

Why Women Don't Talk About the Bible, And What You Can Do About It

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I sat in the kitchen with the other women, but I didn't want to be there.

The teaching session of our home fellowship group had just ended, and we each took a plate of snacks and found a place to sit. The children disappeared outside, the men went into the living room to talk about the Bible lesson, and once again the women stayed in the kitchen discussing the ever-present four Hs of evangelical womanhood: housekeeping, homeschooling, handicrafts and husbands. All great topics, you understand, but I longed for something more.

As I sat straining to overhear the conversation in the other room, I had no idea that the woman next to me was doing the same thing. Both of us went home that night feeling unfulfilled. The topic we wanted most to discuss was just outside our reach and we were once again left wondering why women never seem to talk about the Bible.



Over the years I've thought about this issue over and over. Just last week in separate conversations, a young mother and a 77 year old great-grandmother each complained to me about the shallowness of women's conversations in their respective churches. Neither woman had female friends to talk to about what she was learning in Scripture.

While this is a huge issue that I can't hope to cover in one short article, I will offer a few thoughts to get the conversation started.

Women don't talk about the Bible because no one starts the conversation.

Remember my example of the fellowship group women? Some of us were dying to talk about what we were studying in the Bible and about questions of how to apply what we were learning to our lives, but no one took the initiative to begin the conversation. It was easier to rehash the same superficial subjects. When I finally opened my Bible and asked a friend about a difficult passage I was studying, I found nearly all the women in our group were eager to talk about it.

This may require a little humility, as admitting that you don't know everything and asking others can be frightening, but it may also be a non-threatening way to help you find a kindred spirit.

Women don't talk about the Bible because we are largely untrained. Titus 2 says that older women should be teachers of what is good. It doesn't say what happens if no one has ever trained the older women. There's no easy answer for this one. If you, like me, spent your young adulthood without a Christian woman to mentor you, it will be more difficult to teach a younger woman to talk about and to apply biblical principles to her life and thought. Do it anyway.

All you really need to do is to love God, and love the woman you are mentoring. Everything else will come naturally. Cultivate a relationship specifically for talking about the things that matter most.

Women don't talk about the Bible together because they have abandoned the women's ministry of the local church. As I talk to evangelical women and read their blogs, I hear over and over that they have abandoned these events because they consider them superficial. If this is you, let me ask you two questions.

1. **Are you sure that the events are superficial?** The speaker at a women's tea may be (as was the case at my church) someone special—in this case a missionary leaving to return to primitive and dangerous conditions in a hostile country. The women at my table helped me hash out what was meant by the terms “the old man” and “the new man” between bites of tiny sandwiches and sips of herbal tea. Just because the event *sounds* frilly doesn't mean there is no depth in the fellowship or the teaching.
2. **Are you discounting the events because they are for women only?** It's strange but true; some women seem to only want to learn from men, like the pastor or elders. Discounting the wisdom of other women is not only arrogant; it also is sexist and disobedient to the commands in Titus 2 for women to teach and learn from each other.

If all the women who are interested in learning abandon women's ministry, the result will be a spiritually shallow women's ministry. Instead, be involved and make suggestions—take responsibility and work with your leaders to create a women's ministry that embraces biblical depth, self-sacrificing service *and* a love of beauty. None of those aspects of godly womanhood need be eclipsed for another. We can have it all.

Women don't talk about the Bible because they lack opportunity. If you long for this kind of discussion, *make* opportunity for it. Part of the solution in my case was starting a reading/discussion group for women in our church. We have found that great topics for discussion don't appear out of thin air. They are sparked by ideas—from the sermon you just heard, the missionary biography you just read or the Bible study you just shared.

All the *one another* passages in the Bible apply to our relationships with other women in the church. To teach, to admonish, to comfort or to encourage a sister usually requires talking about the Bible. And conversations about God and the Bible with other women are a joy. There is a depth of understanding between women that is different from conversations with men. I've cried over knotty biblical concepts with other women—I don't know if men tangle their emotions with doctrine in quite the same way.

Are you one of the many women longing to talk about what God is doing in your life? If so, step up and start the conversation.