

Grace-Shaped Living Part 2 • Proper Conduct

I. INTRODUCTION •

A. Read 2 Peter 3:14-18

1. We begin with this because the passage we're looking at today in 1 Tim 2 certainly qualifies for what Peter says here about some of the stuff Paul wrote.
2. It's seen a massive massaging in the last about 40 years.
3. Now, I have to warn you this is a **tough passage** because it's ultra non-PC.
 - a. It's a hornet's nest, a buzz saw.
 - b. Dealing with it is like giving a cat sprayed by a skunk a bath.
 - c. It has to be done but we're going to get some scratches before it's over.

B. Men & Women

1. It's crucial as we begin, to remember the setting.
2. Paul left Timothy in Ephesus to deal with some problems in the church.
3. Most of the letter is **details for proper conduct** of believers when they gather.
4. In this passage, Paul speaks specifically to men, then to women.

II. TEXT

A. V. 8

⁸I desire therefore that the men pray everywhere, lifting up holy hands, without wrath and doubting [better – disputing];

1. In studying Scripture, when you want to know what an author meant by a certain word, you look to see how he used it in other places.
 2. Every time Paul uses the word “everywhere” it's always in connection with local congregations.
 3. So here he means, “I desire men pray in **every fellowship**.”
 - a. The church at Ephesus met in dozens of places. mostly homes.
 - b. Occasionally they'd all get together in some open place that could accommodate them all but their regular meetings were **house churches** scattered all over the city.
 - c. The **elders** of Ephesus were the home-group pastors.
 4. Paul tells Timothy **men** need to take the lead in prayer in these home-fellowships.
 5. And when they pray, they're to lift up **holy hands** to the Lord.
 - a. The iconic image of prayer today is the steepled hands.
 - b. We close our eyes, bow our head & fold our hands to block out distracts & concentrate on God.
 - c. In the 1st Century they stood with eyes open & hands raised in a posture of blessing & surrender.
 6. The emphasis **here** is the need to offer prayer **w/o hypocrisy**.
 - a. It needs to be **holy**; free of anger & arguing.
 7. Paul says this because he knows men have a tendency toward **anger**.
 - a. God created men to do battle; **Warrior** is part of a man's design because evil is a foe to be overcome.
 - b. But sin has tweaked that & turned it into an anger with the wrong things.
 - c. Battle often comes out in getting into conflict with others.
 - d. This is the cause of a lot of that low simmering hostility many men have that boils over at the slightest thing.
 8. Prayer is a proper outlet for anger & how a man can wage the good fight, the real battle.
 - a. But his effectiveness in prayer will be diminished if his anger is pointed in the wrong direction;
 - b. At his wife, kids, his past, the idiots on the 101, the dolts at work.
 9. Men – That anger that seethes inside has a proper & holy outlet **Prayer**.
 - a. The prayer closet is your cage, your Octagon where you can be a UPC – **Universal Prayer Champion**.
 - b. Turn that wrath away from people who are really only victims, toward the cause & object that's victimizing them – **the devil**.
- #### B. Vs. 9-10
1. Paul now deals with something many **women** struggle with.

- ⁹ in like manner also, that the women adorn themselves in modest apparel, with propriety and moderation, not with braided hair or gold or pearls or costly clothing, ¹⁰ but, which is proper for women professing godliness, with good works.
2. I had some really interesting background on what women in Ephesus were wearing at this time but I had to cut it out due to time.
- Just know that the decadent fashions of Rome had found their way there.
 - And some of the Christians were wearing them to church.
 - 1) They came to fellowship dressed immodestly.
 - 2) They showed more skin than was proper & had their hair dolled up in elaborate styles that screamed, "Look at ME!"
3. When we gather – Who do we want the attention to be on? **Jesus!**
- We want hearts & minds to be directed to Him & Him alone.
 - Because that's our aim, we try to limit sights or sounds that would distract from Him.
 - That's why we encourage parents to put their children in the nursery & ask you to turn off your cell-phones.
 - And it's why when Summer comes, we remind the ladies to think about what they wear to church.
 - You see, You women are gorgeous! And us guys like looking at you.
 - You women know that, & it's why some dress the way they do – to **get** guys to look at them.
 - But short shorts & spaghetti-strap T's w/stiletto heels is not appropriate attire for Church.
 - Where it **is**, is at home w/your husband.
 - 1) We're not against mini-skirts & sheer blouses; we're for them at home.
 - 2) But the dress code for Church is modesty because we want to see Jesus, not a muffin-top.
4. Paul doesn't say a woman ought to make herself look like a worn out hag so men won't look at her!
5. On the contrary, he says Christian women **ought to adorn themselves** in a manner **proper** for being a **godly** woman.
- Is God beautiful? Indeed—He is perfection!
 - The godly woman **can** use clothes, make-up & jewelry that compliment her God-given beauty.
 - J. Vernon McGee said it well years ago when answering questions sent in to his radio program.
 - 1) Asked if it was okay for a Christian woman to wear make-up.
 - 2) His reply was, "Well, if the barn needs paint, paint it!"
5. "**Modest**" in v. 9 means "**decent & orderly**."
- It's the Greek word we get our word "**cosmos & cosmetic**" from.
 - The **cosmos** is the **ordered & beautiful** system of the universe.
 - It stands in opposition to **chaos** – a random mess.
 - That's what **cosmetics** do They bring **order** out of **chaos**.
6. "**Propriety**" means "**avoiding extremes**."
- A woman with this quality is ashamed to go beyond the bounds of what's decent & proper.
 - It's important we affirm this as a standard for Christians today because we live in an increasingly rude & crude culture that has made **pushing the limits** a virtue instead of taboo.
 - 1) What's held up by the media & fashion industry as the model our young girls ought to aspire to?
 - 2) Pop divas & starlets who obscenely flaunt their sexuality.
 - 3) A few designers now market scanty lingerie for 7 year old girls!
 - 4) Shopping in some of the stores at the mall is like walking through a strip club!
 - Mom & Dad, do your daughter a favor & don't give in to her pleas to dress like a harlot.
7. "**Moderation**" means to "**have a sound mind & good sense**."
- It's often translated as "**sober**," not having your thoughts clouded by the wrong influences.
8. Ladies, as you stand in front of your closet & consider which clothes to wear when you go out, what **influences** you?
- Allure, Cosmopolitan, Elle**, the **Sports Illustrated Swimsuit** issue?
 - Or a sense of what pleases the Lord? The Holy Spirit or world spirit?
9. I've had the honor of knowing some incredibly godly women who were beautiful both inside & out.
- They always dressed modestly & adorned themselves with make-up & jewelry that was proper.
 - Today, years later, their beauty endures in my memory because they understood that true beauty is a

thing of the soul far more than the flesh.

c. What I **don't** remember are the women who confused beauty with immodesty & thought getting guys to look at them meant they was beautiful.

d. Beauty belongs to a **person**, not a **body**.

10. That's what Paul tells Tim to remind the women of Ephesus.

11. Besides wearing **holy couture**, Paul says ladies should adorn themselves with a **reputation for good works**.

12. Long after the flower withers, let it's fragrance continue!

C. Vs. 11-14

1. Now – as difficult as **that** was, it's a piece of cake compared to what comes next.

2. What we're about to look at has caused many to label Paul a **misogynist**; a woman-hater.

3. It's a difficult passage because it's so contrary to the spirit of our age.

4. Some claim that while this may have applied in the 1st Century, we've gone beyond it.

5. What's interesting about that claim is that it wasn't until the 1960's that anyone had an understanding of this text **other** than what Paul obvious says here.

a. It took the rise of radical feminism to move people to offer different interpretations.

b. But now, 40 years later dozens of books have been written that give creative denials & reinterpretations of this passage.

6. Be warned, I'm going to say some things some won't like.

a. Please stay & hear me out as I seek to faithfully exposit God's Word.

b. If you're put off by what you hear, ask "Why?"

1) Is it because I'm misinterpreting the text,

2) Or you don't like what the HS moved Paul to write?

c. What the Bible says is true.

d. It may not be PC, popular or fun – but it's true; & because of that, it's the right & best way to live.

¹¹ Let a woman learn in silence with all submission.

8. Here we go; here's where Paul gets into hot water. // Let's see what he **is & isn't saying**.

9. In the ancient world, women weren't considered worthy of participating in intellectual pursuits.

a. They weren't allowed in the Greek philosophical schools & Jewish rabbis had only men for disciples.

b. It was assumed only men had the mental facility to grasp deep thoughts.

c. So, women were excluded from the synagogues & schools.

d. They could sit on the periphery, but weren't allowed to enter into discussions.

e. They were shunned & ignored.

10. All of that changed in the Christian assembly!

a. And it changed because besides the 12 men Jesus selected as His official disciples, He also encouraged women to follow Him – an unheard of thing for a Jewish rabbi, & one of the things that set Him at odds with the Jewish leadership.

b. Jesus affirmed the importance of women by appearing to one **first** after His resurrection.

c. In the early church, women were no longer consigned to the outer fringe, they were included right along with the men.

d. So revolutionary was this social & gender innovation early Christians were charged with upsetting the natural order of things. They were branded as dangerous revolutionaries who threatened the civilized world.

11. Far from Paul **barring** women from the assembly, he affirms their participation by saying, "**Let a woman learn!**" Don't exclude them!

12. But as might be expected, this **radical departure** from the status quo went to the head of some women.

a. Taking their new-found freedom too far, they brought disorder to the assembly.

b. They weren't savvy to how things were conducted in the schools & synagogues & interrupted important readings & teaching by making comments or asking questions.

c. Picture it, an Ephesian man has been saved for a few months & attends one of the Ephesian house-churches.

1) He prays for his wife & though she gives him grief at first, she eventually comes to Christ.

2) So he takes her to church for the first time.

- 3) An elder is teaching on one of the parables of Jesus.
- 4) She doesn't understand, so she blurts out, "What's a parable?"
 - d. Multiply that by 4 or 5 others & it's chaos.
13. Paul's concern was that all things be done decently & in order.
14. These interruptions hindered their growth. So he gives this simple instruction:
Let a woman learn in silence with all submission.
15. "**Silence**" means "**peaceable**" & is translated that way in v. 2.
 - a. Paul's not saying women have to zip it & **no talking** is allowed.
 - b. He's means they must keep in mind the authority structure God has ordained for the church.
16. The problem was that some of the ladies, emboldened by their elevation in Christ, had gone beyond proper bounds.
 - a. They knew they were equal to men in terms of value & worth before God.
 - b. But they took it too far & thought equality meant **sameness**.
 - d. Whatever roles men had, they could have also, including leading the fellowship.
17. Not so, and Paul makes that clear now -
- ¹² And I do not permit a woman to teach or to have authority over a man, but to be in silence. ¹³ For Adam was formed first, then Eve. ¹⁴ And Adam was not deceived, but the woman being deceived, fell into transgression.
18. Contrary to the critics who say this only applied to the culture of the 1st Century, Paul's reason for it is based on the order of Creation.
19. I don't want to get technical, but Paul employs words here he uses nowhere else.
20. When he says "**I do not permit**" he's applying his authority as an Apostle; this isn't mere opinion or whim. It's a **directive** from the Lord for His Church.
21. What isn't allowed is for a woman to teach or hold a position of authority over a man > In the Church.
 - a. Since teaching was the unique ministry of elders & they were THE authority in the early church, it's clear what Paul means is that **a woman cannot be an elder**.
 - b. Since pastors are elders, they can't be pastors.
 - c. They can be deacons, prophetesses, teachers of other women & children & serve in all kinds of other capacities. >> They just can't be elders.
22. Let me give a quick sketch of the main ways people interpret this passage.
 - a. The **Egalitarian** view is shaped by radical feminism & says this is purely cultural & has no application to today. They encourage women to be elders & ordain them as pastors.
 - b. The **Hierarchical** view is way over on the other side of the scale & says women can't be elders, deacons or hold **any** position of leadership in the Church.
 - 1) They're not allowed to address the men as a whole at all!
 - 2) They can teach other women & kids—but that's it.
 - c. I could say CC is in the middle but that's not really accurate.
 - 1) Based on what the Bible, we believe the **only thing** women are not to be is **elders**.
 - 2) They can teach & lead all kinds of ministry, just so long as their leadership is **under** the God-ordained authority of the elders & pastors.
23. Though a woman cannot be an elder, that does not mean her influence can't be widely felt in the Body.
 - a. As she embraces her calling & role **as a woman**, she becomes a **powerful** influence.
 - b. We've had many wonderful women in our fellowship over the years who've been **just such** a godly influence.
 - c. I think of one in particular; a senior-saint named Lucille.
 - 1) She came to us about a year after her husband had gone to be with Jesus.
 - 2) Though he was gone, she **continued** to honor & respect him wonderfully.
 - 3) She was a treasured resource to many of us, young & mature alike.
 - 4) Her sage counsel & wisdom was sought after.
 - 5) Even after Lucille joined her husband in glory, her influence lived on in the advice she'd given.
 - d. It was through her example that we all saw the tremendous **power** there is in submission!
24. Paul bases the order of authority in the church on the order of creation.
 - a. Adam came first, then Eve.
 - b. Gen. 1 is clear that **both** male & female are created in the image of God.

- c. But in the relationship **between** man & woman, God ordained that the man **lead** & the woman **follow**.
25. In v. 14, Paul shows how in the Fall, Adam & Eve **violated** the creation order.
- There's a reason the devil tempted Eve & not Adam. It's not because she was more gullible.
 - It's because he appealed to her with what had tripped up him; the desire to supplant the authority above him.
 - When Eve was tempted, instead of pondering the enemy's appeal, she **ought** to have turned to Adam.
 - Read Gen. 3 carefully, & you realize Adam was there but only stood silently by.
 - While Eve **ought** to have consulted Adam as her spiritual head, **Adam ought** to have stepped in & protected her from the enemy's lies. **That was his job**. He failed to do it.
 - And Eve, instead of turning to him & asking him to do what he was supposed to, took it on herself – & the rest, as they say, is history literally!
26. Ever since that fateful day in Eden, women have suffered **either from** -
- 1 • **Abusive** men who wielded authority cruelly, or
 - 2 • They've suffered from **passive** men who **refused** to take the lead in loving & serving them.
- The problem is that women compound the problem when they step in to take over when a man won't. That was Eve's error.
 - A woman **can't** do what God calls a man to do. She should do what Eve **ought** to have done – Wait for the man to step up.
- E. V. 15
- This verse is recognized by nearly everyone as one of, if not **THE** most difficult to interpret in the Bible.
- ¹⁵ Nevertheless she will be saved in childbearing if they continue in faith, love, and holiness, with self-control.
- I'm running out of time so instead of laying out the options, let me cut to the chase & say it's probably best to understand that Paul is balancing out the passage & saying that while being an elder is reserved to men, God's reserved something to women – Having children!
 - Salvation here isn't being born again; it's the **process of sanctification**, where we **grow in grace** as the HS conforms us to the image of Christ.
 - While an elder's ministry is to lead the church & tend the flock of God, God gives a woman her **own church** to lead in her children – & **she grows in grace** as she faithfully tends that flock.
 - I can say that it's a great honor & privilege to be a pastor & tend the flock of God – But the hand that rocks the cradle – Rules the world!

III. CONCLUSION

A. Feminism is Wrong

- This passage is important for us because Radical Feminism was introduced some goofy ideas into our society.
 - They confuse **equality** with **sameness**.
 - They claim Gender differences are contrived & have been foisted on us by a male-dominated past.
 - They tell women that to be an authentic person they must **reject** gender-based distinctions.
 - Traditional roles like being a wife & mother are despised & disparaged.
 - They demand women take the lead in every sphere; including the church & home.
- But v. 15 reminds us being a mother is a holy & unique calling.
 - It's how women can **uniquely** contribute to the work of God.
- Ladies, don't try to be like a man. Don't take off your clothes, abandon your femininity & roll around in the mud to prove you can be as crude & rough as any guy.
- Be what's **best** among humans A woman. After all – God DID create her last!
 - In 1 Peter, Peter describes the woman in comparison to the man as the finer vessel.
 - Like this – [thermos & glass]
- Don't go out & after a man. That's **his** job, to **pursue** you.
 - In the Bible it always says that a man **takes** a wife, & that she is **given** in marriage.
 - The man is to **leave** his father & mother & be joined to his wife.
 - 1) See how it works? He **proves** himself first.

- 2) By making a home, getting a job, preparing their life together ahead of time.
- 3) Then she joins him as his helper.
- c. But today we've forsaken that wisdom for our so-called enlightenment.
 - 1) And now, it's the woman who gets a place, a job, car, insurance.
 - 2) Then her boyfriend moves in with her & lives off of her.
 - 3) Ladies you deserve better. You deserve a **man**. Not a boy in a man's body.
 - 4) Don't sell yourself so cheap. Don't settle. You'll regret it.
6. Ladies, don't step out & do what a man's supposed to do because a man won't.
 - a. Don't fill in because they aren't. Wait & pray.
 - b. **If** you step in, you're only encouraging their laziness & filling a role they should & could take.
 - c. A woman says, "But **someone** has to do it." No. A **man** needs to.
 - d. She says, "I'll do it & it'll **shame** him into doing it."
 - 1) No, 90% will just be happy someone else is doing it; now they don't have to.
 - 2) Of the other 10% that **will** be shamed & step up, you'll **despise** because you had to shame them.
- B. Men
 1. I hope you're listening! Our goal is not to treat women as **equals**; it's to treat them as **better than that**; to treat them as **ladies**.
 2. Don't be like passive Adam who stood idly by while his wife got sucker-punched by evil.
 3. **Step up** – step **into** the role God's called you to as a husband, a father, a man!

Origins of Fashions in Ephesus.

Because Ephesus was a major & important city of the ancient world, considerable research has been invested in it. We know that at the time Paul wrote this, like many large cities of the Empire, Ephesus was caught up in the new Roman fashions of dress & makeup. It had all begun many years before when the rich elite of Rome wore extravagant dresses to the parties they threw for their friends. At each succeeding party, the women would try to outdo each other with their fancy dresses & lavish jewelry & make-up – flaunting their wealth & in effect saying – “Look how rich I am. I'm richer than you.” Over time, in their desire to outdo each other, the dresses, make-up & jewelry became virtual costumes. Then, some of the women began to see who could outdo each other by baring more & more skin, while at the same time adding to the elaborateness of their garment; think the Red Carpet for the Academy Awards & you get the idea – although, the MTV Video Awards might be a better comparison. The rich fueled the fashion industry & soon women of more moderate means were dressing like the rich. The fashion spread throughout the Empire & to Ephesus where some of the women in the church were caught up in it. They came to fellowship dressed immodestly. They were showing more skin that was proper & had their hair dolled up in the elaborate styles that bordered on the costumish. The scandal was that in that culture, a woman's hair was a major part of her beauty & was reserved for her husband's view alone. So she wore a head-covering and only exposed her hair in the privacy of her home. But now that the Ephesian women were making these fancy do's & sticking gold & silver pins with rich decorations on them in their hair, they didn't want to hide it; they wanted others to see.