

1 Timothy

I. Introduction

A. **1 Timothy 2:8-15** . . . Therefore I want the men in every place to pray, lifting up holy hands, without wrath and dissension. [9] Likewise, I want women to adorn themselves with proper clothing, modestly and discreetly, not with braided hair and gold or pearls or costly garments, [10] but rather by means of good works, as is proper for women making a claim to godliness. [11] A woman must quietly receive instruction with entire submissiveness. [12] But I do not allow a woman to teach or exercise authority over a man, but to remain quiet. [13] For it was Adam who was first created, and then Eve. [14] And it was not Adam who was deceived, but the woman being deceived, fell into transgression. [15] But women will be preserved through the bearing of children if they continue in faith and love and sanctity with self-restraint.

B. We've spent the last two Sundays preparing for today's teaching.

1. The first Sunday we looked at the God ordained equality that exists between men and women, and we looked at the hierarchy of authority that exists in our world and in the church.
2. Last Sunday we looked **1 Corinthians 11:3-12 & 14:26-35**, where we learned that women are allowed to pray and prophesy in church meetings, but are not allowed – in the church meeting – to criticize or judge the correctness of what a male designated speaker teaches.

C. Pray

II. The spiritual health of the church and the role of women

A. As with so much of the rest of scripture, context is important for understanding the particulars. The same is true with **vs 9-15**. To make the best sense of them, we must take into account the larger context of **chapters 1-2**. And the larger context deals with correcting false teachers, deterring the teaching of strange doctrines, deterring the use of myths and genealogies as if they are equal to the word of God, and dealing with the problems these two practices are causing in the church.

1. It is this larger context that leads to the conclusion that the focus of **vs 9-15** is on promoting and protecting the spiritual health of the church, and on the integrity and consistency of what is taught in the church.

2. Therefore, contrary to what some may think, **vs 9-15** are not teaching that women are spiritually inferior to men.
- B. [9] Likewise, I want women to adorn themselves with proper clothing, modestly and discreetly, not with braided hair and gold or pearls or costly garments, [10] but rather by means of good works, as is proper for women making a claim to godliness.
1. A similar statement is made in **1 Peter 3:3-4**, “Your adornment must not be *merely* external—braiding the hair, and wearing gold jewelry, or putting on dresses; [4] but let it be the hidden person of the heart, with the imperishable quality of a gentle and quiet spirit, which is precious in the sight of God.”
 2. What makes a woman beautiful? I think we can all agree that outward beauty is a plus. Yet that kind of beauty, though pleasing to the eyes is not what makes a woman pleasing to live with, or to fellowship with and work alongside of in church life.
 - a. The reality is, outward beauty does not guarantee inward beauty. A person with outward beauty is born that way. But inward beauty comes from intentionally and progressively developing, nurturing, and protecting the godly qualities that make for inward beauty. This is as true for men as it is for women.
 - b. Therefore, the kind of beauty that is pleasing to live with and enjoyable to fellowship with in church comes from within.
 - c. The same is true in the spiritual realm. Whether you are a man or a woman, you can dress up and fix up the outside so as to appear spiritual. But the kind of spirituality that is pleasing to live with in the home and fellowship with in the church comes from godly character – godly character that has been enabled by God, empowered by the H.S., measured by the word of God, and intentionally and persistently developed and nurtured by you.
 3. So what are the inward qualities spoken of in **vs 9** and **1 Peter 3** that make a woman beautiful in church life and in the home?
 - a. The first quality mentioned is modesty in dress, hair, and jewelry. And though these things are seen on the outside, they are the manifestation of an inward humility and sense of propriety that does not want to draw a worldly kind of attention to yourself.
 - b. The second quality is good works – that is, doing good to and for others for their sake and the sake of their family and church.

- c. The third quality mentioned is a gentle and quiet spirit – that is, not causing conflicts or arguments, not creating dissension, not being easily upset, and having quiet patience when dealing with disruptions, conflicts, arguments, or unloving behavior.
 4. This focus on humble modesty, good works, and a gentle and quiet spirit affirms that it is not the beauty a woman is born with or wears that make her a joy to be around, but the inner beauty that is revealed in how she loves, treats, and serves others. And it is this inner beauty that testifies to the depth of her spiritual maturity and her confident trust that she is safe in God’s hands.
 5. [An Aside] I want to point out that many women are generally modest. They often engage in the kind of good works that serve the needs of others. And they are usually more gentler and quieter than most men.
 - a. In my opinion, it is also true that women – in general – tend to be kinder, more tender, have more pity and sympathy, and show more affection than most men.
 - b. Though not all women display these qualities, and though sin has a way of eroding and distorting them, enough women have them that I think it is fair to say this is the way God made them.
 - c. And in my opinion, these qualities in women make them better at relationships than men.
 - d. Men may excel in other areas, but generally speaking, women excel when it comes to relationships – which is why we men ought to learn what we can from the women about how to do better at nurturing and maintaining meaningful relationships.
- C. [11] A woman must quietly receive instruction (in church meetings) with entire submissiveness.
 1. It is at this point that the larger context can help us make sense of what the Bible is requiring and why. Again, the larger context is dealing with the teaching of strange doctrines, using myths and genealogies as if they are equal to the word of God, and the problems caused by these two practices in church life.
 2. Certainly false teachers are a problem in that they lead believers away from the truth of God’s word and the ways of godly living. And according to **2 Timothy 3:6-7**, women are more susceptible to the allure of false teaching than men.
 - a. Bringing my own experiences with church life into this picture, it is my observation that women – generally speaking – are more

interested in and open to those parts of spirituality that touch and move the emotions.

- b. Though this is not in itself a bad thing, it's bad side is that those who are like this are more easily deceived and drawn into emotionally driven and emotionally satisfying spiritual type experiences – be they genuine or false, good or bad.
3. I want to add that though many men are not like this and therefore are not so easily misled – which is good, their weakness is that they are near death emotionally. And it is this deadness that gets in the way of men being motivated to pursue or experience a depth of spirituality that includes a meaningful and experientially intimate relationship with God.
 - a. In other words (*and I am speaking in general terms here*), men's spirituality is largely intellectual or logical. Therefore, it hardly touches their heart and emotions – thus leaving them with a good amount of knowledge about God but little in the way of feeling close to and enjoying intimate fellowship with God.
 - b. The point of this is that women – generally speaking – are more emotionally sensitive – which is good in one way, but bad in that they are more easily led astray by emotional appeals and emotionally laden religious experiences – methods the false teachers were using in Paul's day and still use today.
 - c. Does this exonerate the men? No! Men – generally speaking – are more easily led astray by appeals to their pride, and the hope of power, riches, and position.
 - (1) For this reason, false teachers are usually men who prey on the emotions of others to gain a following.
 - (2) And because they prey on the emotions of others, they often have more success with women than men.
4. Here in **vs 9-15**, Paul is seeking to solve, or at least limit the problems brought into the church by the women who have been led astray by the false teachers.

D. [12] But I do not allow a woman to teach or exercise authority over a man, but to remain quiet. [13] For it was Adam who was first created, and then Eve.

1. The logic is simple. By nature and social practice, the older has authority over the younger. Adam, being created first, was older than Eve, and therefore is to be treated as the one in authority. In the world this is commonly called birth-right or seniority.

2. Now, if the requirement of **vs 12** stands alone, then we must take it as it reads – women are not to teach or exercise authority over a man, and are to remain quiet in the church meetings.
 3. However, if the rest of the Bible is the ultimate context, and in my opinion it is, then we must conclude two things –
 - a. **First**, that these two verses do not contradict **1 Corinthians 11:5** – which says a woman can pray and prophesy in the church meeting if she has her head covered.
 - b. **Second**, passages such as those in **1 Corinthians** must be used to influence our understanding of **vs 12-13**.
 4. So how are we to understand **vs 12-13**?
 - a. I see these two verses as taking another step in squashing false teaching and minimizing the problems it causes. For example –
 - b. Here in **1 Timothy**, the first step taken was for Timothy, the leader of the church, to instruct certain men not to teach strange doctrines, nor pay attention to myths and endless genealogies.
 - c. The second step was to ensure that the goal of all that was taught in the church promoted love from a pure heart, a good conscience, and a sincere faith.
 - d. The third step had to do with identifying the false teachers by their misuse of the Law and/or obvious lack of knowledge about what they were teaching.
 - e. The fourth step was to hand over the worst of the false teachers to Satan so that they would be taught by the consequences of their ungodly teaching and behavior not to continue doing so.
 - f. And the fifth step was for the men and women to pray from the vantage point of a godly life – which for women includes not being the authoritative teacher in church meetings or publicly judging and correcting a male teacher’s teaching.
 5. In **vs 14**, Paul goes further than the position of birth to support why this is an essential part of godliness for women in the church.
- E. [14] And it was not Adam who was deceived, but the woman being deceived (*seduced*), fell into transgression (*became a transgressor*).
1. The vital question is: why did the serpent chose Eve over Adam as the one to tempt? Could it be that Eve was more susceptible than Adam given the situation? The Bible answer is yes.
 2. This does not exonerate Adam, as if he is the better person for not being as easily tempted in this kind of situation as was Eve. In my opinion, Adam’s sin was just as bad, if not worse, for he chose Eve

- over God. Or we might say, Adam chose the continuation of his relationship with Eve over his relationship with God.
3. But that is not the point here in **vs 14**. The point is that women are more prone than men to being deceived by false teachers who seduce their followers by appealing to their emotions.
 - a. And though the church needs to be protected from the false teachers – who are primarily men, it also needs to be protected from the women who are prone to accept the false teaching and promote it in church meetings.
 - b. Therefore, the prescribed protection is to not allow women to be the designated teacher in church meetings, and not allow them to publicly judge or correct of what a male teacher teaches.
 - c. Does this mean women are to have no say in such things? I don't read it that way. My understanding is that women can discuss these things and express their opinions with the men after church or with their husbands at home. What is prohibited is giving women the power to openly challenge the men or have the final say during the church meetings. That is to be left to the men.
- F. One final thought before moving on to **vs 15**. We are prone to believe that exercising power over a person or a situation is the most effective method of correcting bad behavior or fixing a bad situation.
1. Yet God, who is all-powerful, most often resorts to the use of power **after** trying other, less forceful methods. In fact, sometimes power is His last resort. Why? Because there is more at stake than simply stopping bad behavior or correcting a bad situation.
 2. A person who is corrected learns what not to do and what they ought to have done.
 3. The person who is worked with, patiently taught, and encouraged to think and examine their beliefs and values will not only learn what not to do, but is far more likely to change their beliefs and values and come to the place where they believe in and value doing what is godly and loving and right and good. And when that happens, they have become a new person in that area of their life.
 4. You may be wondering how this applies to women – who too often experience the abuse of male power. Let me ask this question. Should the mistreated wife or woman at church resort to the use of power to correct her situation? The answer is no, no more than a husband should use power to control his wife (**1 Peter 3:7**), and no

- more than Abraham's wife, Sarah, resorted to power to protect herself from her husband's selfish choices (**1 Peter 3:1-6**), and no more than Jesus Christ resorted to power to end being treated so cruelly (**1 Peter 2:21-23**).
5. This does not mean that a wife cannot call the police when her husband physically abuses her. She can and ought. It does not mean she cannot seek outside help to bring an end to cruel, harmful treatment. It does not mean she has to remain in a church where women are treated as less than men. But it does mean that before things escalate to those levels, she is to use all the tools of prayer, godliness, and the support of godly believers to deal with her situation.
- G. [15] But women will be preserved (*saved*) through the bearing of children if they continue in faith and love and sanctity with self-restraint.
1. When it comes to bearing children, only women can do it because God only made women capable of doing it.
 2. Therefore, just as one of man's roles is to lead and bear the ultimate responsibility for the health of the church and the home – based on the hierarchy of authority – so one of woman's roles is to bear children and nurture them toward becoming mature, God-pleasing adults.
 3. But notice, it is not only bearing a child that moves God to look upon a woman's situation with compassion and salvation, she must also continue to live a life of faith, love, and godliness – with self-restraint – a restraint that is sometimes difficult to practice when men in general or a husband in particular is mistreating her.

III. Conclusion

- A. May God grant us wisdom in apply the truths of **vs 9-15** in ways that honor Him, promote the spiritual health of the church, and give all women the respect and consideration and love they ought to be given as human beings and as children of God.