman could be a judge in all areas of the law.

Source:

Fadel, Mohammad (1997) , “ Two Women, One Man: Knowledge, Power, and Gender in Medieval Sunni Legal Thought.” , pages 189, 190 & 200