

Mid Week • 1 Timothy 2

INTRODUCTION

In Chapter 3:14-15, Paul tells Timothy the reason why he wrote this letter – so that Timothy, as the pastor of the church in Ephesus, might know how to conduct himself as pastor.

In ch. 1, he tells his young friend what he's to do as a **pastor**, then in ch. 2, he shares how the church is to be **organized** and **run**.

CHAPTER 2

¹ Therefore I exhort first of all that supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks be made for all men,

² for kings and all who are in authority, that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and reverence.

Since we covered vs. 1-6 on Sunday, I'll be much briefer with them this evening.

In v. 1, when Paul says that prayer should be “first of all” he means in order of **priority**, not **sequence**.

He isn't saying that the first thing the church should do when it meets is pray, but that prayer must be a priority.

As we go on to read in vs. 3& 4, the *kind* of prayer Paul means is prayer for the **salvation** of the **lost**, specially the salvation of those who are in a position to make a difference in the quality of our lives.

In the ancient world – the most powerful person was the king and those he put in government office beneath him.

Their policies determined whether or not peace and prosperity prevailed.

Their acceptance or hostility set the tone for the entire nation or empire.

Paul called for prayer for kings and all those who are in authority - why?

That we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and reverence.

The king and his underlings were the one's most responsible for that.

In our day, who bears most on our leading a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and reverence?

The President and Congress, certainly – but who else?

Are there others who exert nearly as much authority and influence as the government in setting the cultural context?

How about the media and entertainment industries?

Don't they possess an influence as great, maybe even greater than the government?

It's hard to estimate to just what extent these industries have influenced our times, but certainly they have been as instrumental in setting the cultural climate as the kings of the ancient world.

So to Paul's list of prayer targets, we can add media moguls and celebrities.

He uses three words in v. 1 that all describe different kinds of prayer.

By using these three different words, Paul gives *emphasis* to his urging of prayer for the lost.

Supplication is a kind of desperate desire – it sees a grave need and begs for provision.

Prayer is a general word which refers to the act of reverently coming to God – the idea here is that prayer for the lost is a kind of worship because God is glorified when sinners are saved.

Intercession is a special word that refers to personal involvement.

Today, the word “intercession” is often used to refer to going to someone and confronting them about some grave danger they are in because of poor personal choices.

Family members will do an intervention with someone in the family whose and alcoholic or drug addict.

Their idea is personal involvement and action on behalf of another because they are headed in the wrong direction.

When we intercede for someone, we are personally and passionately bringing them before the Lord in

prayer and pleading that God open their eyes and ears to convict them of sin and bring them to Faith in Jesus Christ.

To these 3 intense words describing prayer for the salvation of those we are praying for, Paul adds that we are to give thanks for all men.

Adding a word of thanks-giving to our requests for their salvation helps lift the crushing burden such prayer can place on us.

The famous pastor and preacher FB Meyer was speaking at a bible conference along with AB Simpson, founder of the Christian and Missionary Alliance.

They shared the same room at the conference center and early one morning, FB Meyer came out of his room into the sitting room to find Simpson on his knees with a globe in his hands, crying out to God with tear-stained cheeks, for the salvation of dozens of people and tribes around the world.

Our prayers for the lost ought to be *passionate*, not cold, indifferent, mechanical things.

But if we only see the need of sinners and not the sufficiency of God to meet those needs, then we can be overburdened.

Ending out intercession with thanks lifts our gaze to the power and love of God.

3 For this is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Savior,

4 who desires all men to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth.

What's good and acceptable? Praying for all that they might be saved.

Why is it good and acceptable? Because it's the very thing God desires!

If God *desires* all people to be saved, then why aren't they?

Simple – Because God also wills for men and women to have the power to chose.

To be human means to have a will and the ability to exercise it.

If God took away our free-will, then we would no longer be human – and as such, would no longer fall in the realm of His desire to save.

Think of it this way:

God desires all to be saved because He loves all.

His love is what moved Him to create man with the ability to *will*, to *choose*.

Man is the only creature capable of understanding and enjoying God's love because we were created in the image of God, with the power to chose.

Love, in order to be love, has to be free, not compelled.

So love and choice go together.

The proper response to God's love is to receive it and return it from a willing heart.

But many people, for whatever reason; actually there is no reason at all, mere prejudice – they refuse to acknowledge, receive, and return God's love.

God's love restrains Him from wiping out their free-will and making them saved.

From His stand-point, it is better to let some people retain their free-will and reject Him, than to eradicate free-will and force everyone to go to heaven.

There was a movie that played in the mid-70's called "One Flew Over The Cuckoo's Nest."

It was about a socio-path who ended up in a lock-down mental institution.

He created so much trouble, the medical staff eventually gave him a frontal lobotomy.

The movie ends with him lying in his bed in a comatose state; alive but oblivious.

If God took away our will, it would be like a spiritual lobotomy.

Better to let man retain his will and that some would rebel and reject Him, than that mankind was reduced to the state of mindless robots.

If He did remove our will, then yes, we could all go to heaven – but not one of us would be able to enjoy it.

God desires all to be saved, but He also honors the choices we make – including the choice to reject Him and His salvation.

5 For there is one God and one Mediator between God and men, the Man Christ Jesus,

- 6 who gave Himself a ransom for all, to be testified in due time,
7 for which I was appointed a preacher and an apostle—I am speaking the truth in Christ *and* not lying—a teacher of the Gentiles in faith and truth.

People of the ancient world were much more religiously-minded than modern man is.

With the rise of science, there's been a marked devaluing of the spiritual realm and the immaterial part of man.

Now, many people think of the world as nothing more than a collection of chemical and minerals.

Even man, they say is nothing but a bag of water with some chemicals thrown in.

In such a materialistic worldview, religion has lost its interest for many.

Whereas the ancient man asked, "How can I be right with my god," modern man asks, "How can I be right with the world around me?"

Success for the ancients was determined by the approval of the gods.

For the modern man, success is determined by the approval, or even envy, of his or her peers.

When Paul writes . . .

- 5 For *there is one God and one Mediator between God and men, the Man Christ Jesus,*

He is speaking against the backdrop of the ancient world with its pre-occupation with religion and the all-consuming question – "How can I be right with my god?"

Paul says, there is only one God, not the many gods of Greece and Rome and all the other nations of the world, each with its own patron deity that had to be appeased with elaborate rituals and offerings.

There is ONE God – and then there is man, and between these two a gulf spreads wide that separates God and man.

That gulf is sin.

How can a man or woman be right with his or her God?

Only through the **Mediator**, Jesus Christ, who comes and lays hands on both God and man and **bridges** the **gulf** created by man's rebellion and sin.

Jesus became the Mediator by giving Himself as the ransom price for our sin.

He didn't just pay a **ransom** and free us from slavery to sin and death – He gave **HIMSELF** as the **ransom**.

I'm reminded of the Moravian missionaries who were so passionate for the salvation of the lost that when they were barred by slave-owners from sharing the gospel with their slaves, the Moravians sold themselves into slavery, just so they could preach to the slaves of Christ.

They gave themselves because Christ first gave Himself.

Some people have read this and wondered who the ransom was paid *to*.

Was it paid to satan or God?

But that's not what Paul is referring to here.

He is not speaking of the ransom in terms of who it was paid to.

The focus is on the price, the cost.

Jesus gave Himself as the ransom, for **all**!

I'm sure many of you are aware that there is a large-scale debate going on in the Church between what are classically called Calvinists and Arminianists.

One of the 5 foundational doctrines of Calvinism is what is known as *Limited Atonement* – that Jesus died *only* for the sins of the elect.

They base this on the following logic:

- 1) God is perfectly Just.
- 2) Jesus suffered and paid for sins.
- 3) People who reject Christ will suffer for their own sins.
- 4) God would be unjust to punish *both* Christ *and* those who reject Him; that would be twice the punishment!
- 5) *Conclusion* – Jesus did not suffer or pay for the sins of those who reject Him.

While this seems to follow in a nice logical flow – it’s a classic case of man using his limited reason to define his theology rather than simply accepting what Scripture says.

This passage says that Jesus offered Himself a ransom for who? ALL!

Some Calvinists go so far as to add the words, “the elect.”

They say Jesus gave Himself a ransom for all the elect!

What about these verses . . .

1 John 2:2 • And He Himself is the propitiation for our sins, and not for ours only but also for the whole world.

1 John 4:14 • We have seen and testify that the Father has sent the Son as Savior of the world.

John 1:29 • The next day John saw Jesus coming toward him, and said, “Behold! The Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world!

2 Peter 2:1 is of particular interest in this regard as it affirms the atonement of Christ being sufficient for those who are clearly lost . . .

¹But there were also false prophets among the people, even as there will be false teachers among you, who will secretly bring in destructive heresies, even denying the Lord who bought them, and bring on themselves swift destruction.

The word “bought” here is the classic word used for to “purchase” or “redeem.”

Heb. 2:9 • But we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels, for the suffering of death crowned with glory and honor, that He, by the grace of God, might taste death for everyone.

And then, in ch. 4, v. 10 of 1 Timothy . . .

For to this *end* we both labor and suffer reproach, because we trust in the living God, who is *the Savior of all men, especially of those who believe*.

Here Paul is even careful to identify that while salvation can potentially extend to all, it’s efficacious, or helpful, only to those who have come to faith in Christ.

At the end of v. 6, Paul says that Jesus came at precisely the **right moment**.

Historians have made frequent comment on how fortuitous it was that Jesus of Nazareth rose at precisely that point in history.

Alexander the Great had succeeded in spreading the Greek culture and thought forms, as well as language across the entire Fertile Crescent & Mediterranean.

The Chinese were finally starting to open their doors to the West.

And then the Romans came along with their armies and roads and brought about the Pax-Romana – the Roman peace!

During the 3½ years of His ministry, Jesus didn’t travel farther than about 80 miles from His hometown, and yet within just a hundred years of His death, the gospel had reached as far away as India and possibly even in to China.

Churches were meeting from Britain and Spain all the way into Eastern Europe, north Africa, and central Asia.

The Apostle Paul had a good part in that phenomenal spread of the Gospel!

He alone was responsible for planting dozens of churches from the Middle East all the way to Spain.

His comment at the end of v. 7 seems a bit out of character . . .

I am speaking the truth in Christ *and* not lying—a teacher of the Gentiles in faith and truth.

From his letters to the Corinthians, we know that Paul’s apostleship was under attack and since he wrote this letter *from* Corinth, there’s a good chance that he writes this declaration of his call to Timothy to forestall anyone’s opposition to what he writes in the letter.

He even spells out his specific task as an Apostle – to preach and teach the Gentiles about Christ.

When Jesus first appeared to Paul, He told him He was sending him to the Gentiles.

When Paul then returned to the other Apostles in Jerusalem, they acknowledged and affirmed Paul’s

calling to be the Apostle to the Gentiles.

⁸ **I desire therefore that the men pray everywhere, lifting up holy hands, without wrath and doubting;**

Every other time Paul uses the word “everywhere” it’s always in connection with **local congregations**.

As in, “I desire that the men pray in every **congregation**.”

Remember that the context here is *order in the church assembly*.

This instruction is specifically for THE men.

They are to pray – to take the lead in prayer.

In 1 Corinthians 14 it is clear that women are *not* forbidden from praying when the church meets.

It’s just that men need to take the lead.

Our posture for prayer today is to bow our heads and close our eyes.

We bow our heads as an act of humble reverence for God, and we close our eyes to block out the distractions that so often hinder our focus and concentration.

The Jews prayed in a much different posture.

The common posture for prayer in that day was to stand and look up, as though one was looking toward heaven and God’s throne.

Often times, one would lift his hands as well, as a gesture of supplication or as an expression of willingness to receive from the Lord.

Lifted hands signify the extension of ourselves toward God, either as an expression of worship or in the anticipation of obtaining a blessing.

Here Paul says that when we pray, we are to ensure the hands we lift to God are holy and without anger and doubt.

In other words – don’t be a hypocrite!

Don’t adopt some posture on the outside that is nothing but a scam – a shield that hides a corrupt heart.

Jesus spoke of the hypocrites who were like white-washed tombs.

On the outside they were so clean and white – but on the inside they were nothing but decayed flesh and the stench of death!

Prayer is a priority, but prayer that isn’t offered from a *sincere* heart is a sham.

If we are to offer holy hands to the Lord, if we are to pray prayers unhindered by selfish anger and petty doubts, then our prayer has to begin with an honest self-examination and confession of sin.

Holy hands means we are in right relationship with **God**, and being without anger and doubts means we are in right relationship with **others**.

The word doubts” refers to petty disputes that cloud our communion with others.

In Mark 11:24-26, Jesus says . . .

²⁴**Therefore I say to you, whatever things you ask when you pray, believe that you receive them, and you will have them.** ²⁵**“And whenever you stand praying, if you have anything against anyone, forgive him, that your Father in heaven may also forgive you your trespasses.** ²⁶**But if you do not forgive, neither will your Father in heaven forgive your trespasses.**

Before the priests could enter in to the Holy Place in the temple, they had to go to the laver and wash.

Before they could come to the table of showbread, which symbolizes fellowship,

Before they could stand before the light of the lampstand, which represents the light of God’s truth to this dark world,

Before they could come before the altar of incense, which stands for the prayers of God’s people ascending before His throne,

They had to stop at the laver and wash.

So too – we must stop at the spiritual wash-basin of the forgiveness of Christ and receive His gift of cleansing.

If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. - 1 John 1:9

Then we can enter in to intimate fellowship with Him, enjoy a fuller revelation of His truth, and find a

place of effective prayer before His throne of grace.

Paul now moves to speak directly to some women's issues that were causing an disturbance in the church.

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.

Paul will speak to the women through the end of the chapter, and what he says here is a part of his instructions to women that have caused some people to label him as a male-chauvinist.

In fact, some Christians are so opposed to what the Apostle says here that they have negated his instructions altogether – saying that this was for *that* time alone and has been superseded by the ethics of our more enlightened age.

If you were to read the writings of Bible commentators and teachers from the days of the early church right up to the 1960's you'd discover they are unanimous in their understanding of what Paul writes here. It isn't until 1969 and the radical feminist movement that people began to put a different spin on this passage.

Today, dozens of books have been written that give creative denials and reinterpretations of what Paul is saying here.

But this is dangerous for the simple reason that what Paul gives here is direction on the ordering of the church.

Either we let the Holy Spirit through Paul define the order and structure of the Church or we bend and adapt the church to the *Zeitgeist*, the spirit of the age.

I must admit that some of what Paul writes about women, specially in 1 Corinthians 11, speaks to a *specific historical perspective* and that rules he gives governing certain conduct are not something that has to be slavishly repeated today.

But what many people forget is that Paul defines specific guidelines for the behavior of men and women based on certain timeless principles.

It's those principle we need to be on the look-out for – and then apply them in the same spirit that moved Paul to define the guidelines he did.

So, let's carefully dissect these verses . . .

9 in like manner also,

Just as Paul had addressed the men of the congregation to take the lead in prayer, in like manner, Paul turns to address the women on *their* role when the church gathers . . .

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.

In a word – Paul says to the women – “Be modest!”

Ephesus was a wealthy commercial city, and some women there competed against each other for attention and popularity.

In that day, expensive hairdos arrayed with costly jewelry were an accepted way to get to the top socially. Paul admonished the Christian women to major on the “inner person,” the true beauty that only Christ can give.

Remember, Paul is writing to Timothy instructions for church life.

These are instructions for how we are to conduct ourselves in the congregation.

Men are to be devoted to sincere prayer while women need to be modest.

Okay – here are the facts.

Men like looking at pretty women.

Women know that and so work at making themselves pretty.

That's great, as long as the man they are attempting to be attractive for is their own husband.

But if a woman adorns herself with hairstyles, cosmetics, or clothing that's aimed at attracting the desire of a man *other* than her husband – she's in error.

Ladies, there's a vast difference between adorning yourself to convey a sense of **true, pure beauty** and affecting a style that is aimed at **alluring men**.

Paul doesn't say here that women ought to make themselves look like old worn out hags so that men won't look at them!

On the contrary – he says that Christian women ought to **adorn themselves** in a manner that's **proper** for being a **godly woman**.

Is God beautiful?

Indeed – Beauty finds its fulfillment in Him!

So, the godly woman ought to make a study of beauty and find those clothes, make-up and jewelry that enhance and compliment her God-given beauty.

I like what J. Vernon McGee said once in reply to a letter that was written to him from a woman who thought wearing make-up was sinful.

McGee said, "If the barn needs paint, paint it!"

The word "modest" in v. 9 means "**decent** and **orderly**."

It's related to the Greek word from which we get the word "cosmetic" and "cosmos."

The *cosmos* refers to the ordered system and beautiful patterns of the universe.

Cosmos stands in opposition to *chaos* – which refers to a random and misplaced mess.

Cosmetics help bring *order* out of *chaos*.

"*Propriety*" literally means "the **avoidance** of **extremes**."

A woman who possesses this quality is ashamed to go beyond the bounds of what's decent and proper.

"*Moderation*" comes from word that means "having a **sound mind** and good sense."

In some places it's translated as "**sober**," not being moved by improper influences.

As you stand in front of your closet and consider which clothes to wear when you go out in public, what influences you?

Allure, Cosmopolitan, Elle, the Sports Illustrated Swimsuit issue?

Or a genuine sense of what pleases the Lord?

Is it the Holy Spirit or the world spirit which influences your attire?

Every woman possesses the capacity to give eloquent testimony to the power of transcendent beauty through the way she adorns herself.

But there is a vast difference between seeking to honor God by honoring the beauty He has given her and a woman adorning herself in a manner that is calculated at taking advantage of men's baser desires and lust.

Godly beauty draws attention ultimately to God – Mere physical attractiveness draws attention to the woman and it ends with her.

As a man, Paul knew the power women possess to distract men's attention.

So he directs them to exercise modesty in how they present themselves when the church gathers.

Besides the outer wardrobe, Paul says that the godly woman is to adorn herself with the *reputation of good works*.

Long after the beauty of the flower withers, let its fragrance continue!

Then he says . . .

11 Let a woman learn in silence with all submission.

Ouch! Here we go – here's where Paul starts to tread ground that gets him in to such hot water.

But it is only a misinformed elitism that causes Paul's critics to jump all over him at this.

In order to understand what Paul is saying and *not* saying here we need to understand the historical and cultural context.

In both the Greek and Jewish cultures, women were not considered worthy of participating in **intellectual pursuits**.

They were not part of philosophical schools and only very rarely were they included as disciples of a rabbi or Greek sage.

Only men were thought to possess the mental facility to grasp religious and philosophical ideas.

As a result, women were usually excluded from synagogues and schools.

They might sit on the periphery, but were never allowed to enter into the discussions.

Generally, they were shunned and ignored.

All of that changed in the **Christian assembly!**

In fact, so revolutionary was the context of the Christian congregation that the early Christians were charged in many places of upsetting the natural order and being dangerous revolutionaries that threatened the entire civilized world.

Slaves and freemen sat side by side and had equal status.

Men and women worshipped and prayed together.

All ate of the same food and drank from the same cup.

Far from Paul barring women from the assembly – he affirms their participation by saying, “Let a **woman learn!**”

I cannot express just how dramatic a break that was from the conventions of the day!

As might be expected, this radical departure from the social customs of the day went to the head of some of those who had been oppressed, like slaves and women.

Taking their freedom in Christ a bit too far, they started to bring disorder to the assembly.

The women, untrained in the Law of Moses, in rhetoric, and in religious and philosophical ideas, would interrupt important readings and discussions by asking questions.

In the middle of a teaching, they might be heard to turn to their husband and say, “What does that mean?”

The result was growing chaos in the Christian gatherings.

Paul was concerned that all things be done decently and in order in the church.

These interruptions were hindering their growth – so he gives this simple instruction:

11 Let a woman learn in silence with all submission.

The word “silence” is the same as used in v. 2 where it is translated as “**peaceable.**”

It’s used in Thessalonians when he tells them to work *quietly* with their own hands.

He’s not saying women have to keep their mouths zipped or that absolutely no talking is allowed!

He’s simply saying that while women *are equal* to men in terms of their value and worth before God and welcome in the Christian congregation, they need to keep their role in perspective and realize that their submission to their husband or father calls for them to be cautious.

If they have a question, they need to ask it in the appropriate setting, not blurt it out in the middle of the meeting and disrupt what’s going on.

Paul had to write this instruction because the women WERE DOING THIS in many of the assemblies because they didn’t know any better.

Paul is not clamping down some kind of cruel lid on a woman’s self-expression; he’s merely giving some basic instruction to them on proper behavior.

Men weren’t interrupting because they *knew better*; synagogue or school etiquette was something they were familiar with – the women weren’t.

Paul told the Corinthians the same thing as here and there told the women what the proper place to ask their questions was – at home, of their husbands.

We try to follow that principle here when ladies ask us questions.

Following the principle of submission – we encourage women to ask their husbands before coming to one of the elders or pastors.

Even if the man is *not* a believer, it’s still appropriate for the wife to inquire of her husband.

Maybe her inquiry will prompt him to search the scriptures.

Maybe he’ll contact one of the pastors or elders to find the answer.

We can never go wrong when we follow the guidance and counsel of the Word of God and exercise diligence to honor the levels of authority and submission He’s established.

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.**

Many critics of Paul want to discard his teaching here by saying it was only applicable to that time and culture.

But note what Paul bases his instruction on – the **order of creation!**

This has nothing to do with culture – it has to do with the original creation of men and women.

Paul's argument runs like this:

A woman is not to teach **authoritatively** over a man because it defies the **authority/submission** roles defined by God and revealed in Creation.

It's important to note that the phrase "to teach or have authority over a man" is a package; grammatically, *teaching* and *authority* go together here.

In fact, his use of the *present infinitive* in both *teaching* and *exercising authority* means he is referring less to the *act* of teaching and more to the *practice* of it, as in the office of leader-teacher; which we can equate with *elder* or *pastor*.

What Paul is saying is that in the congregation; remember, that's the context he's speaking to; women are not to be in positions of authority over men.

He is not saying a woman cannot teach a man or men – **PERIOD!**

He's saying that a woman cannot teach and lead men *authoritatively* in the context of the gathered assembly.

As such, they are clearly barred from holding positions as pastors and elders, because that is specifically the task of elders and pastors – to lead the flock and to teach that which is to be submitted to on the part of the congregation.

A woman can certainly address the church, but only if what she's saying is *under* the *demonstrated* covering of the God-appointed, male leadership of the church.

We see this in Acts 18 where Aquila and Priscilla spoke with Apollos. (24-26)

²⁴**Now a certain Jew named Apollos, born at Alexandria, an eloquent man and mighty in the Scriptures, came to Ephesus. ²⁵This man had been instructed in the way of the Lord; and being fervent in spirit, he spoke and taught accurately the things of the Lord, though he knew only the baptism of John. ²⁶So he began to speak boldly in the synagogue. When Aquila and Priscilla heard him, they took him aside and explained to him the way of God more accurately.**

It seems clear from other passages that speak of this husband and wife team that Priscilla was an equal partner with her husband in terms of their ministry of teaching.

But her *demonstrated submission* to Aquila as her husband meant that people understood her teaching as being under his authority.

Also, when they spoke to Apollos, it was in private, not before the assembly.

Women *are* permitted to teach – in Titus 2, Paul tells the older women to teach and train the younger women.

We had a wonderful lady who was part of our fellowship who blessed many of the women of the church with her sage counsel and wisdom.

Even though Lucille's husband had passed away a year or so before she started attending our church, she still demonstrated a love and submission to his leadership in their many years together.

Her quiet and submissive lifestyle was an incredibly powerful thing that touched the lives of many – and still does!

There is tremendous **power** in submission!

As mothers, women also are in authority over their children and so a woman can teach her *sons*.

But a woman must not "lord it over men."

Rather, she must maintain a quiet and non-disruptive demeanor in the congregation, as Paul says at the end of v. 12.

It's interesting reading the commentators and how they try to dance around what Paul writes in these verses.

Some of them are straightforward and deal with the text as it stands.

Others manipulate and massage it, shaping it to fit something less troublesome to our times.

But what the massagers fail to do is read on to vs. 13 & 14 where Paul says that he is basing his instructions on an unchangeable premise – the order of creation.

Adam came first – then Eve.

Now, think back to the Creation account – *why* did God create Eve?

Because it was not good that the *man* should be alone.

Who was Eve created FOR? Adam!

Lest you think I'm getting heretical here, listen to 1 Cor. 11:8 & 9

⁸For man is not from woman, but woman from man. ⁹Nor was man created for the woman, but woman for the man.

Genesis 1 is clear that *both* male and female are created in the image of God.

But in terms of the relationship between man and woman, God has ordained that the man lead and the woman follow.

In v. 14, Paul does not consign women to the place of submission because they are somehow morally or spiritually inferior to men.

That's the way some have understood Paul here, that Eve was less spiritually perceptive and for that reason women can't lead and teach authoritatively – because they are more prone to error and being deceived by the devil.

But that is not at all what Paul is saying here.

V. 14 is an **amplification** of v. 13.

Adam was first, then Eve, thus establishing the levels of authority and submission.

But in the Fall, Adam and Eve **violated** the creation order.

Think about it, when Eve was tempted by the serpent, what should she have done if she was following in her role as Adam's wife?

She should have gone to Adam and talked with him first.

But no – she took matters into her own hands and moved out from under her husband's protective covering.

Because the serpent was one of the creatures she and Adam had been given dominion of, Eve should have been in authority over the serpent and instead of listening to his lies, she should have commanded its silence!

But instead, she *obeyed* one she *should* have commanded.

Then, Adam listened to Eve, and abrogated his responsibility as head, obeying her.

It was precisely because Adam and Eve neglected their assigned roles that the Fall occurred.

Paul is calling for a **restoration** to the **original plan** in the life of the family and the church.

Christ is the head of the man, who is the head of the woman.

When each person cheerfully embraces his or her assigned role, there is tremendous freedom and satisfaction.

John MacArthur has some potent words on why we need to take this passage as it comes to us instead of trying to twist it to accommodate the non-biblical sensitivities of the feminist movement.

Regarding the contemporary re-interpretation of Paul's teaching on the role of women, he writes,

The ultimate source of those attacks is the archenemy of God, Satan. His goal, as always is to overthrow God's plan and corrupt His design. He is behind the effort to entice women away from their God-created roles in society, in the family, and in the church. Such a satanic enterprise is not new – in fact, it was an issue in the church at Ephesus, because it was an issue in the Roman world of that time.

Satan messed things up in the Garden by appealing to Eve to usurp Adam's headship.

He continues to try that same course by encouraging women today to usurp the God ordained authority in the Church.

This final verse is extremely difficult to interpret and I have to tell you, much to my chagrin, that I do not understand what Paul is saying here!

¹⁵ Nevertheless she will be saved in childbearing if they continue in faith, love, and holiness, with self-control.

While the commentaries are all over the map on this, there is one thing they all agree on – what Paul intends by v.

15 is an enigma.

“Nevertheless” marks this as connected to what comes before.

So, regardless of the fact that Eve usurped the headship of Adam, she, meaning the woman, will be saved in child-bearing, **IF** they, meaning women, go on in faith love holiness and self-control.

The word “saved” here doesn’t mean salvation from sin – it’s the general word for salvation that refers to being kept *safe*.

Paul’s use of the word “dia” meaning “through” instead of “en” meaning “in” when he says, “She will be saved **THROUGH**, not **IN** child-bearing” may be decisive.

That one little preposition may be the key that unlocks Paul’s intent.

He has just referred to Eve’s usurpation of Adam’s lead.

But now he’s saying that the woman bears a unique role men do not have – the bearing of children!

Instead of trying to greedily grasp after the role God assigns men, if a woman cheerfully accepts her unique and special role as a wife and mother, then she’ll be kept safe – from what? From the lies and deceit of the enemy.

This is not to say that every woman is meant to have children or even to be married.

Paul is clear that some are called to a life of celibacy.

Others are unable to have children .

These words do not apply to them – but to the rest, quite frankly, the the majority of people whom God does call in to marriage and child-rearing.

If Christian women continue to be faithful, loving, holy, and self-controlled, keeping their urge to usurp the authority of their husbands, in check, then they have incredible power and influence in the raising and nurture of their children.

The greatest gift this generation can give to the next is godly children who become godly men and women.

And nothing is more critical to that end than the role of a godly mother!

If you listen to the testimony of most great men, you’ll find a strong and loving mother behind them.

The hand that rocks the cradle – rules the world!

1 Cor. 1:2; 2 Cor. 2:14; 1 Thess. 1:8

Wiersbe, Warren

“Feed My Sheep”

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