



ROMANS 16:1-16 – THE WOMEN...
I commend to you our sister **Phoebe**, who is a deacon in the church in Cenchrea. ² Welcome her in the Lord as one who is worthy of honour among God's people. Help her in whatever she needs, for she has been helpful to many, and especially to me.
³ Give my greetings to **Priscilla** and Aquila, my co-workers in the ministry of Christ Jesus.

⁴ In fact, they once risked their lives for me. I am thankful to them, and so are all the Gentile churches. ⁵ Also give my greetings to the church that meets in their home.
Greet my dear friend Epenetus. He was the first person from the province of Asia to become a follower of Christ. ⁶ Give my greetings to **Mary**, who has worked so hard for your benefit.

⁷ Greet Andronicus and **Junia**, my fellow Jews, who were in prison with me. They are highly respected among the apostles and became followers of Christ before I did. ⁸ Greet Ampliatus, my dear friend in the Lord. ⁹ Greet Urbanus, our co-worker in Christ, and my dear friend Stachys. ¹⁰ Greet Apelles, a good man whom Christ approves. And give my greetings to the believers from the household of Aristobulus.

¹¹ Greet Herodion, my fellow Jew. Greet the Lord's people from the household of Narcissus. ¹² Give my greetings to **Tryphena** and **Tryphosa**, the Lord's workers, and to dear **Persis**, who has worked so hard for the Lord. ¹³ Greet Rufus, whom the Lord picked out to be his very own; **and also his dear mother**, who has been a mother to me.

¹⁴ Give my greetings to Asyncritus, Phlegon, Hermes, Patrobas, Hermas, and the brothers and sisters who meet with them. ¹⁵ Give my greetings to Philologus, **Julia**, Nereus **and his sister**, and to Olympas and all the believers who meet with them. ¹⁶ Greet each other with a sacred kiss. All the churches of Christ send you their greetings.



“AFFIRMING WOMEN LEADERS”
1st – It’s mainly about Paul and his letters, but...

PAUL HAD NO PROBLEMS WITH...

A woman prophesying or praying
1 Cor 11:5
But a woman dishonours her head if she prays or prophesies without a covering on her head.

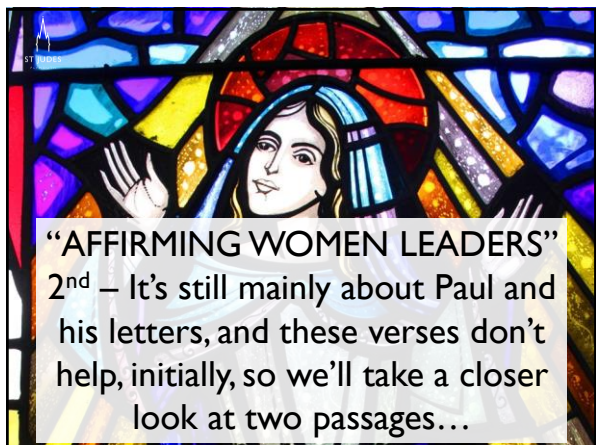
PAUL HAD NO PROBLEMS WITH...

A woman leading a house church
1 Cor 16:19 & Colossians 4:15
The churches here in the province of Asia send greetings in the Lord, as do Aquila and **Priscilla** and all the others who gather in their home for church meetings.

Please give my greetings to our brothers and sisters at Laodicea, and to **Nympha** and the church that meets in her house.

PAUL HAD NO PROBLEMS WITH...

Women being equal with men
Galatians 3:28
There is no longer Jew or Gentile, slave or free, male and female. For you are all one in Christ Jesus.



“AFFIRMING WOMEN LEADERS”
2nd – It’s still mainly about Paul and his letters, and these verses don’t help, initially, so we’ll take a closer look at two passages...

1 Corinthians 14:34-35
³⁴women should remain silent in the churches. They are not allowed to speak, but must be in submission, as the Law says. ³⁵ If they want to enquire about something, they should ask their own husbands at home; for it is disgraceful for a woman to speak in the church. *See footnote NRSV, NLT...

Some manuscripts place 34-35 after 14:40 ?

Option 1 Early Eastern Texts

³³For God is not a God of disorder but of peace, as in all the meetings of God's holy people

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³⁶ Or do you think God's word originated with you Corinthians? Are you the only ones to whom it was given? ³⁷ If you claim to be a prophet or think you are spiritual, you should recognize that what I am saying is a command from the Lord himself. ³⁸ But if you do not recognize this, you yourself will not be recognized.

³⁹ So, my dear brothers and sisters, be eager to prophesy, and don't forbid speaking in tongues. ⁴⁰ But be sure that everything is done properly and in order.

Option 2 Early Western Latin (pre Vulgate) Texts

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Option 3 A Very Early "Margin Note"

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Women should remain silent in the churches. They are not allowed to speak, but must be in submission, as the Law says. If they want to enquire about something, they should ask their own husbands at home; for it is disgraceful for a woman to speak in the church

SOME DIFFICULTIES OF 14:34-35

31,100 verses of the Bible, or 99.994%, don't move.

2 verses of the Bible, or 0.006%, do – these two.

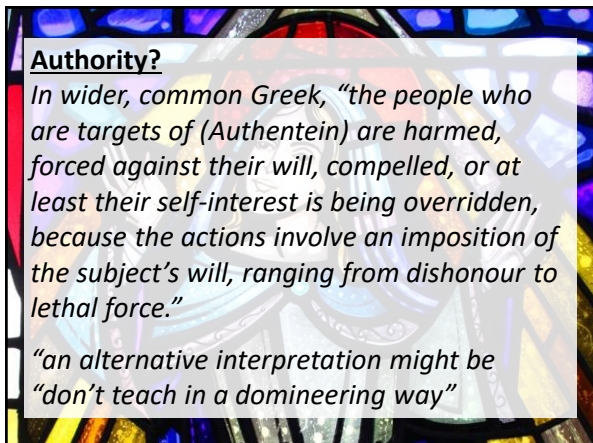
It doesn't fit the flow of Paul's discussion in 1 Corinthians 14 to do with manifestations of the Spirit in the community

1 Timothy 2:8-12 (NRSV)

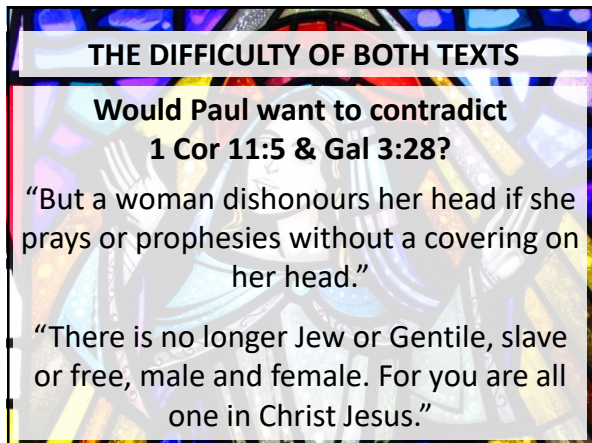
⁸ I desire, then, that in every place the men should pray, lifting up holy hands without anger or argument; **women** ^[plural] should dress themselves modestly and decently in suitable clothing, not with their hair braided, or with gold, pearls, or expensive clothes, ¹⁰ but with good works, as is proper for women who profess reverence for God. ¹¹ Let a **woman** ^[or wife] learn in silence with full submission. ¹² I permit **no woman** ^[or wife & singular] to teach or to have authority over a **man**; ^[or husband & singular] she is to keep silent.

Authority?

Authentein is not related to the ordinary word for authority (*exousia*) which is a fairly common in Paul and the New Testament. *Authentein* is used only once in the New Testament – here.



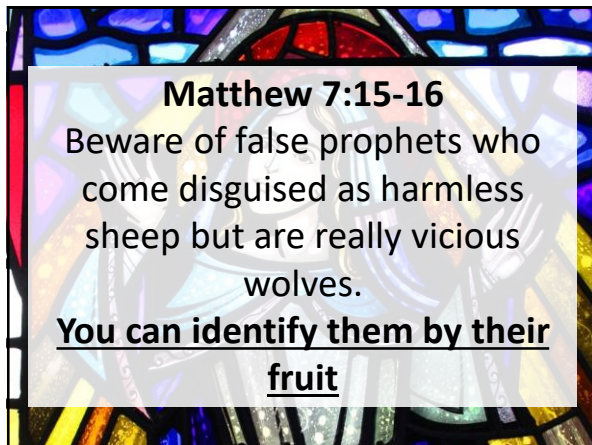
Authority?
In wider, common Greek, “the people who are targets of (Authentein) are harmed, forced against their will, compelled, or at least their self-interest is being overridden, because the actions involve an imposition of the subject’s will, ranging from dishonour to lethal force.”
“an alternative interpretation might be “don’t teach in a domineering way”



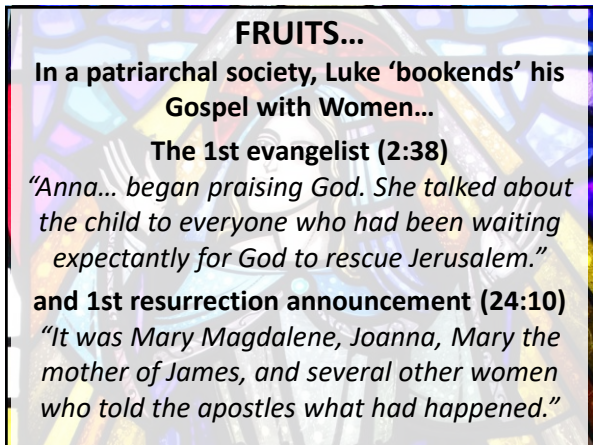
THE DIFFICULTY OF BOTH TEXTS
Would Paul want to contradict 1 Cor 11:5 & Gal 3:28?
“But a woman dishonours her head if she prays or prophesies without a covering on her head.”
“There is no longer Jew or Gentile, slave or free, male and female. For you are all one in Christ Jesus.”



“AFFIRMING WOMEN LEADERS”
3rd – These two passages seem to go against some of the big themes of the Bible. Some examples...



Matthew 7:15-16
Beware of false prophets who come disguised as harmless sheep but are really vicious wolves.
You can identify them by their fruit



FRUITS...
In a patriarchal society, Luke ‘bookends’ his Gospel with Women...
The 1st evangelist (2:38)
“Anna... began praising God. She talked about the child to everyone who had been waiting expectantly for God to rescue Jerusalem.”
and 1st resurrection announcement (24:10)
“It was Mary Magdalene, Joanna, Mary the mother of James, and several other women who told the apostles what had happened.”



Judges
Judges 2:18
Whenever the LORD raised up a judge over Israel, he was with that judge

