IN THE LATE 1880S, LARGE AMOUNTS OF PAPYRI WERE discovered in separate finds. These affected New Testament scholarship to such a degree that scholars labeled the finds “sensational” and “dramatic.” The papyri were written at the time of the New Testament, and touched upon all aspects of life, comprising everyday private letters from ordinary people, contracts of marriage and divorce, tax papers, official decrees, birth and death notices, and business documents. Prior to this discovery, the meanings of numerous New Testament words had remained unknown, and the translators had simply made educated guesses.

In 1895, the celebrated German scholar Deissmann published a large body of papyri, and between 1914 and 1929 Moulton and Milligan published documentary vocabulary (“documentary” meaning papyri and inscriptions) in eight volumes in their Vocabulary of the Greek Testament. Although this was an enormous advance, Moulton and Milligan still did not have entries for about 17 percent of New Testament words. Of the words they did include, there were 800 words for which no documentary attestation was given. Due to ongoing discoveries, the work was out of date before the last volume had been published.

In July 1910, James Hope Moulton made a statement that could be marked as some of history’s “famous last words”: “I do not think that papyrology will take us much further. New papyrus collections will only add details now.” But this was not to be. Scholars had thought the previous finds of papyri sensational and dramatic, yet the subsequent discovery and editing of papyrus fragments revolutionized New Testament scholarship. Several thousand Greek inscriptions and papyri were published for the first time, or reissued, in 1976. In that year alone, fifteen volumes of new papyri were published. The light of meaning now shines on many words previously unattested. Finds are ongoing: several thousand new inscriptions come to light each year. In the last two decades, four thousand inscriptions have been found in Ephesus alone. Sadly, while these discoveries excited New Testament scholars and lexicographers and have prompted numerous academic papers and technical books, they have been largely overlooked by Bible translators. The layperson is unaware of the scholarship, tucked away as it is in technical journals. Thus, the dictionary work we see in today’s Bible translations is based on centuries-old scholarship, following Tyndale’s translation of 1534 and the King James Version of 1611.

Much of the scholarship that would benefit New Testament translation is recent. The work on Greek healing words of the New Testament was published as recently as 1998, and a definitive work on the 1Tim. 2 passage as recently as 2000. Horsley and Lee of Australia have been working on a lexicon of New Testament words since 1986 and are years from publishing the work. They are working to replace the industry-standard dictionary, Moulton and Milligan, which is truly out of date. Yet, while nearly every recent New Testament dictionary cites some documents that are found in the outdated Moulton and Milligan, they have largely ignored the work for word meaning. For example in Mark 14:41, Jesus uttered an expression that is translated in Bibles as “It is finished!” or “It is enough.” However, the expression turns out to be a standard formula of receipt used in the commercial context in the papyri and ostraca (that is, potsherds, mainly tax-receipts) as the technical expression, “Paid in full.”

Matt. 11:12 has caused problems for translators for centuries. The King James Version translates, “And from the days of John the Baptist until now the kingdom of heaven suffereth violence, and the violent take it by force.” The New International Version translates, “From the days of John the Baptist until now, the kingdom of heaven has been forcefully advancing, and forceful men lay hold of it.” Here is a translation based on the recent papyri evidence: “From the time of John the Baptistizer until now, heaven’s realm is being used or even robbed by people who have no legal right to it. This stops those who do have a legal right to it from enjoying their own property.” The verse discusses the infringement of someone’s basic rights as a Christian. For example, some churches might enjoy having a diverse body with men, women, and people of difference races worshipping God together in their services.
but deny leadership opportunities to women or people from certain racial groups. Only in recent times was it discovered that the Greek word *bia* refers to illegal “forcible acquisition,” and is a technical legal term referring to the act of hindering an owner or lawful possessor from their enjoyment of property.\(^5\) The use of actual physical force is not required under the term. From the papyri, there is now firm evidence to show that the words used in this verse were legal terms used with reference to unlawful acquisition.\(^6\) This has revealed that the verse has nothing to do with heaven suffering violence or forcefully advancing but to people hindering Christians from enjoying their rights.

What does the evidence from the papyri and inscriptions tell us about women in the New Testament?

**Phoebe**

*Rom. 16:1-2.* I recommend to you Phoebe our fellow believer, who is a minister of the assembly in Cenchreae, so that you will admit her into your company, the Lord’s company, in a manner worthy of the people devoted to God, and stand by her in whatever matters she needs you to help in. For indeed she became a presiding officer over many, and over me also!

Phoebe is a *diakonos,* “minister”/“deacon,” and certainly not a “servant.” The standard lexicon Liddell-Scott-Jones\(^7\) testifies that the word means servant, messenger, or attendant or official in a pagan religious guild or temple. In the context of religion, the word meant an attendant or official. The word was adopted into Christian vocabulary to mean a church official, that is, a minister or deacon, as the terms were at first synonymous, “deacon” being the transliteration (putting Greek letters into English letters) of the Greek, and “minister” being the translation.

As the church evolved from the “assembly” of the New Testament and became institutionalized, church positions became more distinct. The first mention of a deacon (as well as the first mention of a monk) in a secular document is dated at 324 A.D.\(^8\) (And note that 1Tim. 3:1 mentions the *episkopos,* “guardian,” which became “bishop” after the time of Ignatius in the early second century A.D.) The role of deaconesses arose in the third century. Their duties were set down in the *Didascalia Apostolorum.* The bishop was said to be in God’s image, the deacon was said to be in Christ’s image, the deaconess in the image of the Holy Spirit, and the priest in the Apostles’ image. The bishops designated specific duties to male deacons such as assisting the bishop, particularly in the Eucharist, while permitting deaconesses to minister only to other women. Her duties included visiting female believers and washing women recovering from illness. In the fourth century, the *Didascalia Apostolorum* was replaced by the *Apostolic Constitutions* which stated, “We do not allow women to teach in the Church.” Deaconesses were now to be chosen from among the virgins and widows only. They were still to assist in the baptism of women and to visit sick women. However, the office was not favored in the west.

The papyri provide evidence demonstrating women were office holders in early Christianity. Pliny records female deacons in the time of Trajan (late first, early second centuries).\(^9\) The woman Alexandra was said to be an “over-deacon” in an inscription from Apollonia in Pontus (Thrace).\(^10\) An inscription on a marble stele states, “Here lies Maria the deacon.”\(^11\) An epitaph from Jerusalem mentions: “Here lies the slave and bride of Christ, Sophia, deacon, the second Phoebe, who fell asleep in peace on the 21st of the month of March during the 11th indiction.”\(^12\)

The following inscriptions have female (Christian) deacons as their subject:

1. An inscription describes the deacon Agrippiane as “the most God-beloved deacon Agrippiane.” This is from the early Christian period.\(^13\)
2. An inscription at Mt. Hymettos in Attika.\(^14\)
3. A long epitaph for the deacon Athanasia, ordained by Pantamianos.\(^15\)
4. A family tombstone for a mother and her children. One of the daughters, Agaliasis, is a deacon.\(^16\)
5. An inscription in memory of the deacon Eugeneias, in Turkey.\(^17\)

In his 1534 Bible translation, Tyndale called Phoebe a “minister of the congregation at Cenchreae.” Centuries earlier, Clement of Alexandria wrote, “For we know that the honorable Paul in one of his letters to Timothy prescribed regarding women deacons,”\(^18\) and Chrysostom commented on 1Tim. 3:11 thus, “Some have thought that this is said of women generally, but it is not so, for why should he [Paul] introduce anything about women to interfere with his subject? He is speaking of those who hold the rank of deaconesses.” Far earlier, Pliny records female deacons under Trajan (late first, early second centuries).\(^19\)

It is significant that Phoebe is the minister of the church in Cenchreae, a large commercial city. Cenchreae was on the Aegean Sea and was the eastern port of Corinth. It was one of the two important ports for Corinth, the other being Lekheon on the Ionian Sea. Note that Corinth, a huge and wealthy city, was Greece’s commercial center with trade links all over the ancient world. Its prosperity was due to its position straddling the Isthmus of Corinth with its two ports. All trade from the north of Greece to Sparta and the Peloponnesus passed through Corinth, as did most of the east-west traffic. Ships from Asia Minor, Syria, and Egypt docked at Cenchreae.
Phoebe is not just a minister, she is a prostates, “presiding officer,” “leader and protector.” The term prostates referred to a person of the front-rank, the chief of a body of people; in general, a ruler, someone who stands in front of the people and protects them. It encompassed the giving of financial or material aid. It was also a term that referred to those who gave protection to people who did not have civil rights.

The use of the word prostates to describe a woman caused some discomfort as early as the ninth century, and it was altered in some inferior manuscripts to parastasis, “one who stands by/assistant,” perhaps under the influence of the (Latin) Vulgate, which incorrectly translated prostates as the Latin adstitit, “one who stands by/assistant.” Yet the word prostates was used for women no less than it was for men. An Ephesian inscription speaks of Tullia, a woman who was a than it was for men. An Ephesian inscription speaks of

"The use of the word prostates to describe a woman caused some discomfort as early as the ninth century, and it was altered in some inferior manuscripts to parastasis, ‘one who stands by/assistant.’"

Women Elders

Inscriptional evidence demonstrates that women were church leaders. An inscription from Thera speaks of women elders. An epitaph for the woman Kale describes her as an “elder.” A letter twice mentions a Christian woman called a “master teacher” in a church context. An epitaph from Malta for Eulogia calls her “elder.” An inscription dated to the second or third centuries denotes the woman Paniskiane as an elder in the church, and another of the same date identifies a woman as an elder in Phrygia. Yet another describes a woman who is an elder in a Jewish community. Inscriptional evidence tells of a female elder from Sicily and another from Thera, and another woman elder from Cappadocia around 230 A.D. An inscription dated as pre-Constantine speaks of the woman Ammion, who was an “elder.” A family tombstone for a mother and her children mentions two daughters as “elders” (and perhaps three: name uncertain).  

The Lady Authority of 2 John

“From: The Elder.
To: The chosen Lady Authority and her members…”  
2 John 1:1

The word translated as “lady authority” is kuria, “authority.” It is the feminine for kurios, “lord” or “master.” When used to describe people, it generally refers to one who has power or authority over others. In the neuter, it refers to the ruling power over a state, and in the plural, to executive authorities. The famous Greek playwright, Aeschylus, uses the word in Agamemnon 104: kurios eimi, “I have full authority” and uses it as a synonym for kratos, “command” which appears in the same line. It appears in the papyri, as “mistress” (as in “boss”), for example, in P.Tebt. II, 413, and in P.Oxy VI.939, in which a servant writes, “by the recovery of my mistress from the sickness that overtook her.”

The word tekna has several meanings: “children,” “members,” “inhabitants (of a city),” but was commonly used to mean “(church) members” or “students.” In Rev. 2:23, the term is used for those who follow false teachers. Paul uses the term to address church members in Gal. 4:19. It was used, for example, by the sophist Eunapius (fourth century A.D.) who applied the term to his students, and in Hermas (first or second centuries A.D.) to address church members. The papyri and inscriptions provide considerable evidence for the word. In 1John 2:1, we have the word teknon, a diminutive of teknon, a term of endearment and not of immaturity, meaning here “My dear member.” John is not addressing his biological children. John uses the same word again in verse 12, but uses the word agapetoi, “dearly loved ones,” “beloved,” “loved friends,” or “dear friends” to address the same people in verse 7.

Submit or Support?

The word hupotasso has been translated “submit” in nearly all Bible translations. However, this is a rare word. Prior to the papyri, insufficient examples existed outside the New Testament for lexicographers to grasp its meaning, therefore careful “guesses” were made. When determining the meaning of the word, lexicographers look at (among other things) the occurrences of the word in question to ascertain its meaning from the context. For
example, if a word keeps occurring in such sentences as “They ate …… and cheese” one can expect that the word in question refers to something edible. At the time the Bible was first translated into English, women were legal possessions of men. Thus it is not difficult to see why the meaning “submit (to)” was supplied in the sentence in Eph. 5:22, “Women, *hupotasso* your husbands.” I should add at this point that the lexicographers and linguists of old used to fall prey to the “etymological fallacy,” that is, looking at the root of a Greek word to determine its meaning. This method is valid for some languages, such as Hebrew, but not for Greek. Thus it has been falsely cited that *hupotasso* means “submit” as *hypo* means “under” and *tasso* has a wide semantic range including “to rank, to post, to station, to appoint to service, to assign, to place in a certain order or relative position, to assess (of taxes and payments), to lay down.” Such assumptions proved to be wrong, which is why linguists and lexicographers now refer to this method as the “etymological fallacy.”

While the word *hupotasso* was rare in literature, it was a very common word in the papyri. Does it occur with the meaning “submit” in the papyri? No, it occurs commonly in the postal documents, with the semantic range of “support,” “append,” and “uphold.” Note the following three typical examples: *P.Ryl* II 104.7 with the meaning of appending claims to another document; *P.Oxy* 1.67, “…as the supporting (*hupotasso*) document testifies;” and *P.Oxy* I.34, “I have copied the proclamation and append (*hupotasso*) it to this letter.”

The word occurs in the magical text BIAO 76. A man named Sarapammon has the text incised on a rolled-up lead tablet to secure the love of the object of his desire, the lady Ptolemais. He conjures demons and enlists the help of various underworld powers to ensure his success. The first part of the text requires the powers to harass Ptolemais terribly until she no longer rejects him. The last few lines of the text read: “and I have Ptolemais herself whom Aias bore, the daughter of Horigenes, attached (*hupotasso*) to me for the rest of my life, loving me, desiring me, telling me her thoughts.”

Let us return to Eph. 5:22, which has often been translated, “Wives, submit to your husbands.” However, no matter how we translate *hupotasso*, the word does not occur in Eph. 5:22. The participle of *hupotasso* occurs in verse 21: “*hupotasso-ing* one another,” and verse 22 reads, “wives, with your own husbands, as with the Lord.” The translation of *hupotasso* in verse 21 is “supporting one another,” not “submitting to one another.” The passage contains a play on words (and Paul was most fond of playing on words!) that cannot be brought out in the English language. Verse 23 tells us that the man is the source of the woman just as the Anointed One is the source of the church, and verse 24 tells us that just as the church is the support for the Anointed One, so wives are to be a support for the husband. The Greek word for “source” also meant a physical head, so the picture is of a wife being the supporting structure for the physical head, which is the husband. It is important to note that a word in one language does not necessarily carry all its meanings in another language. The Greek word for head cannot mean “authority over” or “leader” as it does in English: Consider as an example the English word “compasion” which also means “bowels” in Greek. We could no more say “I have bowels for the child” to express our sympathy for the child than we could translate the Greek word “head” with all the same meanings as the English word “head.”

**1 Timothy 2**

*Authenteo* is a rare Greek word that occurs once in the New Testament, in 1Tim. 2:12. It occurs very rarely in the writings of classical Greek authors. Thankfully, it appears in several papyri. Lexicons give the meanings of *authentes* as “murderer,” “perpetrator,” “author,” and “master.” Let us examine the evidence on which this is based.

The verb and noun are used by classical authors as follows: in Herodotos once with the meaning “murderer;” in Thucydidies once with the meaning “murderer;” in Aeschylus twice (*Eumenides* and *Agamemnon*) with the meaning “murderer;” in Apollonius of Rhodes (although he was a little later, third century B.C.) in his *Argonautica* twice with the meaning “murderer;” six times in Antiphon with the meaning “killer/ murderer” (sometimes with reference to suicide); and eight times in Euripides’ works, twice in *Herakles* with the meaning “murderer;” twice in *Andromache* with the meaning “murderer;” once in *The Trojan Women* with the meaning “murderer;” once in *Iphigenia in Aulis* with the meaning “murder;” and once in *Rhesus* with the meaning “murderer.” You will note this is seven times. The meaning of the eighth is disputed. Apart from the one instance in Euripides’ *Suppliants*, the word occurs nineteen times, all with the meaning “murderer/killer.” However, it should be noted that in the fifth speech of Antiphon, the word is used in the sense of the one who did the murder, that is, the author, originator, perpetrator of the murder.33

The remaining classical example is from Euripides’ *Suppliants*. It is usually translated, “Again, where people are absolute masters over the land…” However, the Greek word is not the word for “land,” but the word for the actual earth (ground), the word used by the earth cults. The semantic range includes the word “native.” The standard undisputed meanings are “in, under, or beneath the earth,” “sprung from the earth,” and “of the earth.” In the line in *Suppliants*, there is no preposition,
and the word “earth” is in the genitive case. The word translated “people” is the singular word demos, which can mean “democracy,” or “people” in the sense of a group of ordinary people or the free citizens. If we allow (which, by the way, I do not) the possibility that the word could have meant “master” in classical times, there are three possible translations for this clause in the Greek (and bear in mind that it was written in poetic language):

1. “Where people are masters over the land…”
2. “Where democracy is the murderer of the land…”
3. “Where democracy springs from the earth…”

Let us turn to the papyri. The word occurs over twenty times in the papyri with the meaning “original,” or “originator of.” It does take on the meaning “master,” “mastery (over)” in later centuries, yet does not occur in this meaning prior to, or until a considerable time later than, New Testament times. This is however disputed in two papyrus examples. The first is P-Leid.W. 6.46, in the vocative case where the sun is addressed, “…the archangel of those under the world, O authenta sun!” It has been assumed that the meaning is “O ruling sun!” as those in our Western culture simply (and erroneously) assumed that perhaps ancients saw the sun as a ruler. However, the papyrus was Mithraic. Mithras was connected with the sun’s life-giving powers, and Mithras was believed to cause plants to spring from the earth. There was no hint of the sun being ruler; rather, the sun was considered to be the source, the originator, of life.

The other papyrus example is BGU 4.1208, which lexicons have cited as meaning “authority, mastery over.” However, another meaning is apparent from a reading of the Greek text, which states that the sea captain should have adhered to the original agreement. The whole context supports the meaning “original” as do specific parallel words in the text.

The adjective occurs on one inscription, Aus Lydien, no. 46, an inscription recording parts of two rescripts from the proconsul Maximilianus to the Asiarch Dominus Rufus. The text reads, “I deposited a copy of the commands… the original (authentike) command which was written…”

The authorship of the “pastoral epistles” (1Timothy, 2Timothy, and Titus) has been disputed since the nineteenth century, although not doubted from the second century until that point. The authorship of Paul is doubted on several grounds, citing as reasons the different vocabulary from the Pauline corpus and the absence of usual Pauline theological terms. It has been suggested that if Paul indeed was the author, he used an amanuensis. Yet the differences can be explained by the different subject matter. The vocabulary of 1Timothy alludes to various magical practices of Ephesus and to the problem of Gnosticism. Ephesus was well known historically as a center for magical practices, spell casting, and the conjuring of evil spirits. The New Testament links Ephesus with much demonic activity. Ephesus was the cult center for the worship of the Ephesian goddess Artemis, who was said to have authority over all the demons of the dead as well as the harmful spirits of nature. Artemis was known as a mother goddess, a fertility goddess, and a nature goddess. Ephesus was also associated with Gnosticism, and the focus of the pastoral epistles is on dealing with false teaching.

I propose 1Tim. 2:12-13 should be translated as follows: “I most certainly do not grant authority to a woman to teach that she is the originator of a man: rather, she is not to cause a fuss. For Adam was formed first, then Eve.”

Why would a woman teach that she is the originator of a man? At the time 1Timothy was written, Gnosticism was in its early stages. The Gnostic literature states that Eve was formed first, then enlisted the help of a goddess to help her form Adam. Thus at the time 1Timothy was written, early Gnostics were stating that women were the originators of men. Again, this is recent scholarship. In 1945 the Nag Hammadi Library discovered a collection of thirteen ancient codices containing over fifty Gnostic texts in upper Egypt. The Nag Hammadi collection includes the Genesis creation account and the following texts: On the Origin of the World, Gospel of Philip, Exegesis on the Soul, Hypostasis of the Archon, Thunder: Perfect Mind, Apocryphon of John, Apocalypse of Adam, and Testimony of Truth. The account in On the Origin of the World is as follows:

After the day of rest Sophia sent her daughter Zoe, being called Eve, as an instructor in order that she might make Adam, who had no soul, arise so that those whom he should engender might become containers of light. When Eve saw her male counterpart prostrate she had pity upon him, and she said, ‘Adam! Become alive! Arise upon the earth!’ Immediately her word became accomplished fact. For Adam, having arisen, suddenly opened his eyes. When he saw her he said, “You shall be called ‘Mother of the Living.’ For it is you who have given me life.”

Eve, who was venerated by the Gnostics as the revealer of knowledge, is also a central figure in The Hypostasis of the Archons, and The Apocalypse of Adam. 1Tim. 2:13-15 makes sense in light of the threat of the false teaching of Gnosticism.

Based on recent evidence from the papyri and inscriptions, I assert 1Tim. 2:9-10 should be translated as follows: “And the same goes for women too. I would like women to dress themselves with good taste and in decent clothes with modesty and good sense, not with ornamental arranged hair or gold or pearls or very expensive
clothes, which is fitting for women while they are giving a ‘convert to Judaism’ instructions, and which is fitting for women while they are doing good works.”

The key to this passage is the Greek word Theosebeia, which is a designation we translate as “convert to Judaism” or “Godfearer” as there is no English equivalent. Before the meaning of this word was known, it was variously rendered (wrongly) in New Testament translations as “godliness,” “worship of God,” or “religion.” Inscriptions have now revealed that the word is a formal designation for a group enrolled in a synagogue, but a group distinct from proselytes and native Jews. It has recently been established by scholars that the word applied to a convert (male or female) to Judaism, to someone who was not prepared to be baptized or, in the case of a man, circumcised. A synagogue inscription from Aphrodisias in Karia lists several individuals as Theosebeis. The inscription CIJ 748 (=SEG 4.441) speaks of a section of seating reserved for “Jews as well as Theosebeis.” The inscriptions CIJ 1.228 and IG 12.1.593 mention women Theosebeis from Rome, Rhodes, Cos and Tralles. This is but a small sample. However, the word occurs only here, in 1Tim. 2:10, in the New Testament.

The Greek word epaggelomai with the accusative appears in the same sentence. With the dative it generally means “promise,” but the evidence from the papyri has revealed that with the accusative it means to give orders to someone, or to proclaim (something) by authority. Here is an example of the word occurring in the papyri in the same form in which it appears in 1Tim. 2:10. It occurs in P.Coll.Youtie 130, a prefect’s circular, forbidding magic: “Therefore neither through oracles, viz., written documents ostensibly emanating in the presence of the divinity, nor by means of the procession of images or similar trickery, let anyone lay claim to have knowledge of the supernatural, or give themselves out as an expert about the obscurity of future events.”

Prior to discovering the papyri, many assumed that women were not synagogue leaders or teachers. There is a dearth of Jewish literature from Asia Minor or Crete, or Graeco-Jewish literature of the period suggesting this. That is why the papyri and inscriptions have been so significant in this area, as women are well attested as synagogue leaders (and thus teachers). Synagogue leaders and elders were classified also as teachers (cf. Epiphanius of Salamis, Panarion, 30.18.2 [PG 41.436A]; Justin Martyr, Dialogue with Trypho, 137). Other people in the synagogue could also be teachers of the Law, as synagogues were places of learning.

Inscriptional evidence includes women as Jewish leaders, testifying that women were elders as well as synagogue leaders. For example, CIJ 2 741 = IGRR 4.1452 speaks of a female synagogue leader. Sophia of Gortyn was an elder and synagogue leader (CIJ 731c), Rufina was a synagogue leader (CIJ 741; IGR IV 1452; ISmyrna 1.295.1), as was Theopempte (CIJ 756). Three Jewish inscriptions from the first century B.C. to the fourth century A.D. mention women priests (CIJ 1514 [SEG 1, 1923, no. 574]; CIJ 315; CIJ 1007). Women as Jewish elders are attested in further inscriptional evidence: Rebeka (CIJ 692), Beronikene (CIJ 581; CIL IX 6226), Mannine (CIJ 590; CIL IX 6230), Faustina (CIJ 597; CIL IX 6209), Mazauzala (SEG 27 [1977] no. 1201), Sara Ura (CIJ 400). This area has been well researched recently, and scholars have produced lists of women synagogue leaders in the inscriptions.

Lydia

Lydia is described by the term seboumene ton Theon, a cognate term for Theosebeia, in Acts 16:14. Acts 16:13 is usually translated, “And on the Sabbath day we went outside the city gate to the riverside where we thought there would be a place of prayer.” However, inscriptional evidence now reveals that the Greek word, which was translated “place of prayer,” was in fact another word for “synagogue.” The reason it was translated “place of prayer” is that Luke uses a different word for “synagogue” throughout Acts, and the fact that only women congregants were mentioned must have affected the translation. However, Acts 17:4 and 18:26 speak of women attending the synagogue, and there is ample evidence as mentioned above for women as synagogue leaders. Rabbinic sources speak of women participating in synagogue services. Furthermore, the synagogue at Philippi was in the open air: that is, there was no building, which explains the departure from the more common word for synagogue. Synagogues were in towns, as they had to be within a certain distance for the Sabbath day’s walk, and thus were usually in buildings. The synagogue at Philippi was just outside the city gate. The river is still there today and can be seen in close proximity to the second century Roman ruins of the city.

Conclusion

In the Greek of the New Testament, women are shown to be church leaders, teachers, elders, and deacons. Evidence from the papyri and inscriptions reveals women in these positions at the time of the New Testament and in successive centuries. Yet today, a large faction of Christianity does not permit women to be ministers, and of the Christians that do, most do not permit women to be head ministers. Churches quote what they believe to be God’s Word to support their arguments.
against women in church leadership. Here is the matter in a nutshell: their arguments are based on a lack of understanding of Greek word meaning according to the findings in the papyri and inscriptions of the last hundred years. Available translations do not sufficiently regard the abundant evidence from the papyri and inscriptions.

Ann Nyland is a former lecturer in classical Greek language at the University of New England, Australia and has devoted several years to translating the New Testament in light of the recent discoveries in papyri and inscriptions. She has published in the area of lexicography; her most recent article “Against Grudem: aner and Masculinist Misprisions of New Testament Meaning” is forthcoming in Vol. 3 of the journal Sea Changes: Journal of Women Scholars of Religion and Theology.

4. Of Moulton and Milligan, G.H.R. Horsley and J.A. Lee state, “By the time the last of the eight fascicules appeared in 1929, not only was the first one well out of date, but there was obvious inconsisteny in the choice of contents for entries.” New Documents Illustrating Early Christianity (NDEIC), Vol. 1, (Macquarie: Macquarie Press, 1981), 58.
5. That is, immovable property.
6. Both bia and harpage together with their cognates were used in legal terminology with reference to forcible acquisition. Under the terms of the law, no actual physical force had to be involved, the “force” was the act of keeping owners from their property.
8. P.Coll.Youtie 77 (Karanis, 6/6/324).
12. Garducci, EG IV.445 (fig. 132).
15. Garducci, EG IV.345-47 (Delphi, VI); fig. 99). fifth century at Delos.

20. I.Eph. IV.1063
23. AE (1975) 454 (Centuripae, Sicily; IV/V)
27. Cyprian, Ep. 75.10.
29. Guarducci, EG IV.368-70 (Melos, IV)
32. Regarding “etymological fallacy” and using the roots of Greek and Hebrew words to determine meaning see Moises Silva's book Biblical Words and Their Meaning: An Introduction to Lexical Semantics (La Vergne: Lightning Source, 1994) for a thorough analysis.
33. It should be noted strongly that the notion of “responsibility” has absolutely no connection in the Greek language with the notion of “authorship” of a murder or any act.
34. Aus Lydien, no. 46 (Kula, in Lydia, c. 250-70), pp.89-106.
36. See also Catherine and Richard Clark Kroeber's anyalsis of the use of authenthein in 1Tim. 2:12 in I Suffer Not a Woman (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1992), 79-105.
37. The sentence is in the nominative and infinitive construction: “I most certainly do not permit a woman to teach herself to be (in English, “that she is”) the originator of a man...”
40. AJA 81 (1977) 306.
41. Although, see below, Lydia is described by term seboumene ton Theon, a cognate term for Theosebeia, in Acts 16:14.
42. See K. Mentzu-Meimare’s list of titles for Jewish women elders in Greek inscriptions from the fourth to fifth centuries JOB 32.2 (1982) 433-43. See also B.J. Brooten, Women Leaders in the Ancient Synagogue (Chico: Brown Judaic Studies 36, 1982).
43. The photo captures an interior view of the Church of the Katholikon in the Hosios Loukas Monastery in Phocis, Greece.