

# Wednesday Night BIBLE STUDY

Wednesday December 14, 2022 – First Baptist Church Buda  
Midweek Prayer Meeting & Bible Study

## Honoring 1 TIMOTHY GOD

**HONORING GOD**  
*A Controversial Passage – Part 3*  
**“Worship, Women and Wrangling”**  
*Genesis 3:1-20, 1 Timothy 2:9-15 (focus vv.13-15)*



### **Getting to Know Timothy Facts:**

- (1) **The name Timothy means “one who honors God”** – Hence the name of our study “Honoring God.” Timothy received his name, which means “one who honors God,” from his mother (Eunice) and grandmother (Lois), devout Jews who became believers in the Lord Jesus Christ (2 Tim. 1:5) and taught Timothy the Old Testament Scriptures from his childhood (2 Tim. 3:15). His father was a Greek (Acts 16:1) who may have died before Timothy met Paul
- (2) **Timothy was from the town of Lystra** - Timothy was from Lystra (Acts 16:1-3), a city in the Roman province of Galatia (part of modern day Turkey).
- (3) **Timothy came to know Jesus through Paul during his first missionary journey** - Paul led Timothy to Christ (1 Timothy 1:2; 1 Corinthians 4:17; 2 Timothy 1:2), undoubtedly during his ministry in Lystra on his first missionary journey (Acts 14:6-23).
- (4) **Paul recruited Timothy to join his ministry team during Paul’s second missionary journey** - When Paul revisited Lystra on his second missionary journey, Paul chose Timothy to accompany him (Acts 16:1-3).
- (5) **Timothy was likely a teenager when he first joined Paul’s ministry team** - Although Timothy was very young (probably in his late teens or early twenties, since about 15 years later Paul referred to him as a young man, 1 Timothy 4:12), he had a reputation for godliness (Acts 16:2).
- (6) **Timothy was with Paul throughout the rest of Paul’s life and ministry** - Timothy was to be Paul’s disciple, friend, and co-laborer for the rest of the apostle’s life, ministering with him in Berea (Acts 17:14), Athens (Acts 17:15), Corinth (Acts 18:5, 2 Corinthians 1:19), and accompanying him on his trip to Jerusalem (Acts 20:4). He was with Paul in his first Roman imprisonment and went to Philippi (Philippians 2:19-23) after Paul’s release. In addition, Paul frequently mentions Timothy in his epistle (Romans 16:21; 2 Corinthians 1:1, Philippians 1:1, Colossians 1:1; 1 Thessalonians 1:1; 2 Thessalonians 1:1; Philemon 1).
- (7) **Timothy became the pastor of the church at Ephesus** - Paul often sent Timothy to churches as his representative (1 Corinthians 4:17; 1 Corinthians 16:10; Philippians 2:19; 1 Thessalonians 3:2), and 1 Timothy finds him on another assignment, serving as pastor of the church at Ephesus (1 Thessalonians 1:3).

*“<sup>8</sup> I desire therefore that the men pray everywhere, lifting up holy hands, without wrath and doubting; <sup>9</sup> 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, <sup>10</sup> but, which is proper for women professing godliness, with good works. <sup>11</sup> Let a woman learn in silence with all submission. <sup>12</sup> And I do not permit a woman to teach or to have authority over a man, but to be in silence. <sup>13</sup> For Adam was formed first, then Eve. <sup>14</sup> And Adam was not deceived, but the woman being deceived, fell into transgression. <sup>15</sup> Nevertheless she will be saved in childbearing if they continue in faith, love, and holiness, with self-control.” – 1 Timothy 2:8-15 (NKJV)*

Let's think again about his passage for a minute... just the casual reading of it, and an initial hearing of it. How do you respond to that passage? For discussion respond to these question:

- *What is your initial response?*
- *Why do you think this passage might be extremely controversial (especially in our day)?*
- *Do you think it is important for Christians and the church today to really understand this passage? Why*

How should women conduct themselves in church worship and what is their role in the church? Let me remind you of three important thoughts to keep in minds as we continue to unpack this difficult passage in 1 Timothy 2

### **3 Important Reminders for 1 Timothy 2:**

- (1) **Remember this is one of the most controversial subjects in Christian doctrine** - People have looked at our text (in 1 Timothy 2:9-15) and called Paul a chauvinist. Others declare that this text is cultural or specific to the church in Ephesus and therefore has no bearing on church worship today. There are problems with both of the extremes, and the truth is an accurate understanding and interpretation of this passage probably lies some between these two rather extreme views.
- (2) **If we believe Scripture is inspired and have a high view Scripture then we must accept that this is not Paul's opinion** - Remember Paul's words a little later in 2 Timothy 3:16-17, *"<sup>16</sup> All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, <sup>17</sup> that the man of God may be complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work."* ... including even the ones that we "don't like," or don't understand, or that seem to contradict what we think or believe (or current culture teaches). *"All Scripture is given by inspiration of God..."* It is Divine. So the key is not to throw it out, but to understand it and try to correctly interpret it and get at the heart of what God is saying through His inspired word... even with a difficult passage like this one that may apparently cut across current and conventional thinking.
- (3) **This passage is for more than just the culture of that day** - As for saying this text only applies to the church of Ephesus, the problem with that is Paul says similar things to Corinth (1 Corinthians 14:34) and the church at Crete (Titus 1:5-9). What Paul teaches cannot be easily dismissed. And remember that that though much of Scripture was cultural and applied to that day, it still has application and relevance for us today... even controversial passages like this one still speak. But what is it saying to us today? That is what we must try to get at in our day.

Which of these is this passage for?

Though there is room to agree to disagree on this topic, we must all agree that understanding it and its ramifications are important. Again this is one of the most controversial subjects in Christian doctrine... it hard, and it is hard to get your head around and at times it almost

doesn't make sense (especially in our more modern minds). We mentioned these last time, but just for review here are the two prominent view of this controversial subject of the women in the church...

## FOR REVIEW

**2 Important Terms That You Need To Be Acquainted With:** *These two terms and some understanding of them is important, especially given the climate of our day and the controversy surrounding the issue of women's roles in the church today. These two terms represent are two views used to describe the role of women in the church.*

1. **Complementarianism** – *Complementarianism is the teaching that masculinity and femininity are ordained by God, and that men and women are created to complement, or complete each other.* Complementarians believe that the gender roles found in the Bible are purposeful and meaningful distinctions that, when applied in the home and church, promote the spiritual health of both men and women. Embracing the divinely ordained roles of men and women furthers the ministry of God's people and allows men and women to reach their God-given potential.

*A simple definition: Complementarianism is the view that women are limited regarding leadership roles in the church (such as elder/pastor or deacon). The complementarian view agrees that men and women are equal in Christ, yet that God has specified different roles for men and women regarding church leadership. This view is based on several details found in 1 Timothy 2, 1 Timothy 3 and Titus 1. These include the use of exclusively male pronouns related to elders, that elders are to be the husband of one wife (something only a man could do), and that no examples exist of a female elder/pastor in the New Testament. The complementarian view finds the most biblical support, as the case for a female elder/pastor is one that must be made from silence. The Bible just doesn't ever give or cite an example of a female elder or pastor (there is not biblical precedent).*

2. **Egalitarianism** – *The broadest meaning of egalitarianism is that all people are inherently equal and ought to be treated as such. When used as a doctrinal term within Christianity, egalitarianism has a narrower meaning, suggesting that God does not intend any distinctions between men and women in matters of spiritual leadership.* Biblical Christianity is Western civilization's basis for the former definition, but Scripture opposes the latter. All people are morally and spiritually equal, with identical value, and ought to be offered the same opportunities. However, in the explicit issue of spiritual authority, God has mandated different roles for the two equal genders, a concept known as complementarianism.

*A simple definition: Egalitarianism is the view that women can serve in all forms of church leadership, including ordination as pastors. The egalitarian view is based on the biblical view that men and women are both one in Christ... which is true. For*



example, Galatians 3:28 states, *"There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is no male and female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus."* The weakness of this view, however, is in dealing with the New Testament passages that define the requirements of elders and seemingly specific roles of women in 1 Timothy 2:9-15, 1 Timothy 3:1-7 and Titus 1:5-9. The egalitarian view often refers to and cites examples such as Junia in Romans 16:7, who is sometimes viewed as being called an apostle (though not all agree to this interpretation), Phoebe as a deacon in Romans 16:1 (though the general title of servant is more likely), and to the four daughters of Philip in Acts 21:9 who prophesied. If there were female apostles, deacons, and prophets, it is argued, then why could there not be female elders/pastors? Again, this argument is an argument from silence. Even the parallel examples of female deacons and apostles are disputed, though 1 Timothy 3:11 may possibly speak of female deacons (literally "women" or likely the wives of the deacons). As a result, the most likely interpretation is that women were not elders/pastors in the New Testament and that this teaching was one that extends to today.

While there are Christians who hold to both views, a look at the biblical evidence shows a stronger/higher likelihood that the complementarian view is more accurate. The focus of this argument is ultimately not the value of men versus women, but to God's roles for church leadership under the ultimate leadership of Christ (1 Corinthians 11:3). Jesus is the head of the church and the elders of the church serve under Him to lovingly shepherd the flock of God.

So here are some important thoughts to keep in mind as you try to navigate this controversial and sometimes divisive issue, and seek to determine where you may come down interpretively on what view the Bible is actually teaching...

### **Some Key Thoughts to Keep In Mind:**

- (1) **Difference in role does not equal difference in quality, importance or value** - What is truly the crux of this argument, and what many egalitarians fail to understand, is that a difference in role does not equate to a difference in quality, importance, or value.
- (2) **Men and women are equally valued in God's sight and plan** -
- (3) **Women are not inferior to men** -
- (4) **God does assign different roles to men and women in the Bible** – Let me say it like this in Scripture you will see that God does assign different roles to men and women in the church and the home because that is how He designed us to function
- (5) **The truth of differentiation and equality can be seen in the functional hierarchy within the Trinity** - (See 1 Corinthians 11:3, *"<sup>3</sup> But I want you to know that the head of every man is Christ, the head of woman is man, and the head of Christ is God."*). The Son submits to the Father, and the Holy Spirit submits to the Father and the Son. This functional submission does not imply an equivalent inferiority of essence; all three Persons are equally God, but they differ in their function.

**(6) Men and women are equally human beings and share the image of God with God-ordained roles and functions that mirror the Trinity -**

**WHAT HAPPENED IN THE GARDEN (*Genesis 3:1-20*)**

Now look at our focus passage again with me, **verses 13-15**, but let's back up to verses 11-12 to get in context what Paul is saying. Here what Paul says, ***"<sup>11</sup> Let a woman learn in silence with all submission. <sup>12</sup> And I do not permit a woman to teach or to have authority over a man, but to be in silence. <sup>13</sup> For Adam was formed first, then Eve. <sup>14</sup> And Adam was not deceived, but the woman being deceived, fell into transgression. <sup>15</sup> Nevertheless she will be saved in childbearing if they continue in faith, love, and holiness, with self-control."*** – *1 Timothy 2:11-15*

Paul is clearly tying his teaching in this controversial passage to the Old Testament, Genesis account of the fall. I think it's important to explore that passage a minute to perhaps get at what may be going on here. We've already said (in last weeks study) that something cultural was likely going on at Ephesus. The change in tenses between verses 9-10 and verses 11-12, from "women" (plural vv.9-10) to "woman" (singular in vv.11-12) has led some to interpret this to give some indication that the false teaching going on in the church at Ephesus was being passed on by "a woman" or "the woman." Remember Paul said ***"let her learn"*** (v.11), but in order to learn it needs to be in quietness and submission (v.11)... in other words, be ***"swift to hear, slow to speak, slow to wrath"*** (James 1:19). If you want learn the truth you have to quite down and listen, and not get made or argumentative with the truth but be teachable. We said all of this last week.

Now lets take a look at part of the Genesis account that is referred to our passage in verses 13-15. Turn with me to Genesis 3 **(READ: Genesis 3:1-20)**.

***<sup>1</sup>Now the serpent was more cunning than any beast of the field which the LORD God had made. And he said to the woman, "Has God indeed said, 'You shall not eat of every tree of the garden'?" <sup>2</sup>And the woman said to the serpent, "We may eat the fruit of the trees of the garden; <sup>3</sup>but of the fruit of the tree which is in the midst of the garden, God has said, 'You shall not eat it, nor shall you touch it, lest you die.' " <sup>4</sup>Then the serpent said to the woman, "You will not surely die. <sup>5</sup>For God knows that in the day you eat of it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil." <sup>6</sup>So when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, that it was pleasant to the eyes, and a tree desirable to make one wise, she took of its fruit and ate. She also gave to her husband with her, and he ate. <sup>7</sup>Then the eyes of both of them were opened, and they knew that they were naked; and they sewed fig leaves together and made themselves coverings. <sup>8</sup>And they heard the sound of the LORD God walking in the garden in the cool of the day, and Adam and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the LORD God among the trees of the garden. <sup>9</sup>Then the LORD God called to Adam and said to him, "Where are you?" <sup>10</sup>So he said, "I heard Your voice in the garden, and I was afraid because I was naked; and I hid myself." <sup>11</sup>And***

*He said, "Who told you that you were naked? Have you eaten from the tree of which I commanded you that you should not eat?"<sup>12</sup> Then the man said, "The woman whom You gave to be with me, she gave me of the tree, and I ate."<sup>13</sup> And the LORD God said to the woman, "What is this you have done?" The woman said, "The serpent deceived me, and I ate."<sup>14</sup> So the LORD God said to the serpent: "Because you have done this, you are cursed more than all cattle, and more than every beast of the field; on your belly you shall go, and you shall eat dust all the days of your life."<sup>15</sup> And I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your seed and her Seed; He shall bruise your head, and you shall bruise His heel."<sup>16</sup> To the woman He said: "I will greatly multiply your sorrow and your conception; In pain you shall bring forth children; your desire shall be for your husband, And he shall rule over you."<sup>17</sup> Then to Adam He said, "Because you have heeded the voice of your wife, and have eaten from the tree of which I commanded you, saying, 'You shall not eat of it': "Cursed is the ground for your sake; in toil you shall eat of it all the days of your life."<sup>18</sup> Both thorns and thistles it shall bring forth for you, and you shall eat the herb of the field."<sup>19</sup> In the sweat of your face you shall eat bread till you return to the ground, for out of it you were taken; for dust you are, and to dust you shall return."<sup>20</sup> And Adam called his wife's name Eve, because she was the mother of all living. -Genesis 3:1-20 (NKJV)*

Of course you recognize this as the account of the fall of man, a passage that represents the entrance of sin into the world... sin that marred man and cause a sharp break in mankind's relationship with God, a relationship that would only be restored through the birth of God in the flesh, born of a virgin (we are celebrating this at Christmas), born to give His life on a cross that that relationship broken in the garden might be restored, and man (you and I might be saved)... all of this is even mentioned in the Genesis account we just read. Now think of what is going on in this passage in Genesis 3...

The very first expression of false teaching and a false teacher in the Bible is in Genesis 3, when the ultimate false teacher, Satan tempted and deceived Eve with his false teaching. Let's look at it and see what it teaches us about the false teacher, Satan (the enemy), and his false teaching and what it does in our live (Genesis 2:15-17 & 3:1-13). God had given a clear command/teaching regarding the tree of the knowledge of good and evil and had specified the consequence of disobedience to this teaching/command. Satan, the Father of lies and false teaching introduced his false teaching into Eve's mind when he asked, "Did God actually say, 'You shall not eat of any tree in the garden'?" He wanted to question God truth and teaching and introduce her to doubt and a lack confidence in God's teaching and command. When she affirmed God's teaching (command to them), including the consequences, Satan replied with a denial, with his false teaching... "You will not surely die." False teaching is a tool of the enemy... Satan to make us doubt God, question His truth, and to ultimately lead us astray from God and His salvation and out of relationship with Him.

### **3 Things False Teaching Does According to the Garden Account:**

1. **False teaching gives rise to the enemy's ability to mislead and deceive us** – Genesis 3:1 says, “*Now the serpent was more crafty than any of the wild animals the LORD God had made. He said to the woman, “Did God really say, ‘You must not eat from any tree in the garden’?”*” Do you see it? Satan placed a questioning doubt in the woman's mind with his false statements and was thereby able to craftily mislead and deceive her.
2. **False teaching causes us to question God, His truth and His goodness** – Again Genesis 3:1 says, “*Now the serpent was more crafty than any of the wild animals the LORD God had made. He said to the woman, “Did God really say, ‘You must not eat from any tree in the garden’?”*” Here the Enemy raises a doubt about God and His intentions to keep Adam and Eve from something God, and it works. Notice what Eve says in verses 2-3, “*2 The woman said to the serpent, “We may eat fruit from the trees in the garden, 3 but God did say, ‘You must not eat fruit from the tree that is in the middle of the garden, and you must not touch it, or you will die.’”*” I don't know if you noticed it by she buys into his false notion/teaching about God's goodness. She says He will kill us if we eat from that tree. In verses 4-5 the Devil goes on to say, questioning God's goodness, “*You will not surely die,” the serpent said to the woman. 5 “For God knows that when you eat of it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil.”*” That is false teaching!
3. **False teaching causes us to miss out on God's blessing and promises** – Not only was the relationship between God and Adam and Eve (man) broken (see vs. 8), but they were banished from the place of God's blessing and provision... the garden. Verse 23 says, “*So the LORD God banished him from the Garden of Eden to work the ground from which he had been taken.*”

***Observation:*** *Lest anyone doubt that untruth and false teaching has devastating effects on the life of a child of God and mankind ultimately... it opens the door for a whole host of missed blessings and opportunities, and cripples our relationship with God, may indeed keep on out of a relationship with God and ultimately from salvation.*

Lest we think that we can lay all of the blame on Satan, the Bible clearly holds us accountable for our own sin and follow the lies and deception of the ultimate false teaching that comes by way of the world, the flesh and the devil.

### **WHAT HAPPENED IN EPHEBUS (1 Timothy 2:13-15)**

Now let's jump up hundreds of years later to New Testament times in the port city, the crown jewel of Asia Minor, Ephesus... to a church being pastored by a young preacher boy (perhaps as young as 15-20 years of age). The young church, planted by the Apostle Paul in his first missionary journey and now being pastored by Paul's young protégé in the ministry, Timothy... has been attacked by false teachers, and don't you doubt that Satan (the enemy) is behind the rise of these false teachers and their false teaching. His desire is to disrupt the church, confuse and deceive the people, keep people away from the truth and salvation and out of relationship with God. It seems (as we saw last week) that with the new-found



freedoms of women in the New Testament church and especially in places like Ephesus, where they are now allowed and even encouraged to learn, as young babe in Christ and His truth, have fallen prey to the false teaching and are beginning to bring it into the church. I'm going to back up again and pick it up in verse 11. Pay close attention to our focus verses 13-15 and the connection to the fall in Genesis... here we go **(READ: 1 Timothy 2:11-15)**

*<sup>11</sup> Let a woman learn in silence with all submission. <sup>12</sup> And I do not permit a woman to teach or to have authority over a man, but to be in silence. <sup>13</sup> For Adam was formed first, then Eve. <sup>14</sup> And Adam was not deceived, but the woman being deceived, fell into transgression. <sup>15</sup> Nevertheless she will be saved in childbearing if they continue in faith, love, and holiness, with self-control.” – 1 Timothy 2:11-15 (NKJV)*

**Let me summarize and review our entire passage in 1 Timothy 2:9-15 passage in a nutshell:**

- 1. In context, Paul is dealing with false deceived teachers who are teaching false doctrine (1 Tim. 1:3, 7)*
- 2. Paul did not leave Timothy behind in Ephesus to stop the false teachers AND to stop all women who are teaching correct biblical doctrine – he only left Timothy behind to stop the false teachers from teaching false doctrine (1 Tim. 1:3)*
- 3. Paul says that he too had been deceived and he received mercy because of his fighting against the church was because he was ignorant of the truth and he had been deceived (1 Tim 1:13, 16)*
- 4. Paul differentiates between those who were teaching false doctrines because they were ignorant and deceived (1 Tim. 1:3, 7) and those who were deliberate deceivers (1 Tim. 1:19, 20)*
- 5. Paul names the deceivers (1 Tim. 1:20) but he does not name the ones who are deceived (1 Tim. 1:3, 6)*
- 6. Paul gives instructions to Timothy regarding how the men and women who claim godliness should conduct themselves in the church while they are in the midst of the false teachers (1 Tim. 2:1-10)*
- 7. All Christians should be praying for the lost even those who are lost in their midst – those who are embroiled in false doctrine (1 Tim. 2:1-4)*
- 8. The Christian men in the congregation are not to handle the false teachers with argumentation that might come out even in their prayers (1 Tim. 2:8)*
- 9. The women in the congregation who lay claim to godliness (1 Tim. 2:10) need to handle this false teacher situation with prayer as well (1 Tim. 2:9 “likewise” links back to prayer) and continue to produce good works (1 Tim. 2:10) and not expect that it is their appearance with elaborate dressing that will show forth the godly example, but their godly works (1 Tim. 2:8-10)*
- 10. Paul then abruptly changes from the godly men and women (plural) to the singular form of woman and man and deals with a problem of false teaching and a false teacher.*
- 11. Before Paul gives the prohibition, he gives the solution to one of the problems in the church. Paul instructs that “a woman” is to be given the opportunity to learn. This identifies the problem that she is not one of the deceivers, but one of the deceived. Paul never educates the deceivers – he names them, exposes them and shuns them.*

*His solution to deception is education in sound doctrine and he never ever identifies the deceived.*

- 12. Paul tells Timothy that he is not allowing “a woman” to teach or authenteo “a man”. It is out of context to even consider that Paul is here stopping godly women from teaching correct biblical doctrine. In context the prohibition can only be the stopping of false doctrine and stopping a false teacher. (1 Tim. 2:12)*
- 13. We know this is false teaching that is being stopped because Timothy’s mandate to stop the teachers was only for false teachers. Also in the example given later of why the teaching is to be stopped, Paul ties the prohibition into the example of the first deceived woman (1 Tim. 2:14)*
- 14. Whenever gune and aner are mentioned together in scripture in any type of relationship, they are always translated as husband and wife. Verse 12 should be translated as a single wife teaching/influencing her husband.*
- 15. Paul has several times not identified people by calling them “a man” yet the context clearly identifies the “a man” as a specific person (2 Cor. 12:2, 5; 1 Cor. 5:1) 1 Timothy 2: 11, 12 follows that example as two people are called “a woman” and “a man” without naming them. They are not named because the wife is one of the deceived and Paul never identifies the deceived ones by name.*
- 16. Paul identifies the reason why the first man was not deceived and why the woman was. He refers us back to Genesis to discover the reason by stating that the man was created first and was not deceived and the woman was created second was deceived (1 Tim. 2:13, 14 and Gen. 2:8, 19) See Genesis 2:8, 19 in the Apostle’s Bible which is the modern English version of the Greek Septuagint where it is quite clear the education Adam had before Eve was created.*
- 17. The grammar from 1 Timothy 2:15 requires the identification of a single female to refer back to “a woman” from verse 12. The “she” from verse 15 cannot be Eve because the tense is future and Eve is dead.*
- 18. The only “she” in this entire passage that verse 15 can refer back to is “a woman” from verse 12. “She” and “they” are given instructions regarding her salvation and it is future tense.*
- 19. 1 Tim. 2:15 gives the answer as to whether the deceived woman can receive salvation even though she has been deceived by false doctrine. She (refer back to verse 12 the deceived Ephesian woman) will be saved through the Messiah born of the woman (the childbearing which is a noun and not a verb), if they (refer back to verse 12 the deceived Ephesian woman and her husband) continue on in their faith in God, love for the Savior, holiness, and self-control to stay away from false doctrine. This is how one deceived woman will be saved (and is a pattern for the salvation of all deceived teachers).*
- 20. Summary: Paul was not making a universal prohibition that stopped godly women from teaching sound doctrine to men. He was stopping one of the false teachers in the assembly from taking her Christian husband down the proverbial garden path towards the forbidden fruit.*

In 1 Timothy 2:14, Paul makes a subtle distinction between the sin of Adam from the sin of Eve: “Adam was not the one deceived; it was the woman who was deceived and became a sinner.” Eve fell into sin because of a deception; however, Adam was *not* deceived, which means he chose to sin. When Adam took the fruit from his wife, he knew full well what he

was doing. He was not misinformed or misled; he simply decided to rebel against God's command. He chose to listen to his wife instead of to God (Genesis 3:17).

The New Testament teaches that, as the first man, Adam represented all mankind. He was the head of the human race, and “everyone dies because we all belong to Adam” (1 Corinthians 15:22, NLT). The suffering and death that resulted from Adam's sin emphasizes our need for a Savior—whom Scripture refers to as the “last Adam” (1 Corinthians 15:45). That title for Christ, and the multiple comparisons of Adam to Christ, would make no sense if original sin had come through Eve.

Although Eve was the first to sin, the solution to sin came through “her Seed” (Genesis 3:15, NKJV). The Seed, Jesus Christ, was born of a virgin named Mary (Matthew 1:18–25). He paid the price for sin and will redeem those who receive the salvation He offers (John 3:16). So, just as sin and death came through one man, Adam, it is also through one man, Jesus Christ, that grace and righteousness are given as free gifts to believing sinners. Through Adam we received a curse, but through Jesus we receive a blessing.

---

If we are to understand what Paul means in these verses, it will take a fair bit of work in the text of Scripture and the history surrounding the church in Ephesus. For that background, I recommend the book *Women in the Church: An Interpretation and Application of 1 Timothy 2:9–15*. For now, here are the next six things that 1 Timothy 2:11–15 does not mean.

### **6 Things 1 Timothy 2:11-15 Does NOT Mean:**

#### **(1) 1 Timothy 2:11–15 does NOT mean women must be absolutely silent in church -**

When Paul says for women to learn in the gathering of the church, he qualifies it with two prepositions—“with quietness” and “with all submissiveness.” Removed by language, culture, and 20 centuries, it is easy to misread Paul's words. And in fact, both of these prepositions need to be clarified for our understanding and application.

- First, “with quietness” does not mean for women to be mute in church. Paul says in 1 Corinthians 11:5, 13 that women are to pray and prophecy in the church service. In this same letter (1 Cor. 14:34–35), he tells wives not to speak in service, but this has more to do with retaining the dignity of husbands and wives in the church service—not the absolute denial of women speaking. Combined with 1 Corinthians 11, it is clear that women have a place to read Scripture and pray today. 1 Timothy 2 does not deny this; it may even be implied that women were praying in the public service. This would find support 1 Corinthians and it would make sense that when men are called to pray in verse 8. Also, verse 9 begins, “Likewise also . . .” The likewise may include women praying. This is not explicit, but it is also not out of the question. More persuasively, the word itself, “in quietness,” does not mean absolute silence. As Robert Yarbrough observes, “*Hesychia* (quietness, rest) rarely refers to blanket prohibitive policy against spoken expression.”<sup>[1]</sup> Instead, in comparison with the

other two places where it is used (Acts 22:2; 2 Thess. 3:12), we are led to the conclusion that the word has the idea of “attentive silence for the sake of giving someone a hearing.”<sup>[2]</sup> Moreover, because 2 Thessalonians 3:12 relates to working and 1 Timothy 2:10 gives us a context of “good works, the word is best seen as calling for an “orderly, industrious, and self-responsible” listening. <sup>[3]</sup> In short, the word “in quietness” does not lend itself to not speaking, but to learning with diligence and attention. This passage calls women to theological inquiry, not mute indoctrination.

- Second, “with all submission” lacks a direct object. This means we must be cautious about assuming who women must submit to. In Paul’s earlier letter to the Ephesians, he instructs women to submit to their husbands, and *only* their husbands (5:22–24). There is no blanket call for women to submit to men! And any application like that from 1 Timothy 2:11–12 is a misuse of the text. In context, it seems better to assert that women are to submit to the Lord and/or his teaching. Ultimately, all men and women are called to submit to God and his word. This statement here is not special to women. Instead it esteems them as full disciples of Christ and affords them the same place as all other disciples. In this way, the movement of Paul’s words is an invitation for women to come into the temple of learning, not to exclude them in silence. All in all, women are capable of learning, studying, and understanding all that God has revealed. In fact, there are some women who are far more skilled in the things of Scripture than men. Men would be fools not to learn from them. Moreover, young men especially are called to learn quietly, even being subject to the elders (cf. 1 Pet. 5:5). For all Christians, we are called to submit to all God has revealed in Scripture.

Thus, Paul is not relegating women to a lower status; he is affirming the place of women in the gathered church. Last thing, if women are to have a place in the gathered church, they are to be welcomed (by men!) into a community of learning. Whereas the temple in Jerusalem had a court for the women, separate from the men, the new covenant temple of God joins men and women together, even as it retains a place for men to be spiritual teachers of the congregation. This does not mean women have no place for teaching; it means God has an order to the way teaching is done in the church.

- (2) **1 Timothy 2:11–15 does NOT deny women the gift, the place, or the need for teaching** - Many interpreters of 1 Timothy 2:12 have suggested that “*false teaching*” is what Paul is denying here. However, this implies that teaching is negative here. Such a rendering lacks explicit textual warrant and doesn’t match the rest of the Pastoral Epistles. Teaching is bad, except when false. And this passage clearly does not assert that teaching is bad. Therefore, Paul is not suggesting that teaching or authority are bad in themselves. Rather, upholding the pattern of male leadership in the the home, he does not permit women to teach or have authority *over men*. Such restriction could equally be applied to unqualified men in the church. Indeed, the only people in the church who have authority to teach are the elders, recognized by the congregation as spiritually fit for service as 1 Timothy 3:1–7 explains. In practice, the elders may appoint other, non-elders to teach—and some of these may be women who teach children or who share who share



from their biblically-informed experience. Still, the main point of this verse relates to the organization of leadership in the household of God. In 1 Timothy 3, elders are godly men who model and teach the faith. Such restriction to eldership, however, does not deny the important place of female teachers in the church. In truth, women *are* gifted to teach in the church. As Titus 2:3–5 states, Older women likewise are to be reverent in behavior, not slanderers or slaves to much wine. *They are to teach what is good,* <sup>4</sup> and so train the young women to love their husbands and children, <sup>5</sup> to be self-controlled, pure, working at home, kind, and submissive to their own husbands, that the word of God may not be reviled. Similarly, Acts 18:24–28 includes an example of Priscilla teaching Apollos with her husband Aquila. In most cases she is named first, which may indicate her leading role in teaching. Significantly, however, she is never recognized as an elder or teaching in the gathered church. Acts 18:26 is a wonderful example of how she and her husband instructed Apollos privately: “[Apollos] began to speak boldly in the synagogue, but when Priscilla and Aquila heard him, they took him aside and explained to him the way of God more accurately.” Accordingly, we can see that Paul’s words to women in 1 Timothy 2:12 do not wholly deny women the place of instruction. Rather, for men and women in the gathered church, elders are the ones who give direction to biblical and theological vision of the church. The reason for this relates to the household imagery of the church. In marriage, husbands are to be the spiritual leaders of the home. Likewise, in the household of God, elders are proven husbands and fathers, whose godliness prepares them to lead the church.<sup>[4]</sup>

- (3) **1 Timothy 2:11–15 does NOT state or imply men are better than women** - Starting in verse 13, Paul traces a brief biblical theology of men and women from creation (v. 13), to the fall (v. 14), the salvation of women across the ages (v. 15). He includes these verses to explain why he does not permit a woman to teach or have authority over men in the church. His first reason is grounded in creation: “*For Adam was formed first, then Eve.*” As Genesis 2 explains, God made Adam first and Eve to be Adam’s helper (Gen. 2:18). This was God’s good design in the beginning and Paul grounds his instructions to the new covenant community in the creation of male and female in the beginning. As believers created new in Christ, it makes sense that the roles established in creation would be reaffirmed in the church. That being said, the order of creation does not mean or imply men are better than women. Though some like Philo argued for a principle that said “first is better,” this is not the biblical worldview. Men and women are equally valuable, equally dignified, equally important for God’s purposes in the world (cf. 1 Corinthians 11:2–16). And the restoration of created roles in the church, does not mean men are better than women. It means that in Christ men and women are able to fulfill (with difficulty and only by the Spirit) the roles assigned to them in creation.
- (4) **1 Timothy 2:11–15 does NOT mean women are more easily deceived than men** - In Paul’s next move, he goes from Genesis 2 to Genesis 3 and he recounts the fact that the Serpent came to the woman, deceived her, and she led the man into sin. As Genesis 3:17 reports, Adam is cursed “because” as God said, “you have listened to the voice of your

wife and have eaten of the tree of which I commanded you, ‘You shall not eat of it.’” In Romans 5 Paul assigns sin and death to Adam and 1 Timothy 2 does not change the culpability of the man. For as Genesis 3 also tells us, God came to Adam and addressed him for the transgression of the first couple. Still, in 1 Timothy 2:14 Paul picks up the point that even after the first sin, the pattern in creation remains, men are the spiritual teachers in the home—in their immediate family and in the larger family of faith. In Israel fathers served as spiritual heads of their homes, and now in the household of faith God’s children are still led by godly men. Affirming the ongoing place of “elder brothers” to lead the family, we should not see Paul saying that women are more gullible than men. In 1 Timothy 1:18, the false teachers are all men. In church history, it has been men who have been deceived and the deceivers. While occasionally a woman has led the church astray, far more often it has been men. From Scripture and the testimony of history, therefore, we cannot make a blanket and gender-biased statement that women are more easily deceived. This does not seem to be the way Paul is grounding his argument. Rather, through the fall, the pattern of creation remains—men are to be the teachers in the family of God; women are to be godly, gifted helpers. This passage does not teach that women are weaker. Rather, it adds to the whole of the letter—godly elders are needed to be spiritual leaders in the church.

- (5) **1 Timothy 2:11–15 does NOT teach that redemption erases gender roles** - Galatians 3:28 is *the* egalitarian verse: “There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is no male and female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus.” It is argued that this verse obliterates the gender-distinctions brought about by the curse. However, such a reading fails to recognize the gender distinctions in creation (and new creation), and it does not see how inheritance (given only to firstborn sons of Israel in the Old Testament) is in view. Paul’s point in Galatians 3:26–29 is that the blessings given to Israel’s sons are now available to women, Gentiles, and slaves. There is not status in the world (e.g., sex, ethnicity, socio-economic standing) which can deny a believer a share in Christ’s inheritance. Conversely, salvation doesn’t erase gender roles. First Timothy 2:15 affirms the same reality. The woman who trusts in Christ is saved by faith. Such faith produces love, holiness, and self-control. Importantly, however, this salvation does not need to run counter to who she is as a woman. She neither needs to give up her role as a wife, a temptation that may have been present in Ephesus by those denying marriage (4:1–6), nor does she need to fear that her domestic focus on children keeps her from serving the Lord. Indeed, raising up godly offspring is what God desires. Malachi 2:15 actually says, “What was the one God seeking? Godly offspring. So guard yourselves in your spirit, and let none of you be faithless to the wife of your youth.” The context of Malachi is situated under the old covenant, but the principle remains—the role of godly women in the home, bearing children is pleasing to the Lord. Salvation does not come through having children, but neither does salvation destroy God’s good design for men and women in the home.
- (6) **1 Timothy 2:11–15 is NOT a passage women should fear, but one women and men can embrace for their flourishing** - As with all of Scripture, the goal of God’s word is

human flourishing. Situated in 1 Timothy, these verses are just one of the places Paul is instructing women how to walk in faith, love, and holiness. Indeed, the overarching purpose of these verses are meant to include women in the gathered church. They emphasize the positive good works that women contribute to the church. And they esteem the place for women to learn and serve in the body of Christ. Though Paul's words stand outside and against the egalitarian promises of women's liberation, they offer a greater kind of liberation. Namely, they encourage women to celebrate what makes them women; they validate the life-giving bodies that God has them; they esteem the roles women often have in the home; and they free women from the burden of having to lead the household of God. Certainly, to those who have a vision of human flourishing cultivated by an egalitarian culture, these words will sound oppressive. But to those whose minds have been formed by the story of Scripture and the goodness of being made in God's image as a female, these words should be incredibly encouraging. Men and women are called to be servants in God's house; men and women are invited to pray, learn, and worship in God's house; men and women will have places to teach in the body of Christ—though only some men (elders) will teach and have authority in the local church; and women who spend years bearing and rearing children should not feel second-class citizens of God's kingdom. Paul's concluding words esteem women who are unable to serve in the church because life circumstances (having children) make it impossible. Service to their children is a vital part of God's kingdom purposes, and as Paul will say later to older women, their years of obscurity serving their children and helping their husbands will actually prepare them for valuable service in God's household when their children are grown.

In this way, Paul's words in 1 Timothy 2 provide a compelling vision for women to follow Christ and to do so as women who embrace their God-given role as daughters, sisters, wives, and mothers. For these reasons and more, we should not shy away from Paul's words. We should rightly understand them and apply them, for in them we find life-giving words for women and men.

## CONCLUSIONS

I've spent most of the message explaining a difficult text—difficult exegetically, but also difficult culturally, because it runs against the grain of our modern world. I want to conclude by applying these verses to three areas...

### **3 Areas to Check Yourself:**

**(1) Check your attitude toward Scripture** - Defiant or compliant? Because of our rebellion against God, we all have a tendency to shrug off the parts of His Word that we don't like. If you only submit to the parts of the Bible you like, then you're just using the Bible to reinforce your sinful desires. Even Satan quoted the Bible with Jesus to support his temptation! The test of whether you are under the lordship of Jesus Christ is when the Bible confronts your preferences. Yes, we need to determine what the Bible means before

we apply it. But it's easy to shrug off difficult truth by saying, "I don't agree with that interpretation," when really we don't want to submit to God. Be careful!

- (2) **Check your attitude toward the opposite sex** - Competitive or cooperative? There should be no war between the sexes in the church. Men should esteem and affirm godly women for their ministries. Women should respect and submit to godly elders in their leadership. Elders are not to lord it over the flock, but to be examples of godliness. The times when elders need to use their authority are rare. If we all submit to God and serve in our God-given roles, there will be cooperation. And, as our text shows, Christian men and women should relate to one another in purity, not in sensuality.
- (3) **Check your attitude toward the church and home** - A burden or a blessing? Children should never be viewed by Christian women as a hindrance to their fulfillment through a career. Children are one of God's greatest blessings. The responsibility of shaping their character through godly example in the home is more important than any career, male or female, because the whole fabric of society depends on it. If we seek self-fulfillment, even if through a teaching or leadership ministry, we will come up empty. If we deny self and serve in the roles God's Word ordains, He will bless us beyond measure.