

Scripture: 1 Timothy 2:9-15

Sermon: *Paul's Instructions to Women, Paul writes about appropriate conduct in worship*

Theme: Here Paul gives instructions to women; today, what are we to do with this passage?

Today's text gets us into a challenging passage. I need not try to get your attention. I believe once I read the passage, I will have your total attention. Listen to the passage:

1 Timothy 2:9-15: (ESV)

⁹ likewise also that women should adorn themselves in respectable apparel, with modesty and self-control, not with braided hair and gold or pearls or costly attire, ¹⁰ but with what is proper for women who profess godliness—with good works. ¹¹ Let a woman learn quietly with all submissiveness. ¹² I do not permit a woman to teach or to exercise authority over a man; rather, she is to remain quiet. ¹³ For Adam was formed first, then Eve; ¹⁴ and Adam was not deceived, but the woman was deceived and became a transgressor. ¹⁵ Yet she will be saved through childbearing—if they continue in faith and love and holiness, with self-control.

I am thinking that I now have your attention. You are wondering why women are specified and what we are to do with this passage. I want to look at this passage and I want to show you that this passage is talking about appropriate conduct in worship. Further, I want to tell you that this passage is as important to men as it is to women. We can apply it to both genders.

- In this passage the problem was the women, but the problem was that the women were causing distractions and divisions by their dress and their inappropriate actions in worship.
 - Men and women both can cause these problems in today's church.
 - This may even happen in our church. I will let you decide as we go through this passage.
 - Before we begin I do want to lay my cards on the table and say specifically two ways this happens in many churches today. These are in addition to the specific problem written about in the Scripture passage.
 - The first is outward behavior: this may distract you and others from worshipping the Lord.
 - The second is inward attitude possibly leading to behavior. When we are confused by our personal preferences and we hold our personal preferences near and dear like Scripture, then we can cause distractions and divisions by these personal preferences. I will come back to this.
 - Let's talk about this more.
- I. Verses 9-10 are specific about clothing. Paul's instructions are that we clothe ourselves with good works and not with an image of excess.

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- a. Paul begins with the adverb translated as "likewise." This connects this verse with the previous verse. Verse 8 connects with this section. In verse 8 Paul addresses the men saying that they need to pray without anger and disputing. Apparently, in this church the men had a problem with anger and disputing. The idea represented in this text is applicable to the men and the women in today's church. We must guard against anger and disputes. In fact, in 1 Peter 3:7 the Bible teaches that a man's prayers are actually hindered when his relationship with his spouse is not correct.
- b. We must all pray without anger and disputing. I believe the men are specified in this passage because they were the group struggling with anger and disputes.
- c. So, now Paul addresses the women, but I believe this is just as applicable to the men, so don't tune out. Paul writes that he wants *women to adorn themselves with proper clothing, modestly and discreetly, not with braided hair and gold or pearls or costly garments*. It sounds like there was a problem with this in that culture. In fact, I know that this was a problem in their church. This was written to the church at Ephesus:

The clothing Paul is considering is not slightly expensive but extravagantly expensive as suggested by the use of gold jewelry. A. H. M. Jones says clothing could cost as much as 7000 denarii, which equaled more than nineteen years' wages for an average day laborer

Baugh describes the ancient hairstyles:

Greek hairstyles for women during this period were for the most part simple affairs: hair was parted in the middle, pinned simply in the back or held in place with a scarf or headband. Roman coiffures [person's hairstyles] were similar until the principate [27 BC-284 AD the first period of the Roman Empire]. The women of the imperial household originated new styles; by the Trajanic period [98-117 AD] they had developed into elaborate curls, braids, high wigs, pins, and hair ornaments that were quickly copied by the well-to-do throughout the empire: "See the tall edifice rise up on her head in serried tiers and storeys! (Juvenal Satire 6)." ("Foreign World," 47-48)¹

- d. So, if you caught that what this is saying is that there were some very wealthy women as part of that church. Such women would come to church showing off their wealth. Paul is saying, "NO! You are not coming to worship distracting others by your affluent appearance."
- e. Paul had also told them to dress modestly. This Greek word actually carries the idea of restraint and self control. This word carries the idea of a sense of shame. The way a woman dressed could be quite seductive.
- f. How does this apply? How does this apply to men?

¹ Mounce, W. D. (2002). *Vol. 46: Word Biblical Commentary : Pastoral Epistles*. Word Biblical Commentary (114-115). Dallas: Word, Incorporated.

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- g. First, for all of us. We all must be careful of trying to show off an image of wealth. We may not even realize that we are doing that. Just because you can afford to doesn't mean you should. This can be in jewelry, hairstyles, clothes or other ways. Images of wealth are more than in clothes. What about having to have the newest and the greatest of gadgets, tools, cars or other things. Also, just because you have something doesn't mean that you must flaunt it in front of others. It appears that that is what is happening in this case. These women are flaunting their wealth dividing the body of Christ.
- h. Now, not all make up and clothing, etc are sinful, just the extremes.
- i. The other application is modesty. This mainly applies directly to the women, but it still applies to men. Working with youth we would always say that how a woman presents herself matters. I want to encourage mothers and fathers to encourage their daughters to dress modestly. This has gone out the window more recently but is important. There must be a sense of restraint and shame. But you know what else? We, as husbands, must encourage modesty in our wives as well. Single men must encourage modesty as well. Many times, the way men talk and act, the way we are presented in the media is not showing that we want modesty.
- j. Look at verse 10: *but with what is proper for women who profess godliness—with good works.*
- k. These good works are what is expected in godliness.
- l. You see we give a double image when we claim to be of Christ and the way we present ourselves shows that our god is money.

Dr. Kalas was my preaching professor in seminary. He was in Korea for the 5th or 6th time. His wife's last words as he was heading home were to not buy anything. They don't need gifts for the grand kids, etc. this wasn't a big deal for him because he isn't a shopper. The largest church in the world is in Korea and the largest churches of many denominations including the Methodist and the Presbyterian. There is a city that is inhabited by tourist and it is across the road from an American army camp. This city doesn't have prostitutes and gambling, it is purely shopping. Dr Kalas was there with a seminary group. As soon as they got off the bus a tailor is there to sell them tailor made suits which some students bought. The salesmen tried to get Americans and got Dr. Kalas and said, "Would you like to buy a genuine imitation Rolex." He had never heard, "Genuine imitation!" That was different. Dr Kalas said that he was kind and got away. But notice the tailor said, "genuine imitation."

- m. Does your life show that you are a genuine Christian or a genuine imitation which really isn't genuine at all? A Christ follower must clothe themselves with good works.
- n. Now, before we move on we must get specific to the church itself because this is a pastoral epistle. **Paul's concern was that their affluent and immodest presentation was dividing the**

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church. These ladies were dividing and distracting the others. It was about them and not about the body of Christ and not about the community of Christians.

- i. So, in a way I want to apply this concept to our church. I actually want you to apply this yourself. Do we have things that may cause distraction and division in our church? I want to talk about this in two ways, but first an illustration:

Something I read about the community is this:

Christians can be grouped into two categories—marbles and grapes. Marbles are “single units that don’t affect each other in collision.” Grapes, on the other hand, mingle juices: each one is a “part of the fragrance” of the church body.

The early Christians didn’t bounce around like loose marbles, ricocheting in all directions. Picture them as a cluster of ripe grapes, squeezed together by persecution, bleeding and mingling into one another.

Fellowship and worship, then, is genuine Christianity freely shared among God’s family members. It’s sad to think of how many Christians today are missing that kind of closeness. Sermons and songs, while uplifting and necessary, provide only part of a vital church encounter. We need involvement with others too. If we roll in and out of church each week without acquiring a few grape juice stains, we really haven’t tasted the sweet wine of fellowship.²

- o. The problem in our church and many churches like ours may not be dress and affluent living. I have two thoughts. The first concerns the outwards and the second concerns the heart or the attitude:
 1. What distracts you and others around you in worship? These are things that I thought of which we all may have been distracted by in the past.
 - a. Cell phone: I have been distracted in worship by my cell phone and by the cell phone of other people. This could be the cell phone that rings in the middle of the service or it could be a text message that someone receives and just can’t wait to respond to.
 - b. iPhone or smart phone: distractions are multiplied when we have cell phone devices that we can pay attention to email, sports and other things. I must admit that I was at a special service at one time and during the beginning of the service I was trying to pay attention

² Anne Ortlund, *Up with Worship*. Read in *Swindoll’s Ultimate Book of Illustrations & Quotes*. Thomas Nelson. Nashville, TN 1998. Page 626.

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to the football game's final score. This was when I was in Cincinnati and it was not a normal worship service, but it was a distraction.

- c. Smart phones can be good as well. I know of a parent who was upset seeing her son texting during the sermon, but she was pleased that he wasn't texting at all. He was following along with the sermon on his smart phone. The pastor at that church uploaded the sermon to something called youversion and people could follow along and see his notes.
- d. Passing notes with someone else: this is the final outward distraction that I will list. Sometimes you just can't help but talk with your neighbor. But you'll do this by pen and paper. You may want to make a joke about something in the news or maybe you want to laugh at the way the preacher miss-pronounced a word.
- p. The second aspect of divisions and distractions today is a little more personal. Only you know the answer to this. Only you know if this is a problem for you. This distraction or division has to do with your attitude. Our problem may be that our preferences in our worship style have become a division to the body of Christ. You may wonder what I mean by this or what this looks like. What I mean is that one may have a personal preference in the church's worship service and when that preference is not met it distracts someone and maybe others around that person from worshipping the Lord. It makes this more difficult when one thinks that the preference is mandated in Scripture, but it may not be. We do a lot of things in our worship service that may or may not be mandated in Scripture. Now, this form of distraction can lead to division and all kinds of problems not unlike the affluent and immodest clothing in our passage today.
- q. When there are distractions and divisions, we are bouncing off of each other like marbles rather than coming together like grapes. The freedoms and affluence of our culture and the lack of emphasis on evangelism have allowed us to argue and divide over trivial preference issues that are not in Scripture.
- r. Paul's concern here is that their affluent dress and their immodest apparel was harming the church body. They were not clothed with good works which were fitting for godliness. We may have a problem with this too. Our problem may be that our outside clothing is fine but that may not mean that we are united in godliness. Our divisions may not be caused by clothing but by personal preference that we hold as near and dear as Scripture. Therefore, when our personal preferences are not met we are angered as if Scripture has been violated and we cause divisions. We bring others down.

It was because of these divisions that I believe verses 11-12 are written.

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¹¹ *Let a woman learn quietly with all submissiveness.* ¹² *I do not permit a woman to teach or to exercise authority over a man; rather, she is to remain quiet.*

- II. Verses 11-12 are specific to leadership. Paul is saying that in this setting women are not to be in leadership.
 - a. It seems likely and quite possible that in this setting there were women of high social status and high wealth. These women were educated, though not in the Scriptures. It was because of their education that they thought they could teach. It was because of their education they thought they could be in leadership.
 - b. However, Paul is saying, “NO! You can’t jump the gun like that. You must go through the process of growing in your faith and learning the Scriptures.”
 - c. I don’t believe this passage is anti-women, not at all. This is not chauvinist. If Paul was a chauvinist women would not be learning at all. In Jewish circles women were not even allowed to learn. But look at verse 11, Paul says how they are to learn. This group of women was being disrespectful and disruptive to the rest during worship.
 - d. The Greek word here for silence doesn’t mean that the women are to be completely silent, but that they are to be appropriate learners.

One commentary says the following:

Also, the Pastoral Epistles and the entire New Testament envision a broad role for women in ministry. The New Testament presents women who prophesied (Acts 21:9; 1 Cor 11:5) and some who served undefined roles as helpers (1 Tim 3:11). Paul commended two women as his fellow workers (Phil 4:1–3) and explained that Phoebe was a “servant” (diakonos) of the church in Cenchrea (Rom 16:1) and a “help” (prostatis) to many, including Paul himself. Paul presented women as teachers in 2 Tim 1:5 and Titus 2:3, and Luke presented Priscilla in a teaching role (Acts 18:26). The teaching mentioned in these passages seems to be less formal and structured than that in 1 Tim 2:12, from which Paul excluded females.³

- e. I believe in this setting, because there was a problem with a group of affluent women, Paul will not allow women to teach and be in authority. They weren’t ready for leadership.
- f. Also, this idea of “exercising authority” over a man carries the idea of a teaching authority. A teacher is an authority.
- g. This needs to be clear: I believe that we cannot take these few verses and apply them directly to us today. This was a situation where a group of women were causing problems. They were not educated in the pastoral matters. They were not educated in the Bible, yet

³ Lea, T. D., & Griffin, H. P. (2001). Vol. 34: 1, 2 Timothy, Titus (electronic ed.). Logos Library System; The New American Commentary (101). Nashville: Broadman & Holman Publishers.

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they wanted to be in leadership, and they wanted to be teaching. But no, they weren't ready. Paul put an authoritative stop to this.

- h. We can apply this idea to today's church: in chapter 3 Paul will get into who can be a church leader, who can be an elder and who can be a deacon. So, it is not coincidence that in this case women couldn't be.
- i. We must prayerfully guard against division. Some people simply thrive on division. **Let me say, there is a time to divide. This is when there is a true Scriptural problem at stake.** We must not cause divisions in the body of Christ by untrained teaching, disruptive behavior, immodest or affluent clothing, or an unchecked attitude which equates personal preference with Scripture. The final is the most difficult. Those who cause division in any of those ways are not fit for church leadership. That is what Paul is saying and that is what the Scriptures say.
- j. Let me add that it is wasted time on division that is holding back the Lord's work across this country, this state, this city and maybe this church.

Now, you may want me to say something about verses 13-15:

¹³ For Adam was formed first, then Eve; ¹⁴ and Adam was not deceived, but the woman was deceived and became a transgressor. ¹⁵ Yet she will be saved through childbearing—if they continue in faith and love and holiness, with self-control.

- III. Verses 13-15 are an illustration with a warning of deception.
 - a. Remember that there was a problem with false doctrine creeping in. It is possible that Paul is saying that Eve was deceived by the devil and so you must be careful not to be deceived by false doctrine or by allowing people who are not ready to teach the authority to do so.
 - b. Now, verse 15: There are a few views on verse 15. One view is that we are saved through Jesus who came through a woman being Mary, his mother. Another view is that Paul is simply stating the order of what God set up in Genesis chapter three. However, notice the last part: *But women will be preserved through the bearing of children **if they continue in faith and love and sanctity with self-restraint.***
 - c. Another view from Dr. Rydelnic is: Greater impact through child bearing and/or being spiritual parents, discipling others. I like this view. This is in contrast to the previous verses that say that women should not exercise leadership over men. The point is that they have greater impact through raising children.⁴

⁴ Rydelnic; Open Line; 08.14.2021

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- d. Further: Dr Michael and his wife, Eva, Rydelnic: Interpret the unclear in light of the unclear. We know from other texts how women are saved. Saved here may not be about eternal salvation. This passage is saying women do not find their significance through leadership in the church. They have significance through childbearing and being a mother. In Ephesus people were trying to grasp significance. In Ephesus because of the temple of Diana women were elevated to temple priests. They were priestesses of this goddess. Paul says men are to be the leaders. If "they" continue. This means if the children continue to walk w the Lord. Some translations say if she continues, but it should say, if they meaning the children continue. Paul affirms women: Paul says that Timothy learn the faith from his mother and grandmother. Paul exhorted the older women to teach the younger women. 1 Tim 5 instructs about providing for widows. Proverbs 8 wisdom personified as "lady wisdom." Prov 31 women valor. In Hebrew bible Ruth follows Proverbs 31 as an example. Tamar in the genealogy of Jesus. Judah says that she more righteous than he. Dr Rydelnic says that in Gen 49 the Messiah comes through Judah's tribe because of Tamar.⁵ This is not about eternal salvation.

Rev. Dr. Charles Swindoll writes the following:

When I was overseas, I was working with a man who was under great stress and great pressure. He was a maverick sort of a missionary. He didn't fit the pattern or the mold of what you think of as a missionary. His ministry was in great part to the soldiers, who happened to be on the island of Okinawa by the thousands—in fact, it might be safe to say tens of thousands.

I went to his home one evening to visit with him, and his wife said he wasn't there but was probably down at the office. The office was downtown in a little alley area off of the streets of Naha. It was a rainy night. And I decided that I would get on a bus and travel down to be with Bob. She'd mentioned his stress and pressure, so I expected to find the man folded up in despondency, discouragement, and depression, and just ready to finish it off.

I got off that little bus and I walked down the alley about a block and a half and I turned right, down a little smaller alley, to a little hut with a tatami mat inside. As I got away from the street noise, I heard singing, "Come, Thou fount of every blessing,/ Tune my heart to sing Thy grace." And then that next stanza, "Prone to wander--- Lord, I feel it,/ Prone to leave the God I love."

Quietly I eavesdropped on his private praise service. As I stood in the rain and looked through the walls of that little cheap hut, I saw a man on his knees with his hands toward heaven giving God praise, with his Bible on one side and an Intervarsity Christian hymnal on the other side, his little spiral

⁵ Dr Michael and Eva Rydelnic; Open Line; 09.04.2021

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notebook, worn from use. And I saw him turn from page to page, where he would read it to God, then he would find a hymn and he would sing it to God.

And the remarkable thing is that that pressure he was under did not leave for perhaps another two weeks, it seems. But that praise service alone before God absolutely revolutionized his life.⁶

This missionary was under great stress, but in all the stress he went to the Lord in worship, prayer and the Scriptures. Wow! A Lesson I must remember, a lesson we all must remember. The church is not simply about appointing leaders and saying: "She's a woman, she can't do this." Or, "He's a man so he can." The church is about growing closer to God together. The church is about helping others to know Christ through sharing Jesus with them. The church is about worshipping God together. The church is about being grapes and not marbles.

⁶ Read in *Swindoll's Ultimate Book of Illustrations & Quotes*. Thomas Nelson. Nashville, TN 1998. Page 627-628