

Commandments of the Lord?

By Elder David Pyles

In the 14th chapter of 1Corinthians, Paul admonished that church for its disorderly ways. They had commingled the Lord's Supper with common meals. They were speaking in unknown tongues without interpretation. Their teaching was chaotic with speakers interrupting each other. Paul's rebukes also suggest that women were taking teaching roles in church service.

After denouncing this disorder, Paul preempted any objectors with:

What? came the word of God out from you? or came it unto you only? If any man think himself to be a prophet, or spiritual, let him acknowledge that the things that I write unto you are the commandments of the Lord... Let all things be done decently and in order. – 1 Cor 14:36-40

This seems to assert that Jesus Himself had commanded the things Paul here taught. Some have claimed otherwise, saying there is nothing in the gospels where Jesus even addressed the subject of orderliness in worship or of women teachers in the church. However, when properly viewed, Jesus actually addressed these subjects at least eighteen times. On eighteen occasions, Jesus commanded His disciples, saying, "*Follow me.*" Jesus effectively commanded these things by way of precedents that He set.

With respect to women teachers, Jesus chose twelve disciples who would thereafter become His apostles, but all twelve were men. Had Jesus been indifferent between men and women occupying these roles, then odds of Him coincidentally choosing twelve males would be one in 4096. On another occasion, He sent out seventy to preach. Again, all were men. Odds of this being coincidental are one in over a billion. These actions were intended as precedents, as is implied by His commandment to "*follow me.*"

Further, Jesus did things in orderly ways. For example, the seventy were sent in pairs. More order can be seen when He fed the multitude. He then commanded that the people be organized in groups of fifty (Lk 9:14), and after all were fed, he commanded that the fragments be gathered into baskets so that none be lost (Jn 6:12). Jesus was an orderly man. He even folded His facial

napkin before leaving His tomb (Jn 20:7)! This orderliness is incumbent upon all whose duty it is to be conformed to His image.

His words, “*follow me,*” are a positive commandment, so Paul was well-justified in saying “*the things that I write unto you are the commandments of the Lord.*”

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