

How Women Can Heal the Half-Paralyzed Church

When I worked as a doctor, there was a diagnosis I never liked to make. *Hemiplegic* is the medical term used to describe paralysis down one side of the body that occurs, for example, after a stroke. If the condition was severe, it was potentially a devastating diagnosis for the person involved, who had to come to terms with the fact that they would be weak and unable to fully function and might have to depend on the help of others for the rest of their lives.

The **body of Christ** in the West is hemiplegic. Half of it—the female half—is significantly weakened, if not totally paralyzed. The whole **body of Christ** is suffering as a result.

Where are the women **apostles**? Where are the women who are **prophets, evangelists, shepherds** and **teachers**? Where are the female role models who dare to do great exploits for the **kingdom of God**? I'm grateful to count several like these as my friends, but in general, women in any form of strategic **church leadership** in the West are conspicuous by their absence.

It's not that way in other parts of the world:

- In China, around 80 percent of house churches are planted by ordinary women.
- In India, there is a significant harvest being reaped by women of all castes. Two years ago, I met two women—ordinary, middle aged housewives—one of whom was responsible for starting 2,000 churches, and the other, 6,000 churches.
- In Dr. Cho's church of more than 800,000 in Korea, two-thirds of the associate pastors are women, and 47,000 of the 50,000 cell group leaders are women too.
- In many nations where there is restricted access for the

gospel, women are planting churches. They have easy access to homes and naturally share their testimony with others, pray for the sick and demonized, and find persons of peace.

If women can do it in other nations, why not here in the West?

Are there women in this country who are willing to break out of the stereotypical role assigned to them by tradition? Who will follow the Great Shepherd into the harvest? Who will dare to break out of their box of convention? Who will color outside the lines of expectation?

If God is using women in extraordinary ways elsewhere (and He is), then why not here too? We do not have to remain hemiplegic!

Do you have examples of what God is doing through women either here or in other nations?

*Adapted from **Felicity Dale**'s blog, Kingdom Women. Felicity Dale is the author of numerous books including Simply Church. She is an advocate for women in the church and trains people to start simple, organic house churches around the world.*