

WOMEN TRANSLATORS

CHAPTER THIRTY-THREE

INTRODUCTION

The question of whether or not a woman may translate for a man could (logically) be dealt with in three different manners: (1) It could be viewed from the aspect of the worship assembly, (2) it could be viewed from the aspect of: "... every place", and/or (3) it could be viewed from both standpoints. I will examine arguments that have been set forth by various brethren on both sides of this question. There has been one debate (that I know of) on this matter (Berard-Haley Debate). I will be examining the arguments in this debate and of certain other writers. A number of positions taken in this debate and in other writings (on both sides of the issue) have been answered in prior chapters of this present Volume.

Outline of the Possible Interpretations

The following outline gives all of the logical possibilities of this question:

A – Women translating in a mixed worship assembly?

1-Women are only forbidden to translate in a mixed worship assembly. (They are not forbidden to translate outside a mixed worship assembly.)

2-Women are not forbidden to translate in a mixed worship assembly. (Most of those who hold this position also allow women to translate outside the mixed worship assembly.)

B – Women translating: "... in every place?"

1-Women are forbidden to translate: "... in every place" where there is a mixed group.

2-Women are not forbidden to translate: "... in every place" where there is a mixed group. (Most of those who hold this viewpoint claim that women may translate under any condition. However, some claim that the expression: "... in every place" is limited to the worship assembly.)

Of course, we are discussing women translating, in the spiritual realm, with men present. We are not referring to women

translating secular matters. This also brings up the question: “Is a mixed Bible class under the heading of a worship assembly?” Another question is: “What does the expression: ‘... in every place’ mean?” (cf. Chapter 10 and Appendix C)

ARGUMENTS RELATING TO THE WORSHIP ASSEMBLY

Those who object to women translators can be grouped in three categories: First, some have limited their objections to women translators in the worship assembly. Second, others object to women serving as translators for mixed groups in public scenarios, but not in private scenarios. Third, others object to women serving as translators in any mixed scenario that entails spiritual activities (worship of any kind – teaching, praying, etc.). These three groups disagree because: (1) Some think that 1 Tim. 2:12 is limited to the assembly, (2) Some think that 1 Tim. 2:12 is limited to public scenarios, and (3) Some believe that 1 Tim. 2:12 applies to “... every place” (1 Tim. 2:8) meaning every place where mixed groups engage in spiritual activities. It is evident that errors on 1 Tim. 2:12 have affected the interpretation of when women translators might be prohibited.

There are at least two passages that might (hypothetically) apply to women’s role in a worship assembly: (1) 1 Cor. 14:33b-36 and (2) 1 Tim. 2:8-15.

Paul, in 1 Cor. 14:33b-36, prohibited a woman from speaking and asking questions in the worship assembly. The Greek word translated: “speaking (*λαλειν*– pronounced *lalein*)” (vs. 34-35) is a present tense infinitive that means: “To be a speaker.” This was developed in Chapter Nineteen (pp. 262-ff.). In addition, women are forbidden to ask questions of the speaker in vs. 35.

How do those who teach that women may serve as translators in mixed assemblies reply to these points? First, some claim that 1 Cor. 14:33b-36 is limited to the cultural situation of the first century. This argument was answered in Chapters Seventeen and Nineteen. Second, some claim that 1 Cor. 14:33b-36 was limited

to the age of miracles. This argument was answered in Chapter Nineteen and Appendix E.

Since women are forbidden to be speakers in the worship assembly and are forbidden to ask questions of the speaker, the following arguments establish the claim that women are forbidden to serve as translators in a mixed worship assembly:

First Premise: If women are forbidden to serve as speakers in a mixed worship assembly and a translator (interpreter) is a speaker, then women are forbidden to serve as translators in a mixed worship assembly.

Second Premise: Women are forbidden to serve as speakers in a mixed worship assembly and a translator (interpreter) is a speaker.

Conclusion: Women are forbidden to serve as translators in a mixed worship assembly.

The following argument relates to women asking questions of the speaker in a mixed worship assembly:

First Premise: If women are forbidden to ask questions of the speakers in a mixed worship assembly and a translator (interpreter) asks questions of a speaker, then women are forbidden to serve as translators in a mixed worship assembly.

Second Premise: Women are forbidden to ask questions of the speakers in a mixed worship assembly and a translator (interpreter) asks questions of a speaker.

Conclusion: Women are forbidden to serve as translators in a mixed worship assembly.

The only way these two syllogisms can be falsified is to deny the second premise of each syllogism. This means that the following must be true (from contraposition¹ and DeMorgan's theorem):

First Premise: Either women are not forbidden to serve as speakers in a mixed worship assembly or a translator (interpreter) is not a speaker.

Second Premise: A translator is a speaker. (axiomatic)

Conclusion: Women are not forbidden to serve as speakers in a mixed worship assembly.

¹ cf. Fox, 2003, Appendix A for a discussion of contraposition and DeMorgan's theorem.

This means that in order to answer this argument, one must disprove that 1 Cor. 14:33b-36 applies to the 21st century church. Note the following:

First Premise: Either women are not forbidden to ask questions of the speakers in a mixed worship assembly or a translator (interpreter) does not ask questions of a speaker.

Second Premise: Translators (interpreters) do ask questions of a speaker. (admitted by most who advocate women translators)

Conclusion: Women are not forbidden to ask questions of the speakers in a mixed worship assembly.

This means that in order to answer this argument, one must disprove that 1 Cor. 14:33b-36 applies to the 21st century church. Some who deny that 1 Cor. 14:33b-36 applies to 21st century Christians will not allow women to ask questions of the speaker, in a worship assembly. What sound argument can they set forth that prohibits women asking questions of the speaker? If they attempt to make an argument, will it apply to a Bible class? From these arguments, it is manifest why some have opposed what I have written in Chapters 1-23 (in the first editions of Vols. 1 & 2, printed in 2006).

Most of those who advocate women translators make the following arguments: (1) Women speak when they sing (Eph. 5:19) and (2) Women speak when they make the good confession (Rom. 10:9-10). These men fail to recognize that the Greek present tense infinitive (λαλεῖν) translated: "... to speak" (1 Cor. 14:34-35) prohibits a woman being: "The speaker" or the one leading the speaking. A woman is not leading the speaking when the church sings (if there is a man leading the singing). A woman is not leading the speaking when she answers the question: "Do you believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God?" by replying: "Yes" or "I do." A woman is not leading the speaking when she says: "Amen" to a prayer (being led by a man) in the assembly.

In order to prove his claim that 1 Cor. 14:33b-36 does not apply to any non-miraculous context Bob Berard made the following argument:

Where has he proven (not just asserted) that the silence enjoined upon women in the miracle-filled setting of First

Corinthians 14:26ff applies in our worship or Bible classes today? If all of the mandates of that miraculous context apply today, what about the teaching of verses 27-30? Are the speakers always “two, or at the most by three, and that by course” in assemblies (including lectureships) where he is present? (Berard-Haley, p. 70)

Before I consider this passage let me point out that I do not claim this passage applies to a Bible class. Let us examine this passage of Scripture. Paul wrote:

1 Cor. 14:27 If any man (τις) speaketh (λαλει) in a tongue, *let it be* by two, or at the most three, and *that* in turn; and let one interpret: 28 but if there be no interpreter, let him keep silence in the church; and let him speak to himself, and to God.

The reader should note that (even in English) it is clear that the word “man” is singular. The Greek word translated “any man” (τις) is most certainly singular as is the verb translated speaketh (λαλει). What this is saying is that there is to be one tongue speaker who will speak in two or three somethings. It is evident that this makes sense if it is telling the tongue speaker to speak two or three sentences and then allow the translator to translate. This is not referring to two or three speakers (as many interpret it). One should be able to see (that this is singular) in the English text. I have preached and lectured with a translator and this is the best way to preach (two or at most three sentences at a time). The word translated “two” δυο is indeclinable (meaning that it could be either masculine, feminine, or neuter) and the word translated “three” τρεις has the form of a nominative or an accusative (it is obvious that it is accusative). If τρεις is accusative it is either masculine or feminine (it cannot be neuter). It appears that the Greek expression for a sentence is: “ὁ λογος” (Vaughan and Gideon, p. 195). Note that λογος is masculine and would agree with both δυο and τρεις. This would mean that he could be saying: “Two or three sentences.”

Other writers have made the claim that 1 Cor. 14:33b-36 contains an absolute prohibition of women speaking. By this they mean that, if this passage applies today, then women may not speak in any manner (including saying: “Amen to a prayer,” “Singing,” and/or “Making the good confession”). This argument is

unscholarly because it fails to allow the context to define the word translated: "... keep silence" (σιγατωσαν – pronounced *sigatōsan*). This word is found in 1 Cor. 14:28 and 30 (in the immediate context). In 1 Cor. 14:28 Paul contrasts the silence of a tongue speaker with his speaking in a tongue. The tongue speakers were only forbidden to speak in tongues if there were no interpreter. In 1 Cor. 14:30 Paul contrasts the silence of a prophet (when another prophet receives a revelation) with his speaking as a prophet. The prophets were only forbidden to prophesy (speak as a prophet) when another received a revelation. Paul is neither absolutely forbidding a prophet to speak in other manners nor absolutely forbidding a tongue speaker to speak in other manners in the assembly. Women are not forbidden to speak by means of singing, saying "Amen," or by making the "good confession." Women are forbidden to "be the speaker" in 1 Cor. 14:33b-36 (cf. the present tense infinitive - λαλειν). In this context, this applies only when men are present.

ARGUMENTS RELATING TO "EVERY PLACE"

Paul made his instructions of 1 Tim. 2:8-15 applicable everywhere by the expression: "... in every place" (1 Tim. 2:8). The meaning of the expression: "... in every place" is discussed extensively in Chapter 10 and Appendix C.

Many Contradict Themselves

If a woman is teaching (in an authoritative manner) when she serves as a translator where men are present, then she is violating 1 Tim. 2:12. Those who object to my definition of *didaskō* (cf. Chapters 10, 21, and 27) are in a dilemma because their definition of the Greek word *didaskō* comes back to haunt them. Note the following argument:

First Premise: If *didaskō* type teaching is defined as *X* and *didaskō* type teaching of a man by a woman is forbidden and women translators engage in *X* when they translate, then women may not serve as translators with men present.

Second Premise: *didaskō* type teaching is defined as *X* and *didaskō* type teaching of a man by a woman is forbidden and

women translators engage in *X* when they translate. (definition of certain brethren)

Conclusion: Women may not serve as translators with men present.

The letter *X* can be replaced by: (1) imparting knowledge, (2) giving testimony, (3) expounding the way of God, (4) reading the Scriptures, (5) answering spiritual questions, (6) quoting Scripture in answer to a question, (7) citing a passage of Scripture in answer to a question, (8) giving an answer to a brother, (9) showing a brother his fault, (10) evangelizing, (11) having a conversation with a man, etc. These are the *red herrings* that have already been answered throughout this present Volume. (I warn the reader that these certain men will equivocate on the definition of the word “teach” [1 Tim. 2:12] at this point.)

If one denies the consequent of this conditional syllogism, it becomes (by transposition and DeMorgan’s theorem) the first premise of the following syllogism:

First Premise: If women may serve as translators with men present, then either *didaskō* type teaching is not defined as *X* or *didaskō* type teaching of a man by a woman is not forbidden or women translators do not engage in *X* when they translate.

Second Premise: Women may serve as translators with men present. (affirmation of those who support women translators)

Conclusion: *didaskō* type teaching is either not defined as *X* or *didaskō* type teaching of a man by a woman is not forbidden or women translators do not engage in *X* when they translate.

Note the following disjunctive argument derived from the conclusion of this argument:

First Premise: Either *didaskō* type teaching is not defined as *X* or *didaskō* type teaching of a man by a woman is not forbidden or women translators do not engage in *X* when they translate.

Second Premise: *didaskō* type teaching of a man by a woman is forbidden. (axiomatic – 1 Tim. 2:12)

Conclusion: Either *didaskō* type teaching is not defined as *X* or women translators do not engage in *X* when they translate.

Now let us make this conclusion the first premise of the following argument:

First Premise: Either *didaskō* type teaching is not defined as *X* or women translators do not engage in *X* when they translate.
Second Premise: Women translators do engage in *X* when they translate. (most things defined as *X* [above] are axiomatic)
Conclusion: *didaskō* type teaching is not defined as *X*.

Many of those who advocate women translators are in the following dilemma:

Either *didaskō* type teaching is not defined as *X* or they must give up their claim that women may serve as translators.

Many of the men who are arguing for women translators also have rejected my definition of *didaskō* type teaching (as set forth in this present Volume [Chapters 10, 21, and 27]). They need to face this dilemma and reply to it in some reasonable manner. I suggest that they are unable to give a reasonable reply to this dilemma. If they accept my definition of *didaskō* type teaching, they will be forced to give up several of their arguments on women translators.

Women are Teaching When They Serve as Translators

Women certainly engage in *X* when they serve as translators, but do they engage in *didaskō* type teaching when they serve as translators? Bob Berard admitted that women teach when they engage in serving as translators:

... don't you see that the woman's translating to, or teaching a man or men is not in itself wrong, it's the way it is done [the **manner**, and **HOW** including the situation] that can make her teaching a teaching which is OVER the man and therefore sinful. (Berard-Haley, pp. 16-17)

Bob made the unscholarly claim that what is forbidden (in 1 Tim. 2:12) is a woman teaching: "... over the man." I have already pointed out that there is no Greek preposition from which the word *over* is translated (pp. 14 and 325-327). The word *over* is derived from the word translated: "... have dominion over" (ASV) or: "... usurp authority over." (KJV)

To argue that Priscilla (Acts 18:26) taught (*didaskō*) Apollos and that this is a parallel to women translators is an admission that the women translator is engaging in *didaskō* type teaching. (The reader

should carefully note that Luke does not use the Greek word *didaskō* for what Priscilla does. [cf. Appendix G]) In addition, to argue women are commanded to sing and that women teach men by means of their singing (Col. 3:16) and that this is a parallel to women translators is an admission that the woman translator is engaging in *didaskō* type teaching. Berard admitted that the woman translator is teaching, he merely attempted to justify it by appealing to Acts 18:26 and Col. 3:16.

I offer the following dialog to illustrate that translators teach when they translate:

Theophilus: Would you say that one who heard and spoke the words of another was in the same role as a translator.

Inquirer: Yes, I would.

Theophilus: Did not the Holy Spirit take the words of Jesus and give them to the apostles (in different languages – Jn. 16:12-15 and Acts 2:1-11)?

Inquirer: Yes, He did.

Theophilus: Did not the Holy Spirit teach the apostles when He took the words of Jesus and gave them to the apostles (Jn. 14:26)?

Inquirer: Yes, He did.

Theophilus: Since this is what a translator does, does not this analogy show the likelihood that a translator is teaching (just as the Holy Spirit taught the apostles)?

Inquirer: It would seem so.

Note the following argument that adds additional evidence that women translators are engaging in *didaskō* type teaching when they serve as translators:

First Premise: If women translators instruct (teach – KJV - καταχεω - pronounced *katēcheō*) and edify by means of their

translation, then women translators are engaging in teaching when they serve as translators.

Second Premise: Women translators instruct and edify by means of their translation. (1 Cor. 14:19 [instruct - *katēcheō*], 14:5, 12, 13, and 26-28 [edify])

Conclusion: Women translators are engaging in teaching when they serve as translators.

The only question with regard to this argument is: “Does *katēcheō* type teaching include or equal *didaskō* (authoritative) type teaching?” If so, women are forbidden to serve as translators for a mixed audience.

Women Translators and Mixed Praise Teams

A woman translator for a man is no different from having a praise team composed of both women and men with one man leading. Note the argument of some on women translators:

First Premise: If a male is present and controlling when a woman translates for a male speaker, then the woman is in subjection when she translates.

Second Premise: A male is present and controlling when a woman translates for a male speaker.

Conclusion: The woman is in subjection when she translates.

How can this be limited to translation? Let us examine the implication of this argument by converting it into a categorical syllogism. The following is the converted form:

Major Premise: All instances where a male is present and controlling when a woman translates for a male speaker are instances where the woman is in subjection when she translates.

Minor Premise: X is an instance where a male is present and controlling when a woman translates for a male speaker.

Conclusion: X is an instance where a woman is in subjection when she translates.

I shall deny the truth of the major premise by demonstrating the implication of this premise. In order to do this I shall make it the conclusion of the following argument:

Major Premise: All A are instances where the woman is in subjection when she translates.

Minor Premise: All instances where a male is present and controlling when a woman translates for a male speaker are A.

Conclusion: All instances where a male is present and controlling when a woman translates for a male speaker are instances where the woman is in subjection when she translates.

One could make the middle term (A) to be: “instances where the woman conforms to the Scriptures in her actions.” However, this *begs the question* because the issue in question is: “Is a woman conforming to the Scriptures when translating for a mixed audience?”

Those who make this argument need to supply a suitable middle term (A) to prove the soundness of the argument. We need a middle term (A) that does not *beg the question*. Some men are unreasonable (2 Thess. 3:2) and reject logic (sound reasoning) and will ignore this point (they will not even try to supply a suitable middle term). These men (2 Thess. 3:2) are also evil because their hearts are so corrupt that they will not repent when they are shown that they are wrong (they will not humble themselves before God and His Word). If one does not love the truth, he will wind up teaching error (2 Thess. 2:10-12). These men do not believe the truth because they do not love it.

Women Translators and Women Serving the Lord’s Supper

It is evident that if the usage of women translators is lawful, then the act of women serving the Lord’s Supper is lawful. The following dialog demonstrates how I draw this conclusion:

Theophilus: You say that you can defend the practice of having women translators and that this practice will not change the practices of the Lord’s church in any other manner. May I ask you some questions?

Inquirer: Certainly, let us discuss this matter and I will answer your questions.

Theophilus: Why do you object to women serving the Lord’s Supper?

Inquirer: I object to women serving the Lord's Supper because they are in a leadership role when they serve the Lord's Supper.

Theophilus: How do you know they are in a leadership role? What evidence will you give that they are in a leadership role? Suppose that we have four persons serving the Lord's Supper; two of them are men and the other two are women. Let us assume that the two men hold the trays and give half of them to the two women and the men lead the prayers. The women do not make any audible sounds in the process of serving the Supper. How can you say the women are doing anything wrong?

Inquirer: I say they are doing wrong because their very act of being in front of the audience makes them to be leaders.

Theophilus: But, you have already allowed a woman to stand before the congregation and officiate in spiritual activities (serving as a translator), so this will not support your claim.

Inquirer: Well, there must be men who are present and controlling of the women and there are no men present and controlling.

Theophilus: No, as I said, the two men are in charge of the distribution and they are in control of the situation. The men give them the trays and they distribute them to the congregation.

Inquirer: I do not see how I can object to women serving the Lord's Supper, if I continue supporting women translators.

Theophilus: Neither do I, why not study the matter further and repent of teaching this error?

Inquirer: I will study this matter further.

THE CONSTITUENT PARTS ARGUMENT

The constituent parts argument is discussed in detail in the Berard-Haley debate. It is also discussed by: Berard (1994, pp. 13-14), Berard (1995, pp. 3 and 30), Brown (1996), and Warren (1957).

Bob Berard's argument is (Berard-Haley, p. 3):

Major Premise: All total situations in which every component is authorized are total situations which are authorized.

Minor Premise: The use of a woman translator is a total situation in which every component is authorized.

Conclusion: The use of a woman translator is a total situation which is authorized.

Let us logically examine this argument. First, it is logically valid (properly constructed by the rules of logic). Second, the major premise is true. Third, I deny the truthfulness of the minor premise.

In 1995, Bob made the following three arguments to establish his minor premise (pp. 4-5): (1) There is authorization for her presence and hearing. (I agree that this point is true [MRF].) (2) There is authorization for her mental processing (translation) of a message. (I agree that this point is true [MRF].) and (3) There is authorization for her speaking. I disagree with this assertion [MRF]. If the word "speak" is properly defined we learn that a woman is not permitted to speak. (cf. the definition above and in pp. 254-269). In addition, if a woman engages in *didaskō* type teaching when she speaks, the speaking is forbidden (1 Tim. 2:12). In 1997, Bob listed the following four arguments to establish his minor premise:

The woman has authority: (1) to mentally translate the message of a preacher (II Tim. 2:15; 1 Thess. 5:21); (2) to speak in a gender-mixed assembly (Eph. 5:19); (3) to speak alone or singly (Rom. 10:10; Jas. 5:16); and (4) to impart spiritual instruction (Col. 3:16). (p. 13)

At this time Bob was arguing that a woman may teach (*didaskō*) in the assembly and do it alone. Note the following argument:

First Premise: If a woman is permitted to speak alone and is permitted to teach (*didaskō*) when she speaks, then a woman may teach (*didaskō*) alone in the assembly.

Second Premise: A woman is permitted to speak alone and is permitted to teach (*didaskō*) when she speaks. (Assertion of some who defend women translators.)

Conclusion: A woman may teach (*didaskō*) alone in the assembly. (This would justify a woman being a teacher of the assembly or being a preacher in the assembly.)

Berard committed the fallacy of equivocation when he used the word “speak” in two different ways. First, it is referring to being “the speaker” in 1 Cor. 14:33b-36 (cf. Chapter 19), Second, it is referring to answering a question when it is used of a woman either making the good confession or confessing sin, and Third, it is referring to a woman who is neither “the speaker” nor “the leader” when a woman is singing.

Many brethren, who claim that women may serve as translators, would not allow a woman to preach a sermon when she was asked: “Do you believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God?” If they would not allow her to preach a sermon (even for a couple of minutes), they are inconsistent to make this the same as what is forbidden in 1 Cor. 14:33b-36 and 1 Tim. 2:12.

Berard’s Judge - Translator Analogy

Bob was trapped by his belief that 1 Tim. 2:12 prohibited women teaching men in an authoritative manner. He had to argue that a woman translator is teaching, but not teaching in an authoritative manner. Bob made the following analogy (designed to prove that a translator is not teaching in an authoritative manner):

Just as a translator for a criminal court judge need not exercise the judge’s authority over a defendant, the female translator need not exercise the authority of a teacher over his auditors when control in the total court situation makes it apparent to those appearing before him that he (the judge) and not his translator is the one to whom they must make their appeals and he (the judge) and not his translator is the one who will declare their guilt or innocence. The judge judges and the translator translates. (Berard-Haley, p. 5)

Bob has committed the either-or (false dichotomy) fallacy. Bob's argument only allows for two possibilities: (1) Either the translator has the authority of the judge or (2) the translator has no authority. The truth is, the translator has some authority over the audience, but not necessarily the same authority as the judge.

There is another problem with this analogy. The judge has authority to use either a male or a female translator to speak for him in the foreign language. A gospel preacher does not have the authority to allow a woman to speak for him (this is the point in question). Bob is guilty of "begging the question" because his analogy assumes that a preacher has the authority (from God) to use a woman translator. His analogy makes this assumption and it breaks down if this assumption is untrue.

Another problem with this analogy is that a female judge could use either a male or a female translator. Does this mean that a woman preacher could use either a male or a female translator? This would make a male translator to be in subjection to the female speaker (assuming that Berard's arguments are sound). Analogies should never be used to prove propositions; they are only useful in illustrating a matter. Copi writes:

A great many arguments are not designed to demonstrate the truth of their conclusions as following necessarily from their premises, but are intended to merely support their conclusions as probable, or probably true. Arguments of this latter kind are generally called inductive, and are radically different from the deductive variety. Of these nondeductive or inductive arguments, perhaps the type most commonly used is the argument by analogy. (pp. 377-378)

Bob's analogy only illustrates his argument, it does not prove it to be sound (true). Bob's analogy breaks down because it does not parallel the preacher-translator situation in every aspect. I have listed three areas where the argument breaks down (any one of which would falsify his argument). In addition, an analogy never proves something to be true; it only establishes a probability that it is true (analogies are inductive, not deductive in nature).

Bob's analogy could also be answered by asking an audience (of unbiased people) if they viewed a woman translator as having any authority over the audience. If some thought she was exercising any authority over the audience, his analogy would break down.

ANSWERS TO SOME OF BERARD'S QUESTIONS

Bob Berard asked Robin Haley several questions in their debate. I shall respond to some of them in this section. (I will number the question the same as Bob numbered it with the page number following the number.) These were true-false questions.

1-(p. 6)-___ In every case it is sinful for a woman to write a translation she has made of a man's sermon if she intends it to be used for a man's private Bible study. Answer: If a woman engages in *didaskō* type teaching² when she translates a man's sermon for a man's use, then she is forbidden to translate the material (1 Tim. 2:12). Remember that it is possible for one to engage in *didaskō* type teaching by means of his/her writing (2 Thess. 2:15).

2 Thess. 2:15 So then, brethren, stand fast, and hold the traditions which ye were taught (*didaskō*), whether by word, or by epistle of ours.

The question then becomes: "Is she engaging in the type of teaching that is forbidden in 1 Tim. 2:12 when she translates a man's sermon?" Bob has made the mistake of assuming that women are only limited in their roles with men in the public domain. Bob has also made the mistake of assuming that a woman cannot violate 1 Tim. 2:12 by means of teaching through her writing. It is manifest that Bob has "begged the question" with both of these assumptions.

5-(p. 6)-___ In every case it is impossible for anyone to translate a spoken message into another language without modifying the essential meaning of the original message. Answer: There are certainly some instances in which a translator would not modify the essential (whatever Bob means by this word) meaning of the original message. I discussed the problem of having to insert one's

² The reader should remember that this author has defined *didaskō* type teaching as authoritative type teaching.

interpretation into a translation in Fox, 2005, Chapter 14. Allow me to use a problem with translating from English to Russian to show the difficulty of translating without modifying the meaning. The Russian language neither has the indefinite article nor the definite article. Dawson, Bidwell, and Humesky wrote: “Notice that Russian does not have definite or indefinite articles corresponding to English *the, a, an.*” (p. 10) Because of this whenever an English speaking preacher/teacher uses either the indefinite or definite article the translator must either explain the usage or translate it with his/her interpretation. One cannot speak very long (in English) without using either the definite article or the indefinite article. There are a number of other problems, such as the different cases in Russian (instrumental case – as in Greek), but no instrumental case in English. I understand that there are similar problems in going from English to Chinese (Campbell, p. 40).

3-(p. 21)____ In EVERY CASE a Bible teacher (who speaks and understands only Spanish) using a bilingual male translator (who is fluent in both Spanish and English) to present his Bible lesson to an audience (which understands only English) is NOT IN CONTROL of that TEACHING situation. Answer: True How can he be in control when he does not understand what the translator is saying? I have used two different male translators (in Russia) and I caught one of them mistranslating what I spoke (I have taken 1 ½ years of Russian in college). His mistranslation was not deliberate, but he did not have a good enough command of English (I was using scientific language in a debate with a panel of university professors with an audience of several hundred university students). Even when I had one of the best translators, I realized that I was not in control of him. It is a myth that the speaker is controlling the translator! In order to save time, my translator had me to cite a passage and not read it (he read it out of his Russian Bible). If a woman translator were to do this, it would justify having a woman to read Scripture in the assembly. If the Russian translation is accurate, this will get around problems with the translator not giving a good translation (at least of the Scriptures cited).

5.-(p. 21) ____ If Priscilla could teach spiritual truths in the presence of men and could do so without sin, then a woman’s

teaching (or translating) spiritual truths in the presence of men is sin only if it is accomplished in a wrongful manner. Answer: Priscilla did not engage in *didaskō* (authoritative) type teaching of Apollos. This point was set forth in Chapter 12, Appendix A, and Appendix G. Note that Bob is admitting that a woman translator is teaching the audience. How does Bob get around the prohibition of 1 Tim. 2:12? He claims both that Priscilla was teaching Apollos and that women teach (*didaskō*) when they sing (Col. 3:16). I discussed Col. 3:16 in Chapter 20. Bob's argument essentially emasculates 1 Tim. 2:12.

1.(p. 37) ___ A woman may translate by signing to her deaf husband and to his twin brother as all three of them sit on the back pew during a Bible class being taught by a man. Answer: False, it does not matter that she is related to them, the same rules apply to her relationship with any man (including her husband and brother-in-law). Those who claim that a woman may engage in *didaskō* type teaching of a male who is a close family member do not cite a single verse of Scripture to support their claim. Their argument is essentially pragmatic in nature (the end justifies the means) and begs the question. It would seem that sober-minded men would recognize that they have no Scripture to support this argument. I have dealt with the claim that women may engage in authoritative teaching of their adult male relatives in Appendix I.

INTERPRETATION AND TRANSLATION

Definitions of the Words

In this section I will list all of the related words and give all the passages where the words are found in the N. T. in order that the reader may study this matter for himself.

διερμηνεῖα ... (pronounced: *diermēneia*) “(διερμηνεῖω, q. v.), *interpretation* ...” (Thayer, p. 147) Word found in MSS A and D in 1 Cor. 12:10.

διερμηνεῖω (pronounced: *diermēneuō*) “*to interpret* [δια intensifying by marking transition ...] **1.** *to unfold the meaning of what is said, explain, expound* ... **2.** *to translate* into one's

native language” (Thayer, p. 147) “... a strengthened form of *hermēneuō* (*dia*, through, used intensively), signifies to interpret fully, to explain ...” (Vine, p. 608) “With this verb, which is found six times in the NT practically = the *simplex*,³ ...” (Moulton and Milligan, p. 160) Word found in: Lk. 24:27, Acts 9:36, 1 Cor. 12:30, 14:5, 13, and 27.

διερμηνευτης (pronounced: *diermēneutēs*) “*an interpreter*” (Thayer, p. 147) Word found in: 1 Cor. 14:28 (cf. ἐρμηνευτης - below).

ἐρμηνεία (pronounced: *hermēneia*) “*interpretation* (of what has been spoken more less obscurely by others)” (Thayer, p. 250) Word found in: 1 Cor. 12:10 and 14:26.

ἐρμηνευτης (pronounced: *hermēneutēs*) “*an interpreter*” (Thayer, p. 250) Word found in MSS: B, D*, F, and G in: 1 Cor. 14:28.

ἐρμηνευω (pronounced: *hermēneuō*) “fr. ἑρμῆς, who was held to be the god of speech, writing, eloquence, learning”; **1.** *to explain in words, expound ...* **2.** *to interpret*, i. e. to translate what has been spoken or written in a foreign tongue into the vernacular” (Thayer, p. 250) “... denotes to explain, interpret (Eng., hermeneutics), and is used of explaining the meaning of words in a different language ...” (Vine, pp. 607-608) Word found in: Jn. 1:38-39, 42-43, 9:7, and Heb. 7:2.

μεθερμηνευω (pronounced: *methermēneuō*) “*to translate into the language of one with whom I wish to communicate, to interpret*” (Thayer, p. 395) “to change or translate from one language to another (*meta*, implying change, and *hermēneuō*), to interpret ...” (Vine, p. 608) Word found in: Mt. 1:23, Mk. 5:41, 15:22, 34, Jn. 1:41-42, Acts 4:36, and 13:8.

³ Simplex “1. SIMPLE, SINGLE 2: allowing telecommunications in only one direction at a time” (Merriam Webster)

Different Kinds of Interpretation in the New Testament

When a single word is translated, the Holy Spirit used the Greek word *methermēneuō* (except in Acts 9:36), but when speech was translated the Holy Spirit used the Greek words: *hermēneuō* and *diermēneuō*. The word *diermēneuō* is the strongest of the three words. The translation (interpretation) of *diermēneuō* is in line with my points developed in this chapter.

Bob Berard asked Robin Haley the following question:

4. (p. 37) _____ In the situation below, Mary (in order to avoid teaching over men) should not give the information which she knows is needed by both the male teacher and the other class members.

A male teacher whose native language is English has studied Spanish to considerable proficiency and is teaching in Spanish. All the class members (men and women) except one woman (Mary), speak Spanish only. The male teacher is teaching about the second coming of Christ and cannot think of the Spanish expression he wants to use to translate the English expression, “unexpected.” He asks Mary, who speaks both languages fluently, to help him translate. (Berard-Haley, pp. 37-38)

In this scenario Mary is translating in the lowest sense (*methermēneuō*), there are no grammar or syntax problems in her conveying the message to the male teacher of the Bible class. I have already established that a woman may answer a question in a Bible class without engaging in *didaskō* (authoritative) type teaching (throughout this present Volume). In this instance she is doing nothing more than answering a question.

Let us give a scenario that probably occurred in the first century. A tongue speaker at Corinth was speaking in Latin because there were some in the audience who knew Latin, but did not know Greek. In order to translate faithfully, because Latin does not have a definite article, it was necessary for the interpreter to explain the definite article to the Latin speaking group in the assembly. In explaining the definite article, he went beyond simple word-for-word translation (as some would say *methermēneuō* type translation).

This was necessary because the Lord wanted the same message delivered to the Greek speaking part of the audience as to the Latin speaking part of the audience. Other differences in grammar and syntax required the interpreter to engage in *didaskō* type teaching.

*A FORTIORI*⁴ ARGUMENTS

My first *a fortiori* argument is: If a prophet is greater than an interpreter, then a woman prophet is greater than a woman interpreter. If a woman prophet were not allowed to speak to the assembly, a woman interpreter is not allowed to speak to the assembly.

First Premise: If a prophetess is greater than a female interpreter is and a prophetess is not permitted to speak in a mixed spiritual setting, then a female interpreter is not permitted to speak in a mixed spiritual setting.

Second Premise: A prophetess is greater than a female interpreter is and a prophetess is not permitted to speak in a mixed spiritual setting.

Conclusion: A female interpreter is not permitted to speak in a mixed spiritual setting.

This second *a fortiori* argument is sound even if (hypothetically) one were to prove that 1 Cor. 14:33b-36 was limited to a miraculous context:

First Premise: If a prophetess is greater than a female with the gift of interpretation is and a prophetess is not permitted to speak in a mixed spiritual setting, then a female with the gift of interpretation is not permitted to speak in a mixed spiritual setting.

Second Premise: A prophetess is greater than a female with the gift of interpretation is and a prophetess is not permitted to speak in a mixed spiritual setting.

Conclusion: A female with the gift of interpretation is not permitted to speak in a mixed spiritual setting.

⁴ The reader should consult Fox, 2003, Vol. I, Appendix B to see that whatever is true of the lesser is true of the greater (*a fortiori*) and by contraposition (cf. Appendix A of Fox 2003), whatever is not true of the greater is not true of the lesser.

This argument will be followed by the following argument:

First Premise: If a female with the gift of interpretation is greater than a female translating without a gift of interpretation is and a female with the gift of interpretation is not permitted to speak in a mixed spiritual setting, then a female translating without a gift of interpretation is not permitted to speak in a mixed spiritual setting.

Second Premise: A female with the gift of interpretation is greater than a female translating without a gift of interpretation is and a prophetess is not permitted to speak in a mixed spiritual setting.

Conclusion: A female translating without a gift of interpretation is not permitted to speak in a mixed spiritual setting.

The necessary inference is that women translators are not permitted to translate in a mixed assembly of the church. These two *a fortiori* arguments prove that 1 Cor. 14:33b-36 applies to the 21st century church.

ARGUMENT FROM EXPEDIENCY

I have observed a number of preachers who have tried to justify some unsound practice upon the basis of expediency. Bob Berard (1994) made the following argument from expediency:

Major Premise: All means which are advantageous to the accomplishment of a God-assigned obligation and which do not themselves constitute a violation of God's will are scriptural expedients.

Minor Premise: The use of a woman translator is a means which is advantageous to the accomplishment of a God-assigned obligation and which does not itself constitute a violation of God's will.

Conclusion: The use of a woman translator is a scriptural expedient.

Let us examine this argument. First, the argument is valid (properly constructed by the rules of logic), Second the major premise is true (except, that it must be qualified – “All lawful means ...”), and Third, the minor premise is not true. I admit that it would be advantageous (if it were in harmony with the will of God) to have women translators. It would also be advantageous to have women

preachers, but it is not lawful to have either. If we qualify the first premise (“All lawful means ...”), we can see how Bob engaged in the logical fallacy of “begging the question.” Bob had to assume it was lawful before he discusses whether or not it is advantageous. Bob just “glossed over” the question of whether or not it is lawful. We see from this that Bob assumed that the woman translator is lawful in order to prove that having a woman translator is lawful. Here is Bob’s corrected argument (proving that he is begging the question):

Major Premise: All lawful means which are advantageous to the accomplishment of a God-assigned obligation and which do not themselves constitute a violation of God’s will are scriptural expedients.

Minor Premise: The use of a woman translator is a lawful means which is advantageous to the accomplishment of a God-assigned obligation and which does not itself constitute a violation of God’s will.

Conclusion: The use of a woman translator is a scriptural expedient.

Note that Bob assumes that the usage of a woman translator is lawful in order to affirm his minor premise. Many arguments from expediency are of this form (they beg the question).

In order to evaluate whether or not an act is expedient we must examine several things: First, it must be lawful (using women translators is not lawful), Second, it must not cause division (using women translators has caused division), Third, it must not be viewed as a violation of God’s will by non-Christians (some non-Christians view it as a woman exercising authority over men), and Fourth, it must truly expedite the cause of Christ. CHART RW-38

One is misguided to argue from the standpoint of expediency, because a translator is not an expedient (or an aid). A translator is necessary, if the speaker does not know the language of the audience (1 Cor. 14:28). Allow me to illustrate this with baptism. It is expedient (or an aid) to have a baptistery in the building where the church assembles, but it is not necessary to have a baptistery. It is necessary to have water to perform the baptism, therefore water is not an expedient (not an aid) like a baptistery, it is a requirement.

The reader should be aware that nothing is an aid that is required; therefore it is not proper to claim that the usage of a woman translator is an aid. The question of whether or not to use a man or a woman translator would be an expedient (if it were lawful to use a woman translator with a mixed audience– which is not lawful). No child of God should contemplate doing anything, unless he has first determined that is it lawful! I am amazed that brethren would make the claim that expediency justifies this practice. How many false teachers have used expediency to justify their sinful practices?

SUMMARY OF FOX’S ARGUMENTS

The arguments set forth by this author, in this chapter, can be summarized around two different passages of Scripture (1 Cor. 14:33b-36 and 1 Tim. 2:12).

Paul, in 1 Cor. 14:33b-36, implicitly prohibited the usage of women translators by his forbidding a woman engaging in speaking (*lalein*) and asking questions in the assembly. Since a Bible class is not an assembly (because the whole church is not usually in the Bible class), women may ask questions in a Bible class.

Paul, in 1 Tim. 2:8-15, implicitly prohibited the usage of women translators everywhere (including the assembly and any time where there are mixed groups outside the assembly). Any time a woman assumes the role of a teacher of men (*didaskein*), in every place (everywhere), she violates 1 Tim. 2:8-12. A woman asking questions (outside the assembly), unless she asks them in a wrong manner, is allowed (this point has been established in this present Volume).

OTHER PROBLEMS WITH THIS MATTER

Some of those who are against the usage of women translators have made several unsound claims. First, I know of at least one preacher who claims that Bible classes are assemblies of the church. If this were true and an eldership were overseeing five Bible classes (held simultaneously) and each Bible class were an assembly of the church, then one eldership would oversee five assemblies of the

church. This would justify a denominational structure for the church (one eldership over more than one assembly [or more than one church]). Another problem with this claim is: If a Bible class is an assembly and women are not allowed to speak in the assembly (1 Cor. 14:33b-36), then women may not speak in a Bible class (even if men are not present).⁵ This would mean that women may not teach a Bible class that included women and/or children. (This is the very argument that our non-class brethren have made.) Still another problem with this claim is that women are forbidden to teach in some place (1 Tim. 2:12) and virtually everyone agrees that this includes the assembly (some limit it to the assembly, others [M. Fox included] apply it to every place [1 Tim. 2:8] in which spiritual activities are engaged).

Second, I know of at least one preacher who claims that modern day preachers are prophets. He denies that miracles are worked today, but still claims that non-inspired preachers are prophets. This implies that 1 Cor. 13:8-10 has not been fulfilled. This is implicit Pentecostalism. This was his answer to one of the arguments made (by some who support women translators for mixed groups) against 1 Cor. 14:33b-36 applying to modern day people.⁶

SIGNING FOR THE DEAF

American Sign Language is a bona fide language. Even though it is not an oral language, it is a language. All the arguments I have made with regard to women translating an oral language are applicable to signing for the deaf.

The American Sign Language has a different vocabulary and grammar-syntax structure than spoken English. It is simpler in

⁵ This would be true, unless we successfully argue that 1 Cor. 14:33b-36 relates to mixed assemblies and does not apply to women only assemblies. I am convinced that this passage relates to mixed assemblies and that it does not apply to women only or women and children only assemblies.

⁶ Certain preachers have argued that 1 Cor. 14:33b-36 relates to prophets and that it cannot apply to us today because we do not have prophets (since the age of miracles).

structure than spoken English. This requires interpretation by the translator to communicate any spoken message to deaf audiences. It also requires interpretation to communicate a message from a deaf person signing to one who speaks English.

One problem with this practice is that brethren have had women to sign for the deaf in a number of churches. We have a problem with repenting of our past sins (repentance is difficult, that is, it requires that we humble ourselves and admit that we have sinned). Once a matter becomes practice, we tend to try to justify ourselves rather than honestly accept the arguments against our practice and repent. Truly, repentance may be the most difficult of all of God's commandments.

PREDICTIONS BY MARION FOX

Based upon the logical implications (not that I claim to be a prophet or to have supernatural knowledge), I predict that those who are advocating that the usage of women translators is scriptural will eventually engage in the following (because they have emasculated 1 Cor. 14:33b-36): First, they will allow women to ask questions in the assembly. Second, they will allow women to read Scripture in the assembly, because the woman translator essentially reads Scripture. Third, they will allow women to make announcements in the assembly, because they have no passage that prohibits her from being a speaker. Fourth, they will either forbid women reading the Bible to men in a Bible class or they will allow it in the assembly. If they claim a woman is teaching (and violating 1 Tim. 2:12) by reading the Bible in order to keep her from reading the Bible in the assembly, they must forbid her reading the Bible in a Bible class. If they properly teach that reading the Bible is not *didaskō* type teaching and they have emasculated 1 Cor. 14:33b-36, they have no passage that forbids a woman reading the Bible in the assembly. Fifth, they will not be able to oppose women serving the Lord's Supper and will eventually allow women to serve the Lord's Supper.

I think we are seeing some of the fruits of the error of defending women translators by the reactions to my two Volumes (most of those who used and defended the usage of women translators have

strongly attacked the doctrines taught in my three Volumes [Fox 2006 Vols. I & II] and Fox 2007). These men have not been specific about what they are objecting to in these three books, but some have even lied about what I teach. The following false claims have been made: (1) that I do not believe a woman may teach a man under any conditions, (2) that I do not believe a woman may grade a man's Bible correspondence course, (3) that I do not believe that a woman may have a discussion with a man about the Scriptures, (4) that I do not believe that a woman may impart spiritual information to a man, and other false accusations about what I believe. (I will wait upon God to deal with these men [Rev. 21:8]).

A SHAMEFUL PRAGMATIC ARGUMENT ANSWERED

I dealt with pragmatic reasoning in Chapter Eighteen. I also discussed pragmatic arguments in some of this present Volume in pp. 14, 289, and 309. It is shameful that any Christian would use pragmatic reasoning. I will quote several arguments that various brethren have made on women translators.

Ira Rice wrote:

One brother and his wife went to Latvia with some of us. When we could find no male translator who could translate Bible doctrine correctly, that couple returned home to the U. S. without teaching a single soul rather than acquiesce to our use of female translators who could and did translate correctly. (p. 3)

With respect to the brother who returned home without violating his conscience, I am amazed that a brother-in-Christ would condemn him for not violating his conscience. Note my argument:

First Premise: If the usage of women translators is sinful, then no Christian should use women translators for mixed audiences.

Second Premise: The usage of women translators is sinful. (established in this chapter)

Conclusion: No Christian should use women translators for mixed audiences.

I am disappointed that any brother would make a pragmatic argument like this one. Brother Rice should have respected his brother for not violating his conscience, rather than ridicule him. I think that Ira should have studied Rom. 14:1-23 and 1 Cor. 8:1-13.

He should have treated him as a weaker brother. (In fact, the brother who objected to using women translators was the brother who was standing for the truth and was not the weaker brother.)

I also ask: “How did Ira know that the female: ‘... could and did translate correctly,’ if he did not know the language?” He did not have any evidence to support this naked assertion!

WHO HAS BEEN INVOLVED IN USING WOMEN TRANSLATORS IN EVANGELISM?

Two different groups have been involved in using women translators in evangelism and edification. First, quite a few congregations have been using women translators to translate for the deaf. I have always thought this was wrong, but have not pressed the issue until now. The brethren introduced a change without studying it fully. Repentance is difficult, because they must admit they have been wrong in the past!

Second, with the opening of the Soviet Union to evangelism there were a number of preachers who wanted to go there to preach to these people. Even so-called “conservative” preachers began to use women translators to translate their sermons and/or classes. If you go to the references at the end of this chapter, you will see that some prominent brethren used women translators. There was a “gentlemen’s agreement” among the so-called “conservative brethren” to stop using women translators. The Memphis School of Preaching was one group that had been using women translators (along with those mentioned in this chapter).

David Brown published a list of articles that had been written on this subject (Brown, 1997, p. 9). You will note the absence of articles by the director/faculty of the Memphis School of Preaching on this subject. They used women translators, but did not write in defense of them.

You will note that I addressed several arguments that were used to support women translators in Vols. I and II. It is possible that much of the opposition (particularly from the MSOP director, faculty, and

graduates) was because I had opposed the doctrines they taught. If these men had strong convictions, why have they not written on these subjects and debated these questions? Why have they resorted to misrepresentations of what I teach?

CONCLUSION

The usage of women translators to translate spiritual matters in mixed groups is contrary to the Scriptures and should not be done by faithful brethren. It is shameful for men not to qualify themselves to serve the Lord by being translators. Women are forbidden to serve as translators (for mixed groups in spiritual activities): (1) in the assembly (1 Cor. 14:33b-36) and (2) everywhere (1 Tim. 2:8-15).

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Berard, Bob. "May women scripturally translate in a mixed assembly?" *Contending for The Faith*. Vol 25 # 9, Sept. 1994, pp. 12-14.

Berard, Bob; Haley, Robin. (1995). *May a woman translate to an audience which includes men?* Spring, TX: Bible Resource Pub. (I will refer to this Volume as: *The Berard-Haley Debate*.)

Berard, Bob. "New hermeneutic and other efforts fail to support man-made law against the female translator?" *Contending for The Faith*. Vol 28 # 2, Feb. 1997, p. 13.

Brown, David. "The constituent element argument and the female translator." *Contending For The Faith*. Vol. 27 # 2, Feb. 1996, pp. 2-13.

Brown, David. "Articles published in opposition to a female translator." *Contending For The Faith*. Vol. 28 # 2, Feb. 1997, p. 9.

Campbell, Roger D. "Women translators" *Seek the Old Paths*. Vol. 7 # 5, May 1996, pp. 39-40.

Copi, Irving M. (1978). *Introduction to logic, 5th ed.* New York: Macmillan Pub. Co. Inc.

Dawson, Clayton L.; Bidwell, Charles E.; and Humesky Assya (1964) *Modern Russian 1*. Washington, D.C.: Georgetown University Press.

Moulton, James Hope; Milligan, George (1976). *The vocabulary of the Greek Testament, Illustrated from the papyri and other non-literary sources*. Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans Pub. Co.

Rice, Ira Y. Jr. "Some things don't matter one way or the other." *Contending for the faith*. Vol. 28 # 2, Feb. 1997, pp. 2-4.

Vine, W. E. (no date). *Vine's expository dictionary of New Testament words*. McLean, VA: MacDonald Publishing Co.

Warren, Thomas B. (1957). *Lectures on church cooperation and orphan homes*. Jonesboro, AR: National Christian Press Inc, pp. 26-34.