

Glad Tidings

“And we bring you good tidings of the promise made unto the fathers...” (Acts 13:32)

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Women Preachers in the Church of Christ

(Jerry Fite)

Youthful Lauren said it was “cool” and “crazy” as she reflected on her recent Sunday morning preaching experience in the Fourth Avenue Church of Christ in Franklin, Tennessee. The Senior Minister, Patrick Mead, welcomed her to the stage by prefacing how much the church there values women as the Bible does. She preached with passion and enthusiasm, and closed by leading the whole congregation in prayer.

How did Lauren King become a preacher and prayer leader in the Church of Christ? Did not Paul instruct the church of Christ that women were not to “...teach, nor have dominion over a man” (*I Timothy 2:12*)?

Lauren King is a student at Lipscomb University who wanted to broaden her talents unto public preaching. Patrick Mead explained that Lauren was there because “*Lipscomb called*”. They had a student pursuing a “*preaching major, but needs an internship*”. Mead said, “*Send her*”. While it was just a matter of time before this church was to have a female preacher, since they already were using instruments of music in public worship, Lauren

preached that Sunday because the school sought the local church to use her in a preaching capacity. Schools run by brethren have influence over local churches.

Lauren King became a preacher because she was led by subjective feelings. She felt the Lord “*made it clear*” through “*discernment and prayer*” that she was to pick up “*a preaching emphasis*”. When she walks through open doors and “*feels peace about where I am going*”, she knows “*God is telling her, “Yes”*”. She “*perceives the Lord’s voice*” not by revealed Scripture inspired by God, but by how she “*feels*”.

Subjective feelings led Paul to persecute Christians with a clean conscience (*Acts 23:1, 26:9*). The open door that seems right may be just another way to death (*Proverbs 14:12*).

Twisting of Scripture played a part in Lauren’s internship (*2 Peter 3:16*). Senior Minister Mead views Paul’s statements restricting women from teaching over men, thus honoring their submissive role, as “*a temporary issue in Corinth and Ephesus*”. Why? Because we would not today be feeding widows of a cer-

tain age (*I Timothy 5:9*) and would not be allowing women to wear jewelry (*I Timothy 2:9*)??? Paul is revealing that widows with no family, and at least age 60 were to be “*enrolled*” or permanently supported by the church, not that a widow under 60 was not to be “*fed*”. In *I Timothy 2:9*, Paul is condemning the ostentatious spirit that moved women to dress immodestly, not that adorning with jewelry or clothing was a sin in itself (*cf. I Peter 3:3-4*).

If Paul’s instructions to not teach over a man is “*temporary*” in Ephesus, how long will it be before women no longer have to submit to their husbands in everything (*Ephesians 5:24*)?

Mead allowed Lauren to preach because we should “*read Paul through Jesus, not Jesus through Paul*”. What Paul taught the church in limiting women to speak was the “*commandment of the Lord*” (*I Corinthians 14:37*). When you read Paul, you are reading Jesus (*cf. John 16:13-14*).

Lauren King became a preacher in the “*Church of Christ*” because of subjective feelings, twisting of Scripture, and sophistry; not because of “*speaking where the Bible speaks*”!