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CROSS                      A Message from  
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**Question:** Does the Bible restrict women from praying?

**Answer:** The Bible urges all of God's children to pray. Paul said, "***Pray without ceasing, in everything give thanks, for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you,***" (*1<sup>st</sup> Thess. 5:17-18*). Women are included in that injunction as well as men. Also, we find examples where women like Hannah, Hagar and Lydia prayed. Of course, women should pray.

However, in the public worship assembly, where both men and women are present, the Bible specifies that men only are to lead the prayers. We find this directive in *1<sup>st</sup> Tim. 2:8*, "***I desire therefore that the men pray everywhere, lifting up holy hands, without wrath and doubting.***" The word translated "men" here is the Greek "aner", and refers exclusively to men. The force of that word is made more apparent when you consider that in *verses 1, 4 and 5* of this same chapter, a different word for "men" is used. In those verses, the word "men" is from the Greek "anthropos", a generic word for "mankind", and includes men and women.

Thus, what is taught is as follows: *Verse 1*, prayers are to be made for all men (mankind). *Verse 4*, God desires for all men (mankind) to be saved. *Verse 5*, there is one Mediator between God and men (mankind). But, in *verse 8*, suddenly, the Holy Spirit has Paul to change the word for men so it's understood that when it comes to public worship, where men and women are both present, the men only are to lead the prayers.

--Steve McCaslin