

### Women in the Early Church

**Memory Verse:** *Each one should use whatever gift he has received to serve others, faithfully administering God's grace in its various forms* (1 Pet. 4:10 NIV).

#### Background Helps:

The place of honor that Jesus gave to women is continued in the life of the early church. Although the chief leadership functions were given to men (apostles and elders), various women are portrayed using their spiritual gifts, doing their part in building the church of Jesus Christ.

#### Lesson Helps:

Once again your lesson could follow one of several alternatives:

1. My aim is to teach my students the role of various women in the early church, so that they will exercise their gifts to serve the Lord in the body of Christ. Consider such examples as Dorcas, Lydia, Priscilla, and the women of Romans 16 to show your class the role of women in the early church. Challenge your students (whether male or female) to use their gifts to serve others in the body of Christ (or in the work of evangelism). In a larger class, divide into small groups with each group assigned to research the gifts and service of one of the women. Report back to the rest. The memory verse, 1 Peter 4:10, is particularly suitable for this lesson.
2. My aim is to teach my students about the contrast between Sapphira (Acts 4:32–5:11) and Priscilla (Acts 18:1-4, 18-21, 24-28, et al) in the way each supported her husband, so that they will support their spouses in a way that pleases God. Notice how both of these women supported their husbands, but in one case Sapphira supported Ananias in his deception and sin while in the other case Priscilla supported Aquila in his service for Christ. Challenge your students to follow the second example in their marriage!
3. You may also choose to focus your lesson on just one of the week's Bible readings, for example, the service of Dorcas (Acts 9:36-43) or the conversion of Lydia (Acts 16:11-16, 40) or the disunity between Euodia and Synteche (Phil. 1:27; 2:1-4; 4:2-3) or the godly influence of Lois and Eunice on Timothy (1 Tim. 1:5; 3:14-17). Write up an appropriate aim and devise methods to get your students involved in the lesson.

#### Assignment:

-  Read about **Moses' farewell sermon (Great Sermons of the Bible).**
-  Memorize **Deuteronomy 6:5.**