

1 Timothy 2.1-15

Part of the series: "Men and Women -- A Divine Harmony" for the Watford church of Christ
07 June 2023

RECORD

Introduction

- Why we are studying this topic
 - Like many of our sister churches in the International churches of Christ, we are examining our assumptions and teaching, but not aiming at any particular end in mind. Different congregations are landing in different places.
 - How men and women can use their God-given gifts effectively in community together
 - For our children
- Where we are in our studies
 - Sundays - men and women
 - Teaching classes - Hermeneutics and Exegesis; Genesis 2 & 3; 1 Corinthians 11 & 14
- What we aim to achieve tonight
 - Understand some of the different interpretations of the passage
 - Find the significance for our Watford context
 - Regarding men and women
 - And, regarding worship, godliness, prayer, teaching/learning and salvation -- which is the point of Paul's instructions in this passage
- Q&A and discussion to follow tonight
- I will send these notes out after this session
- More discussion in the men and women gatherings later in the month

Background

- Paul founded the church -- Acts 19.



- Paul is writing to Timothy who is serving there as an evangelist.
- What was Ephesus like? Huge, cosmopolitan, wealthy.
- What was it known for?
 - Library



- Artemis (Diana in Roman pantheon) and her temple - one of the wonders of the ancient world
 - Fertility and childbirth

- Who are the female 'influencers' of our day?









- To denigrate Artemis was tantamount to treason

- A statue in every home
- Virgin priestesses from wealthy, powerful families
- Any threat was met with violence - Acts 19 riot





- Paul's final visit to Ephesus
 - “I know that after I leave, *savage wolves will come in among you and will not spare the flock*. Even from your own number men will arise and distort the truth in order to draw away disciples after them. So be on your guard! Remember that for three years I never stopped warning each of you night and day with tears.” (Acts 20:29–31 NIV11)

 - Paul's instructions to Timothy in the letters he wrote to him
 - “As I urged you when I went into Macedonia, stay there in Ephesus so that you may *command certain people not to teach false doctrines* any longer or to devote themselves to myths and endless genealogies. Such things promote controversial speculations rather than advancing God’s work—which is by faith. The goal of this command is love, which comes from a pure heart and a good conscience and a sincere faith. Some have departed from these and have turned to meaningless talk. They want to be teachers of the law, but *they do not know what they are talking about* or what they so confidently affirm.” (1 Timothy 1:3–7 NIV11)
 - He does not say whether these people are men or women
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- “Command and *teach* these things. Don’t let anyone look down on you because you are young, but set an example for the believers in speech, in conduct, in love, in faith and in purity. Until I come, devote yourself to the *public reading of Scripture, to preaching and to teaching*. Do not neglect your gift, which was given you through prophecy when the body of elders laid their hands on you. Be diligent in these matters; give yourself wholly to them, so that everyone may see your progress. Watch your life and *doctrine* closely. Persevere in them, because if you do, you will save both yourself and your hearers.” (1 Timothy 4:11–16 NIV11)
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- “*Preach the word*; be prepared in season and out of season; correct, rebuke and encourage—with great patience and careful instruction. For the time will come when people will not put up with *sound doctrine*. Instead, to suit their own desires, they will gather around them *a great number of teachers to say what their itching ears want to hear*. They will turn their ears away from the truth and *turn aside to myths*.” (2 Timothy 4:2–4 NIV11)
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Paul's Points?

- Prayer -- 2.1, 8, 10
 - Godliness -- 2.2, 10
 - Quietness -- 2.2, 11-12
 - Teaching/Learning -- 2.6b-7, 11
 - Salvation -- 2.4, 15
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Examining the Text

- Reminders about interpretation
 - The Scriptures are written *for* us, but not *to* us. Therefore we need to do our best to determine God's message to us in this passage.
 - That means asking what it meant
 - Then, what it means
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- vv1-7. Paraphrasing those verses -- 'God wants as many saved as possible, and you and I agree with this wholeheartedly...'
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- vv8-10 **Therefore I want the men everywhere to pray, lifting up holy hands without anger or disputing. I also want the women to dress modestly, with decency and propriety, adorning themselves, not with elaborate hairstyles or gold or pearls or expensive clothes, but with good deeds, appropriate for women who profess to worship God.**

- Men, v8
 - Pray instead of arguing
 - Without anger - at peace with one another
 - Different from prevailing culture
 - Were they lifting their hands to fight?
 - 'Holy' hands instead of unholy hands
 - No violence, flying off the handle
 - The attitude is the point, not the specifics of lifting hands
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- Women, v9-10
 - Dress in such a way as to not obscure their identity as Christians. No dress to impress.
 - The issue is modesty, not the detail. i.e. not behaving in such a way as to disrupt worship through distracting clothing (here) or distracting talking (later).
 - Details look contextual - pearls not mentioned in 1 Peter
 - **"Your beauty should not come from outward adornment, such as elaborate hairstyles and the wearing of gold jewellery or fine clothes. Rather, it should be that of your inner self, the unfading beauty of a gentle and quiet spirit, which is of great worth in God's sight." 1 Peter 3:3-4**
 - Wealthy Christian women were used to flaunting their wealth which was acceptable in that society. What would be obscene in rural India would seem normal in Monaco.
 - They looked as if they were honouring Artemis, not God
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- vv11-15

- v11. **A woman should learn in quietness and full submission.**

- Women are *meant* to learn -- "The problem seems not to be women teaching but rather that the women are learning—too loudly." Two Views on Women in Ministry by James R. Beck, Craig L. Blomberg (Editor), Craig S. Keener (Contributor), Linda L. Belleville
- If the shock to our time is that women should be quiet (while learning), the shock to first century people would be that women should learn!
- Quietness - cannot learn if talking. Cannot mean total silence (**1 Corinthians 11.5**).
- When I was studying at LST we had an OT lecture on the flood narrative. One student

continually interrupted and argued with the lecturer. A fellow-student asked her to desist so that the rest of us could learn. She could not take it, and left the classroom. We were prevented from learning because she would not let us sit in quietness and submission so that we could learn.

- Submission - to God. i.e. a humble spirit. Nothing here about being submissive to men.

- v12. I do not permit a woman to teach or to assume authority over a man; she must be quiet.

- 'I do not permit' could mean a specific prohibition because of societal norms which, if disrupted in this case, would do more harm than good. i.e. some societal norms must be challenged (women should learn), but some must not - at least not here, not now -- because a focus on changing those norms would get in the way of the more important issue (learning).

- Women pushing their way into teaching roles would have been used to that, or seen it demonstrated in the Artemis cult. That would be their reference point for their role in the church. However, they were likely not educated in this new religion.

- Sometimes people with real gifts (music, leadership, speaking) useful in the secular job environment, need time to adjust and spiritualise their gifts before they are useful in the church - whether men or women. Danger of crashing and burning - damaging their faith and the faith of people around them. Some make the transition quicker than others.

- My move from Albrighton to Ashford as a chorister

- authority -- authentic -- to 'lord it over'. Bossy? Like the 'new Roman woman'.

- Used only once in the NT. Not something anyone should aspire to - man *or* woman.

- A noisy, power-hungry insubmissive-to-God woman has no place teaching men or exercising authority in the church - especially when that authority is patterned after the kind wielded on behalf of Artemis instead of after Christ.

- Just as some of the Ephesian women were dressing in a way that made them look like a disciple of Artemis rather than a disciple of Jesus, so they are using their freedom to speak and influence the church in a way that reminded people of Artemis rather than Jesus.

- The point may not be that women are not to exercise authority, but that they are not to exercise Artemis-style authority.

- Culture of the day male-dominated in general, but female dominated in religion.

- Imagine men's and women's sports flipped. All the big money is in women's football, rugby, cricket (NFL, baseball & basketball in USA).

- It would be a little like Match of the Day being highlights of the women's games, with the men's matches coming later at midnight. Imagine the Premier League's money going into the women's game, all the back page stories focussed on the women's games etc....

- FA Cup Final 3pm last Saturday, the nation comes to a standstill - for the women's version, not the men's

- quiet - so as to be able to learn. Professional teachers can attest to the challenge of trying

to teach in a noisy classroom.

- v13. For Adam was formed first, then Eve.

- Adam first -- not Artemis.

- Diana (Roman equivalent of Artemis) was 'first-born', then helped her mother to deliver her twin brother, Apollo



- v14. And Adam was not the one deceived; it was the woman who was deceived and became a sinner.

- The woman (Eve) was deceived. She was not the 'wise' one (as Artemis was portrayed).
- Paul's point is that women are 'nothing special' compared to men. If they were 'all that' they would not have been susceptible to temptation by the snake and would not have led Adam astray.
- Perhaps a cautionary tale, rather than a theological point.
- By the way, Adam does not get off the hook:
- "Nevertheless, death reigned from the time of Adam to the time of Moses, even over those who did not sin by breaking a command, as did Adam, who is a pattern of the one to come." (Romans 5:14 NIV11)
- 'Eve had sought to instruct Adam with insufficient grasp of the issues. Was Paul, in fact, saying that no woman should teach without first taking time to learn, in view of the fact that women had had no opportunity to be taught?' Tyndale
- Eve is being used as an illustration of what happens when people are not thoroughly instructed. In this case he uses Eve because she is a woman, and the unhealthy domination of men by ignorant women is the problem in Ephesus.
- The implication is that, once the women are as well instructed as the men, they would be as capable of teaching as the men. In that case, in the future, Paul would not give this instruction.

- v15. But women will be saved through childbearing—if they continue in faith, love and holiness with propriety." (1 Timothy 2:8–15 NIV11)

- Is this his main point? His arguments about behaviour are correctives to the women's attempts to secure safety for themselves and their female children. The dominating sense in Ephesus was that to have children and be safe (and the children be safe) it was up to Artemis to sort it out.

- Reference to Messiah? [Genesis 3.15](#)

Summary

- 'My conclusion is that the women all the way through this passage were those who continued looking like representatives of Artemis rather than the ambassadors of Christ.'
Trevor Williams
- Questions and discussion