MARY'S CHOICE

"NOW IT CAME TO PASS,AS THEY WENT,THAT HE ENTERED INTO A CERTAIN VILLIAGE:AND A CERTAIN WOMAN NAMED MARTHA RECEIVED HIM INTO HER HOUSE.AND SHE HAD A SISTER CALLED MARY,WHICH ALSO SAT AT JESUS' FEET, AND HEARD HIS WORD.BUT MARTHA WAS CUMBERED ABOUT MUCH SERVING,AND CAME TO HIM AND SAID,LORD,DOST THOU NOT CARE THAT MY SISTER HATH LEFT ME TO SERVE ALONE? BID HER THEREFORE THAT SHE HELP ME.AND JESUS ANSWERED AND SAID UNTO HER,MARTHA,MARTHA,THOU ART CAREFUL AND TROUBLED ABOUT MANY THINGS:BUT ONE THING IS NEEDFUL:AND MARY HATH CHOSEN THAT GOOD PART, WHICH SHALL NOT BE TAKEN AWAY FROM HER"(LUKE 10:38-42).NOTICE THAT JESUS DID NOT REBUKE MARTHA FOR SERVING,THAT IS PART OF A WOMAN'S WORK.BUT HE DID REBUKE HER FOR BEING SO BURDENED AND CAREFUL ABOUT UNNECESSARY SERVING THAT SHE HAD NO TIME FOR THE WORD OF GOD.A POT OF BEANS,A PAN OF CORNBREAD AND A BATCH OF COOKIES,WOULD HAVE BEEN SUFFICIENT TO SATISFY THE HUNGRY;AND MARTHA,TOO,WOULD HAVE HAD TIME TO SIT AT JESUS' FEET.IN OTHER WORDS WE SHOULD ALWAYS PUT THE MOST IMPORTANT THINGS FIRST;AND THE TRIMMINGS LAST,IF WE HAVE TIME FOR THEM WITHOUT NEGLECTING THE "GOOD PART".THE COMMAND COMES TO US WOMEN,AS WELL AS TO MEN,TO:"SEEK YE FIRST THE KINGDOM OF GOD AND HIS RIGHTEOUSNESS;AND ALL THESE THINGS SHALL BE ADDED UNTO YOU"(MATTHEW 6:33).

I HAVE BEEN WORKING ON A SERIES OF ARTICLES,WHICH I HOPE EACH OF YOU IN ONE SMALL WAY OR ANOTHER WILL FIND EDIFYING AND,OR,ENCOURAGING.I AM NOT PRESUMING THAT YOU DO NOT KNOW THESE THINGS.BUT,AS PETER SAYS IN 2PET.1:12,13:"WHEREFORE I WILL NOT BE NEGLIGENT TO PUT YOU ALWAYS IN REMEMBRANCE OF THESE THINGS,THOUGH YE KNOW THEM,AND BE ESTABLISHED IN THE PRESENT TRUTH.YEA,I THINK IT MEET,AS LONG AS I AM IN THIS TABERNACLE,TO STIR YOU UP BY PUTTING YOU IN REMEMBRANCE." ALSO AS DAVID SAID IN PS.71:16-18:"I WILL GO IN THE STRENGTH OF THE LORD:I WILL MAKE MENTION OF THY RIGHTEOUSNESS,EVEN OF THINE ONLY.O GOD,THOU HAST TAUGHT ME FROM MY YOUTH:HITHERTO I HAVE DECLARED THY WONDEROUS WORKS.NOW ALSO WHEN I AM OLD AND GRAY HEADED,O GOD,FORSAKE ME NOT;TILL I HAVE SHEWED THY STRENGTH UNTO THIS GENERATION,AND THY POWER TO EVERYONE THAT IS TO COME PAUL IN TIT.2:3,4,SAID TO THE OLDER WOMEN,"TEACHERS OF GOOD THINGS:THAT THEY MAY TEACH THE YOUNG WOMEN------."

I WONDER HOW MANY OF YOU REALIZE JUST HOW MUCH TEACHING A WOMAN PROFESSING GODLINESS MIGHT DO.WE HAVE ALL BEEN TOLD BY PREACHERS THAT WE ARE TO TEACH THE YOUNG WOMEN AND CHILDREN,AND KEEP SILENCE IN THE CHURCH.AND THEY HAVE TOLD US CORRECTLY AS FAR AS THEYWENT;THEY HAVE SCRIPTURES FOR TEACHING THUS.ALSO THAT A WOMAN IS NOT TO USURP AUTHORITY OVER THE MAN.BUT LET US STUDY CLOSELY SOME OF THE SCRIPTURES THAT HAVE TO DO WITH WOMEN IN THIS EFFORT.WE KNOW THE BIBLE DOES NOT CONTRADICT ITSELF.ALL PASSAGES AGREE,IF WE ARE PUTTING THE RIGHT APPLICATION ON THEM.IF ONE DISAGREES WITH THE OTHERS,THEN IT CAN ONLY MEAN WE ARE MAKING A MIS-APPLICATION SOMEWHERE.THE BIBLE DOES NOT CONTRADICT ITSELF.

1COR.14:34,35:"LET YOUR WOMEN KEEP SILENCE IN THE CHURCHES:FOR IT IS NOT PERMITTED UNTO THEM TO SP EAK:BUT THEY ARE COMMANDED TO BE UNDER OBEDIENCE,AS ALSO SAITH THE LAW.AND IF THEY WILL LEARN ANYTHING, LET THEM ASK THEIR HUSBANDS AT HOME:FOR IT IS A SHAME FOR WOMEN TO SPEAK IN THE CHURCH." AUTHORITY MEANS,POWER.VINE'S DEFINATION OF GREEK WORDS, GIVES THE MEANING HERE,TO BE "TO DOMINATE;TO HAVE DOMINION OVER."SO IF A WOMAN TAUGHT IN THE CHURCH ASSEMBLY,THE LORD SAID IT WOULD BE TO HER SHAME,BECAUSE SHE WOULD BE HAVING DOMINION,OR LEADERSHIP OVER THE MEN. SHE WOULD BE USURPING AUTHORITY,OR POWER THE LORD DELEGATED TO MEN.SHE WOULD BE SEEKING TO WORK IN THEIR MEASURE,AND NOT IN THE MEASURE DELEGATED TO HER AS A WOMAN.1COR.10:12-14:"---BUT WE WILL NOT BOAST OF THINGS WITHOUT OUR MEASURE,BUT ACCORDING TO THE MEASURE OF THE RULE WHICH GOD HATH DISTRIBUTED TO US,A MEASURE TO REACH EVEN UNTO YOU.FOR WE STRETCH NOT OURSELVES BEYOND OUR MEASURE------." SO BY THE RULE OF GOD THERE IS A MEASURE IN WHICH IT IS OUR DUTY TO WORK;BUT NOT TO STRETCH OURSELVES BEYOND OUR MEASURE.BY READING AND STUDYING THIS RULE OF GOD,I FIND ONLY THESE TWO RESTRICTIONS ON A WOMAN USEING HER INFLUENCE AS A PROPHETESS.WHAT IS A PROPHETESS? PAUL SAID IN 1COR:14:3,"HE THAT PROPHESIETH SPEAKETH UNTO MEN TO EDIFICATION,AND EXHORTATION,AND COMFORT." SO,A PROPHETESS IS A WOMAN WHO SPEAKS UNTO EDIFICATION,AND EXHORTATION,AND COMFORT.BUT A PROPHETESS MUST BE CAREFUL TO WORK ONLY IN THE MEASURE THE LORD HAS GIVEN HER.ACCORDING TO THE SCRIPTURAL RULE WE HAVE STUDDIED,WE KNOW SHE CANNOT PROPHESY IN THE CHURCH ASSEMBLY;SHE SHE CANNOT USURP,OR HAVE DOMINION OVER THE MEN:THIS WOULD BE BREAKING

THE RULE GOD HAS GIVEN HER.

BUT GOD HAS GIVEN HER A MEASURE IN WHICH TO PROPHESY.HE HAS COMMANDED THAT SHE BE A TEACHER OF GOOD THINGS.HE HAS GIVEN HER EXAMPLES OF WOMEN DOING THESE THINGS.

ACTS 18:24-26:"AND A CERTAIN JEW NAMED APOLLOS,BORN AT ALEXANDRIA,AN ELOQUENT MAN,AND MIGHTY IN THE SCRIPTURES,CAME TO EPHESUS.THIS MAN WAS INSTRUCTED IN THE WAY OF THE LORD;BEING FERVENT IN THE SPIRIT, HE SPAKE AND TAUGHT DILIGENTLY THE THINGS OF THE LORD,KNOWING ONLY THE BAPTISM OF JOHN.AND HE BEGAN TO SPEAK BOLDLY IN THE SYNAGOGUE:WHOM WHEN AQUILA AND PRISCILLA HEARD,THEY TOOK HIM UNTO THEM,AND EXPOUNDED UNTO HIM THE WAY OF THE LORD MORE PERFECTLY." NOTICE,PRISCILLA,IN COMPANY WITH HER HUSBAND,EXPOUNDED UNTO THIS MIGHTY PREACHER THE WAY OF GOD MORE PERFECTLY.PRISCILLA IS NOT CONDEMNED FOR DOING THIS.SHE WAS NOT ASSERTING DOMINION OVER HIM.SHE DID NOT DO IT IN THE PUBLIC ASSEMBLY, USURPING AUTHORITY OVER THE MEN THERE.BUT TAKING HIM UNTO HERSELF;SHE DID IT IN PRIVATE CONVERSATION.WHETHER IT WAS IN THE TEMPLE,TO ONE SIDE AFTER SERVICES WERE DISMISSED,OR IN HER HOME,WE DO NOT KNOW.BUT WE DO KNOW SHE WAS NOT USURPING AUTHORITY OVER THIS MAN IN DOING THIS:TEACHING THIS MIGHTY PREACHER.SHE WAS WORKING IN HER OWN MEASURE,GIVEN BY THE RULE OF GOD FOR US,SHE TAUGHT HIM PRIVATELY.HE COULD HAVE REFUSED TO LISTEN TO A WOMAN,IF HE HAD CHOSEN TO DO SO.SHE HAD NO AUTHORITY OR DOMINION OVER HIM.BUT IN PRIVATE CONVERSATION,IN HER MEASURE AS A WOMAN,SHE EXPOUNDED UNTO HIM THE WAY OF THE LORD MORE PERFECTLY.AND HE, LOVING THE TRUTH,AND RESPECTING HER AS A SISTER,LISTENED AND LEARNED.

ACTS 21:8-10:"AND THE NEXT DAY WE THAT WERE OF PAUL'S COMPANY DEPARTED,AND CAME UNTO CAESAREA:AND ENTERED INTO THE HOUSE OF PHILIP THE EVANGELIST,WHICH WAS ONE OF THE SEVEN;AND ABODE WITH HIM.AND THE SAME MAN HAD FOUR DAUGHTERS,VIRGINS,WHICH DID PROPHESY." THESE WOMEN, IN THE PRIVACY OF THEIR FATHER'S HOME "DID PROPHESY"(SPEAK UNTO EDIFICATION,EXHORTATION,AND COMFORT),WITH SUCH MEN AS THEIR FATHER,THE APOSTLE PAUL,LUKE THE PHYSICIAN,AND THE REST OF THEIR COMPANY OF CHRISTIAN MEN.BUT THEY ARE NOT CONDEMNED FOR DOING THIS.THIS WAS ACCORDING TO THE RULE OF GOD FOR US.THIS IS OUR MEASURE AS CHRISTIAN WOMEN.

LUKE 2:36-38,"AND THERE WAS ONE ANNA,A PROPHETESS,THE DAUGHTER OF PHANUEL,OF THE TRIBE OF ASHER:SHE WAS OF GREAT AGE,AND HAD LIVED WITH AN HUSBAND SEVEN YEARS FROM HER VIRGINITY;AND SHE WAS A WIDOW OF ABOUT FOURSCORE AND FOUR YEARS,AND DEPARTED NOT FROM THE TEMPLE,BUT SERVED GOD WITH FASTINGS AND PRAYERS NIGHT AND DAY.AND SHE COMING IN AT THAT INSTANT GAVE THANKS LIKEWISE TO THE LORD,AND SPAKE OF HIM(CHRIST) TO ALL THAT LOOKES FOR REDEMPTION IN JERUSALEM".ANNA WAS A PROPHETESS; SHE SPAKE NOT ONLY TO MARY AND JOSEPH,BUT TO ALL OTHERS SHE CAME IN CONTACT WITHOF THE SAVIOUR.BUT SINCE THE BIBLE STATES SHE WAS SERVING GOD,WE KNOW SHE WAS NOT ADDRESSING THE PUBLIC ASSEMBLY.SHE WAS WORKING IN THE MEASURE OF THE RULE GOD GAVE US:SPEAKING PRIVATELY TO THOSE SHE MET COMING AND GOING IN THE TEMPLE;WHILE SHE SERVED GOD NIGHT AND DAY WITH PRAYERS AND FASTINGS,NOT DEPARTING FROM THE TEMPLE;AND WE HAVE NO RIGHT TO ASSUME SHE WAS LEADING PRAYERS IN THE PUBLIC ASSEMBLY;OR THAT SHE WAITED UNTIL SHE WENT HOME TO PRAY.THE RULE SAYS,"WOMEN ARE COMMANDED TO BE UNDER OBEDIENCE,AS ALSO SAITH THE LAW"(1COR.14:35).AND ANNA,BEING A SERVANT OF GOD,WAS OBEDIENT TO THE RULE GIVEN HER.1TIM.2:1-4 GIVES AN OUTLINE OF SOME OF THE THINGS IN WHICH THE CHRISTIAN WOMAN TODAY SHOULD BE SERVING GOD BY PRAYERS OF FAITH:"I EXHORT THEREFORE,THAT FIRST OF ALL,SUPPLICATIONS,PRAYERS,INTERCESSIONS,AND GIVING OF THANKS, BE MADE FOR ALL MEN;FOR KINGS,AND FOR ALL THAT ARE IN AUTHORITY;THAT WE MIGHT LEAD A QUIET AND PEACEABLE LIFE WITH ALL GODLINESS AND HONESTY. FOR THIS IS GOOD AND ACCEPTABLE IN THE SIGHT OF GOD OUR SAVIOUR;WHO WILL HAVE ALL MEN TO BE SAVED,AND COME TO A KNOWLEDGE OF THE TRUTH".NOT BY LEADING PUBLIC PRAYERS IN THE CHURCH ASSEMBLY;BUT PRIVATELY,IN HER MEASURE ACCORDING TO THE RULE.PRAYER FOR,AND ON BEHALF OF ALL THE CHRISTIANS;PRAYERS FOR OUR LOVED ONES;PRAYERS FOR THE RULERS OF THE WORLD;PRAYERS FOR THE LOST,THAT THEY MAY OBEY THE GOSPEL.

JUD.4:4,5;"AND DEBORAH,A PROPHETESS,THE WIFE OF LAPIDOTH,SHE JUDGED ISRAEL AT THIS TIME.AND SHE DWELT UNDER THE PALM TREE OF DEBORAH BETWEEN RAMAH AND BETHEL IN MOUNT EPHRAIM;AND THE CHILDREN OF ISRAEL CAME UP TO HER FOR JUDGEMENT".NOTICE THIS WONDERFUL WOMAN IS NOT CONDEMNED FOR JUDGING ISRAEL.SHE DIDN'T SET HERSELF USURPING AUTHORITY OVER MEN. SHE DWELT WITH HER HUSBAND,UNDER HER PALM TREE.BUT PEOPLE CAME TO HER BECAUSE OF HER KNOWLEDGE OF THE WORD OF GOD:AND SHE JUDGED THEM.READ THE ENTIRE 5TH AND 4TH CHAPTERS OF JUDGES. SHE SENT TO BARAK,AND TOLD HIM

THE LORD HAD CHOSEN HIM TO DELIVER ISRAEL.AND EVEN WHILE ENCOURAGING, HELPING,EDIFYING,EXHORTING,AND COMFORTING HIM,SHE KEPT HERSEL F IN THE BACKGROUND.BUT BARAK WOULD NEVER HAVE SAVED ISRAEL WITHOUT THE HELP OF DEBORAH AND JAEL.BARAK WAS THE LEADER:BUT DEBORAH ENCOURAGED AND HELP-HIM.WE NEED A LOT OF FAITHFUL DEBORAHS TODAY.PAUL RECOGNIZED AND ACK-NOWLEDGED THE HELP OF WOMEN.PHIL.4:3,"AND I ENTREAT THEE ALSO,TRUE YOKEFELLOW,HELP THOSE WOMEN WHICH LABORED WITH ME IN THE GOSPEL--", THE BIBLE DOSEN'T SAY THESE WOMEN JUST GAVE PAUL A BED AND MEALS;WHILE THIS IS A GOOD WORK ALSO,AND PROBABLY INCLUDED.BUT THEY LABORED WITH HIM IN THE GOSPEL.ROM.16:3-4,"GREET PRISCILLA AND AQUILA,MY HELPERS IN CHRIST JESUS:WHO FOR MY LIFE LAID DOWN THEIR OWN NECKS--".PAUL AGAIN MENTIONS HELPERS IN CHRIST JESUS,AND NAMES PRISCILLA.

A CHRISTIAN WOMAN SHOULD STUDY HER BIBLE AND BE ABLE TO TEACH IT.GOD DOSEN'T EXPECT OR ALLOW HER TO CORRECT AN ERROR FROM THE PULPIT BUT WE ARE NOT EXCUSED IN CLOSEING OUR EYES TO FALSE TEACHINGS.REMEM-BER PRISCILLA AND THE MIGHTY APOLL OS.

ALL CHRISTIANS ARE TO BE COURTEOUS TO ONE ANOTHER(1PET.3:8); WE ARE ALL TO BE CLOTHED WITH HUMILITY(1PET.5:5).SO A PROPHETESS WILL NEVER BE RUDE AND NOISY.BUT LIKE PRISCILLA,PHILIP'S DAUGHTERS,AND ALL THOSE OTHER WOMEN(HELPERS IN THE GOSPEL),WE WILL SPEAK THE TRUTH EVERY WHERE OUR RULE GIVEN OF GOD ALLOWS US TO DO.WE WILL LOVE THE KINGDOM OF GOD FIRST OF ALL LIKE MARY SITTING AT THE FEET OF JESUS,HAVING CHOSEN THAT GOOD PART.WE WILL CORRECT ERRORS WITHIN OUR MEASURE:RESPEC TING ELDER MEN AS FATHERS,THE YOUNGER AS BROTHERS;THE ELDER WOMEN AS MOTHERS,THE YOUNGER AS SISTERS. WE CAN'T FORCE ANYONE BUT YOUNG CHILD-REN TO OBEY.BUT WE ARE OBLIGATED IN OUR HOMES TO QUOTE SCRIPTURES OF WARNING.EVEN IF YOUR HUSBAND IS NOT A CHRISTIAN,YOU ARE STILL OBLIGA TED TO LIVE AND WALK IN THE WAY OF THE SPIRIT.EVEN IF IT MEANS HE WILL LEAVE YOU BECAUSE OF IT(1COR.7:12-15):"A SISTER IS NOT UNDER BONDAGE IN SUCH CASES".BUT WE NEVER CAN PUT THE WILL AND PLEASURE OF MAN ABOVE OUR DUTY TO GOD.EVEN IF YOU HAPPEN TO BE MARRIED TO THE MAN.

LET US DECLARE WAR ON CONVERSATIONS OF UNKINDNESS AND CRITISI-SM OF THOSE ABSENT.THIS IS BACKBITING!THIS CULTIVATES BITTERNESS FOR THE PERSON SPOKEN AGAINST;DEFILING ALL WHO TAKE PART IN IT,OR EVEN LISTEN WITHOUT PROTEST.HEB.12:15,"LOOKING DILIGENTLY LEST ANY MAN FAIL OF THE GRACE OF GOD;LEST ANY ROOT OF BITTERNESS SPRINGING UP TROUBLE YOU,AND THEREBY MANY BE DEFILED." GUIDE YOUR HOUSE(1TIM.5:14) AS THOUGH CHRIST WERE STAYING THERE.IF YOU ARE LIVING RIGHT,HE IS THERE. 2COR.6:16,"I WILL DWELL IN THEM,AND WALK IN THEM;AND I WILL BE THEIR GOD,AND THEY SHALL BE MY PEOPLE.DOING AND SPEAKING UNKIND THINGS IS LACK OF CHARITY.1COR.13:4-8,"CHARITY SUFFERETH LONG,AND IS KIND;CHAR-ITY ENVIETH NOT;CHARITY VAUNTETH NOT ITSELF,IS NOT PUFFED UP,DOTH NOT BEHAVE ITSELF UNSEEMLY,SEEKETH NOT HER OWN,IS NOT EASILY PROVOKED, THINKETH NO EVIL;REJOICETH NOT IN INIQUITY, BUT REJOICETH IN TRUTH--."

AND DO YOU HAVE ANY IDEA HOW IMPORTANT CHARITY IS? 1COR.13:1-3,"THOUGH I SPEAK WITH THE TONGUES OF MEN AND ANGELS,AND HAVE NOT CAHRITY,I AM BECOME AS SOUNDING BRASS,OR A TINKLING CYMBOL.AND THOUGH I HAVE THE GIFT OF PROPHESY,AND UNDERSTAND ALL MYSTERIES,AND ALL KNOW-LEDGE;AND THOUGH I HAVE ALL FAITH,SO THAT I COULD REMOVE MOUNTAINS,AND HAVE NOT CHARITY,I AM NOTHING.AND THOUGH I BESTOW ALL MY GOODS TO FEED THE POOR,AND THOUGH I GIVE MY BODY TO BE BURNED,AND HAVE NOT CHARITY IT PROFITETH ME NOTHING."

THERE IS ABSOLUTELY NO HOPE FOR US UNLESS WE CULTIVATE AND LIVE CHARITY.

YOURS IN CHRISTIAN LOVE,LURANA MC CLUSKEY

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