

I TIMOTHY 2:9-15
ROLE FOR WOMEN!

Please turn in your Bibles this morning to I Timothy chapter 2 as we continue our in-depth study of this letter that Paul wrote to his son in the faith, Timothy.

In our last study, as we looked at prayer and the importance of prayer, we saw the role of men in the church. They are to be leaders and the example for others to follow was that they were to be men of prayer!

This morning, we are going to skip over verses 9 through 15 of I Timothy chapter 2. I was hoping we would cover this when the women were at the women's retreat, but that did not happen.

No, we will cover this section and I think you have guessed it; this is a very controversial section of Scripture.

Let me make myself clear on this. The section we will be looking at this morning is only controversial if you don't believe that the Word of God is inspired by God and is profitable to us.

And if you are a Bible believing Christian and adhere to what Paul says here in chapter 2 of I Timothy, then you will be called "*sexist*" or "*chauvinist*" or "*bigot*" or "*anti-feminist*" and the list goes on.

To deal with this problem, many have moved away from the traditional and historic interpretation of these verses and have changed them to fit the times we are living in. They feel that by doing this they are improving on society and elevating women to the place that they need to be in society.

The reality is that they have not improved on what God has said, but they have corrupted it and when you look at what is going on today, there is truly disorder in the family and that disorder in the family has been brought into the church as well.

Now some of you may be thinking, *“Pastor Joe, is this really such a big deal? Come on, we are living in the twenty-first century and times have changed. And thus, women’s role in the church has changed as well. What’s the big deal if a woman is a pastor?”*

Here is why this is so important. Remember what Paul is writing Timothy about, how they were to conduct themselves in the church. In fact, Paul wanted Timothy to stay there in Ephesus to correct some of the problems that had come into the church. And Paul wants them to move from this departure from what God has said and move back to what God has said, what God desires of them for it is what is best for their lives.

Thus, God has established these things and that is what makes it important and the reason we can’t change what He has said because – ***FATHER KNOWS BEST!***

And here’s the thing because everyone has ideas on what is right and what is wrong. What they think the church should be about and what it should accept and what it should change.

I am sorry but it really doesn’t matter what I think or what you think, it matters what God has said. Don’t you think that the One who has created the Church has the right to tell us what the order of the Church is? Of course He does!

In spite of what some may say, the church is not the invention of man. The church is the creation of God and as such He has got the right to establish how it functions including the roles of men and women in the church.

And why do we see such disorder in the church today?

One of the reasons is that we are not following what God has established in regard to the roles of men and women in the church. God is a God of order and when you don't listen to what He is saying then you are in rebellion against Him.

And if you are rebelling against the Lord then you are listening to the Devil and thus, we see the results of that with disorder, things are a mess!

One writer put it like this. He wrote,

When opinions and convictions suddenly undergo dramatic alteration, although nothing new has been discovered and the only thing that has dramatically changed is the spirit of the age, it is difficult to avoid the conclusion that that spirit has had an important role to play in the shift.

- Harold O. J. Brown

In other words, we have let the spirit of this age, not the Spirit of God, guide us in what the church function is all about, the role of men and women in the church and that is not a good thing!

The Bible defines the order of the church, not dead theologians or living theologians or the spirit of this age! We need to be clear on that.

If we don't allow the Bible to determine the order of the church, the role of men and women in the church, then our culture will and that will not be a good thing as I have said!

And please understand that this is not a matter of superiority and inferiority.

Then what is it?

It's a matter of authority and submission pure and simple.

When the Church submits to God’s Word and functions willingly and joyfully in the roles He has ordained, then the church is unified, blessed and effective in the work He has called us to do.

Again, that is what this letter is all about, **“If I am detained, you may know how people ought to conduct themselves in the household of God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and stay (the prop and support) of the Truth.”** I Timothy 3:15. (The Amplified Bible)

I have called our study this morning – ***ROLE FOR WOMEN!***

And I have broken down these verses as follows,

PROPER DRESS – I TIMOTHY 2:9-10

BE SUBMISSIVE – I TIMOTHY 2:11-14

THE BLESSING – I TIMOTHY 2:15

So with that as our introduction, let’s begin reading in I Timothy chapter 2, beginning in verse 9 and let’s see what the Lord has for us as we study His Word and we look at this topic – ***ROLE FOR WOMEN!***

I TIMOTHY 2

VERSES 9-10

Please understand that when Paul says, **“In like manner also, that the women . . .”** he is saying, ***“Just as I have commanded the men how to conduct themselves in the local church service - so now I command the women in how they are to conduct themselves in the local church service as well.”***

And in this section, there are two main points or commands that Paul is giving to the ladies.

They are to *dress modestly* and *act submissively*.

We will deal with that second point as we read on here in I Timothy, but we are going to deal with now, that women are to have – ***PROPER DRESS!***

Now you may be thinking, ***“Are you kidding me? Paul is going to tell me how to dress! No way! I am not going to let some man tell me how to dress! I am woman here me roar and if anyone gets in my way, look out!”***

I told you that this is a very hot topic, a very controversial subject, and many avoid it, or they try to change what Paul is saying to fit in with today’s culture. But the church is never to be guided by the world or culture but by the Word of God.

First of all, if you believe the Bible is the inspired Word of God, then Paul is writing these words from the inspiration of the Holy Spirit. In other words, these are the words of God for women in the church! This is not what Paul felt women should do, please understand that.

And this should just make sense when you think about it. What Paul is saying here is that a godly woman would never want to dress in a provocative way so as to be seductive and therefore stumble the men in the church.

Now I am not saying that you have to wear head to toe clothing, but I think you understand what this is all about.

You see, we don’t come to church to impress people, we come to church to worship God.

Now if you are wondering what the bottom line is, it really is very simple. You see, a good way to check this out ladies, to see if your dress is proper is put Jesus in the seat next to you and how comfortable would you feel!

If you would not be comfortable with Jesus sitting next to you because of the clothes you are wearing, then you probably need to put on proper attire! And I will let you in on a little secret, He is sitting next to you, and He is sitting next to all of us!

And as a godly woman, aren't you interested in honoring God? Of course you are and the way you dress will testify to that fact!

And please understand that this is not a suggestion by Paul. Just as men are commanded to pray, women are to dress themselves in a manner that is fitting to worship God.

Again, I know this is not easy, but this is not a suggestion here.

The word "**adorn**" is from *KOSMEO*, (kos-meh'o) and it is the word from which we get our English word "*cosmetic*."

It basically means "*to put in order*" or "*to arrange*."

Here's the thing, what you wear on the outside is just a reflection of what has taken place on the inside!

Now, the \$100,000 question is, "***How are women meant to dress for church?***"

Paul lays out some guidelines.

First of all, he speaks of "**modest apparel**."

What does that mean?

Before you put on your outfit, ask yourself "***Is it moderate?***"

Propriety," on the other hand, asks "***Is it appropriate for the occasion? Is it going to draw attention to me?***"

The idea is that you are to wear something that is not so wild that people are watching you, or men are watching you because of what little you are wearing!

To kind of put this into perspective, listen to what the fourth-century church father, John Chrysostom wrote,

And what then is modest apparel? Such as covers them completely and decently, and not with superfluous ornaments; for the one is decent and the other is not.

What? Do you approach God to pray with broidered hair and ornaments of gold? Are you come to a ball? To a marriage-feast? To a carnival?

There such costly things might have been seasonable: here not one of them is wanted.

You are come to pray, to ask pardon for your sins, to plead for your offences, beseeching the Lord, and hoping to render him propitious [favorable] to you. Away with such hypocrisy!

- Cited in Alfred Plummer, "The Pastoral Epistles, The Expositor's Bible, p. 101

Again, this is not easy because styles change. And what people wear today is different than 100 years ago.

So we do have to take that into consideration.

Listen to how Peter dealt with this issue in I Peter 3:3-4, "**Do not let your adornment be merely outward - arranging the hair, wearing gold, or putting on fine apparel - rather let it be the hidden person of the heart, with the incorruptible beauty of a gentle and quiet spirit, which is very precious in the sight of God.**"

You see, how you dress reflects your heart!

In our society we do the exact opposite. We focus on outward beauty, the adorning of skimpy clothes, lots of jewelry and it just reflects what is in our heart. We are not focused on the Lord, but we are focused on ourselves.

Look at the multi-billion-dollar plastic surgery industry today where people will spend thousands of dollars to alter their appearance but won't even spend time in a Bible study!

Now, don't get me wrong, as J. Vernon McGee said, if the barn needs to be painted, ladies, then you need to paint it. I didn't say that he did!

Then how are women to dress?

This is interesting to me because the focus is not on the outward beauty but the inward beauty, as I have said!

What do I mean by that?

I mean what God is doing with you on the inside will overflow outwardly, in your actions and that is a beauty that will not fade away as you walk with the Lord! In other words, that "... which is proper for women professing godliness, with good works." I Timothy 2:10.

What is my point?

My point is this. Spend more time with the Lord, building up the inside of your life because what you do there will overflow into your actions, and that is truly where beauty lies as we are told in Proverbs 31:30, "Charm is deceitful and beauty is passing, But a woman who fears the LORD, she shall be praised."

But look at how women are bombarded today with all kinds of bizarre and many times vulgar fashion! Women have to be careful, Christian women, not to let the pagan culture dictate their fashion or the way that they dress!

Another point here is that we also have to be careful as we start to judge people that come through the door that might not dress the way we think is appropriate.

First of all, are they even saved?

They may be an unbeliever and thus, this is how they dress.

Churches have turned women away because of the way that they were dressed. Think about that. And unsaved women has come into the church and they have been turned away because of their attire.

What is being done is that you are stopping what God was doing in their heart, bringing them to church to hear His Word! They dress like unbelievers because they are unbelievers. Be careful.

I had a friend that was going to a friend's funeral, and it was at a church. She was wearing pants and they would not allow her to come in because she did not have a dress on.

They did offer her a choir gown to wear as a dress, but she refused and was not able to go in! She is a believer, but they felt if you did not wear a dress to church you could not come in. That is sad and it is not Biblical!

But for the unbeliever, let's give the Holy Spirit some time to get a hold of their heart, because once He does and they get saved, He'll begin to change their attitude about a lot of things, including the way they dress.

But if it is a believer, and they are dressed inappropriately, then talk with them, in love. But make sure you are not talking to them because you are jealous of the way they look.

And just because you would not dress like that, you are not comfortable, doesn't mean they are doing something wrong.

As you look around the room, we have a variety of people, and they are dressed in a way that they are comfortable. We may not dress like they do, but that does not make it wrong.

So be careful with this. There are some obvious things that are wrong, but again, make sure it is not just you with the problem of how someone is dressed.

And let's put this into perspective.

What is this chapter about? **PRAYER!**

Thus, bring it before the Lord in prayer, not only the way you dress, but maybe how others are dressing.

And maybe pray for them, and if the Lord leads you then you can talk to them in love.

I don't think that is an issue here at Calvary at this time, but again, may all that we do be done in the love of Christ and with prayer!

I think you get what Paul is saying regarding women and their – **PROPER DRESS!**

Okay, does anyone have in their Bibles I Timothy 2:11-12, mine seems to be whited out! No, it is not.

As much as it would be great to skip these two verses, we need to remember that God would not have said this through Paul if He did not mean it.

Thus, let's approach these verses with an open heart and see what the Lord is saying here as we get into a section that deals with – **BE SUBMISSIVE!**

Again, a hot subject but just listen to what is being said.

VERSES 11-14

Wow, Paul must be some kind of male chauvinist pig!

And as some read this that is the conclusion they come to.

Others feel that we are living in the twenty-first century, and we need to update the Bible to today's culture. Let's face it, times have changed, and the role that women play has also changed. I am not saying that this is right. I am not saying what the world has done for the role of women is right, but we see the reality of it and then the consequences of disorder in the family!

Remember, the focus here is – ***BE SUBMISSIVE!***

And I realize that once again this is a very unpopular and controversial subject, the role of women in the church.

The reason that this is so controversial is because many have been swayed by the world's philosophies, which are constantly changing instead of listening to what God has said, who is unchanging.

First of all, I would have to agree that the way that this verse is translated does seem to say that Paul was telling women that they are not to speak at all in the church.

Tragically, I have had some try to use this verse to make that point as they were telling a woman to be quiet! Not a good thing and not a correct interpretation of this verse.

Let me explain this so you will understand what Paul is saying and you won't come to the conclusion that he is a male chauvinist pig, or that women are not to talk in church, they are to be silent!

There is a Greek word for "silence," ***SIGAO***, which means just that, but that is not the word that Paul used here.

He used the Greek word ***HESYCHIA*** for "silence" and it speaks of quietness, not unruly.

It's the same Greek word used in verse 2 of I Timothy chapter 2 and there it is translated "peaceable."

What's the point?

Listen carefully. Paul's whole point is that women would receive the teaching of men that God has chosen to lead the church, not trying to usurp that role or fight against it. It does not mean complete silence, not at all. Submission is the principle; to learn in silence describes the application of the principle.

And apparently some of the women in places like Ephesus and Corinth had this issue of submission. In those places there was a strong feminist movement. And in these places they were disrupting the church services by yelling out objections to what was being taught and possibly even trying to insert themselves into the services as teachers.

Also, keep in mind that in the early church men sat on one side of the room while the women on the other.

So if the pastor said something the wife did not understand, she might yell out, ***“Honey, what is he talking about?”***

Now we may think that is far-fetched, but we had a couple in the church years ago, and that is exactly what took place. I would say something, and she would be asking him questions. Thank God they were sitting next to each other, but she would ask him questions throughout the study. It is just distracting to me when that happens, and I am sure for others as well.

Clarke expresses this idea as he wrote, ***“It was lawful for men in public assemblies to ask questions, or even interrupt the speaker when there was any matter in his speech which they did not understand; but this liberty was not granted to women.”***

Make no mistake about it, God is a God of order and thus, by their actions, they were not submissive and they were causing disorder in the church service by the actions.

And please understand that the word for ***submission*** here literally means, ***“To be under in rank.”***

It has to do with respecting an acknowledged order of authority. It certainly does not mean that men are more spiritual than women or that women are inferior to men. It is not speaking of women being slaves. Not at all!

Warren Wiersbe put it like this. He wrote, *“Anyone who has served in the armed forces knows that ‘rank’ has to do with order and authority, not with value or ability . . . Just as an army would be in confusion if there were no levels of authority, so society would be in chaos without submission.”*

Exactly, there is an order and men are the spiritual leaders in the church and in the family!

But here come the objections.

If this is true, then why does Paul tell us Galatians 3:28-29, **“There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is neither male nor female; for you are all one in Christ Jesus. And if you are Christ’s, then you are Abraham’s seed, and heirs according to the promise.”**

Because there is spiritual equality, men are not better than women or more spiritual than women, they just have different roles! And that is the key to me. Men and women have different roles in the church!

And keep in mind that in that period of time, women were second class citizens. And the Lord lifted them up.

Now, if there is still some confusion, we see in verse 12 Paul interpreting for us what he means in verse 11.

Let’s read that verse again. I Timothy 2:12 says, **“And I do not permit a woman to teach or to have authority over a man, but to be in silence.”**

Paul is not saying that women can’t teach in a church, but they cannot fill the office of a pastor/teacher in the church.

It doesn't mean that women can't teach in church but when they do it must be under the authority of the men that God has appointed to lead the church.

Again, this is a big issue today.

Let me share this article with you and you will see how Christians can cloud the picture and ignore what the Bible is saying. They will get you to not trust what the Scriptures are clearly saying.

We are told,

Sadly, many women we talk to have been disrespected by Christian men in authority, especially in the local church context.

Some years ago Kristi and I were leading a midweek seminar at a Bible church. Our topic was discipleship to Jesus and personal soul care. There were about twenty people attending. I opened our meeting with prayer, introduced our topic, and made some comments from the Bible. Then Kristi shared her insights with a personal example.

Right after she stood up to speak a man abruptly got up from his chair and left the room in a fuss, shaking his head and muttering under his breath.

As Kristi continued speaking, the man's wife kept turning around to see if he was coming back. Soon she picked up her purse and left too. Later she contacted us, "I'm sorry we left your talk. My husband believes it's not Biblical for a woman to teach in church when men are present."

This was quite demeaning of Kristi and women in general. Though I don't imagine that any of the church's elders or pastors would've walked out on Kristi, their official church doctrine supports the belief behind doing that. They do not allow women pastors, elders, or preachers/teachers; they limit women to roles like pastor's wife, admin staff, hostess, women's ministry leader, teacher of children, or deaconess.

These elders are sincere and not intending to be sexist or disrespectful of women, but that's the effect they're having.

We've heard from many women who have been discriminated against in church leadership. When a church doesn't welcome qualified women into leadership it's damaging to the identity and dignity of women and girls and it affects how they're treated by men and boys. Furthermore, it can damage the whole church or organization.

Women bring spiritual depth, nurture, relational skill, integrative thinking, and tender-courage that often are lacking in all-male leadership groups. Women tend to be high in emotional intelligence, which is key to success in any endeavor, especially in ministry.

In my experience of working with pastors and church leadership the absence of qualified women at the leadership table has also contributed to unjust terminations of pastors, harmful church splits, and dysfunctional team dynamics.

Typically, churches that hold women back from eldership or other leadership roles cite two controversial New Testament passages to support their view: 1 Corinthians 11:3 and 1 Timothy 2:11-12. But they take a narrow view on those verses and don't give adequate weight to a number of other Scriptures that do support female leadership in the church and elsewhere. . .

In 1 Timothy 2:11-12 Paul says, "A woman should learn in quietness and full submission. I do not permit a woman to teach or to have authority over a man; she must be silent." (NIV)

Similarly, in 1 Corinthians 14:34-35 he says, “Women should remain silent in the churches. They are not allowed to speak, but must be in submission, as the Law says. If they want to inquire about something, they should ask their own husbands at home; for it is disgraceful for a woman to speak in the church.” (NIV)

How do you interpret these verses? A straightforward, literal reading of these texts, does seem to support that a church should not have women pastors or elders. On this matter, I’ve heard elders say, “This is the Lord’s commandment!” or “It’s the clear teaching of the New Testament.”

But there are many evangelical Christian church denominations that do not interpret these Bible passages to restrict women from leadership; they ordain women as pastors and install them as elders or overseers: Presbyterian, Methodist, Assemblies of God and other Pentecostal traditions, Salvation Army, the Church of the Nazarene, Friends (Quaker), certain Baptist and Lutheran groups, some nondenominational churches, Evangelical Covenant, and the Reformed Church in America (RCA). In fact, a number of years ago I was blessed to serve as a Spiritual Formation Pastor at an RCA church under the leadership of a woman Senior Pastor.

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He makes some very good points and when you listen to what he has to say, it is easy to buy into his take on women pastors.

One example he gives is that of Deborah in the Old Testament. In Judges chapters 4 and 5 we read of her story. We are told that after the death of the Judge Ehud, Deborah was the Judge in Israel.

That is the example of women in the leadership in the Bible, one of the women he picks!

That is a very bad example. The reason it is bad was not that Deborah was the Judge, well that was bad, but that there were no men to lead the nation. A woman had to step forward and Judge Israel because no man would!

In fact, when it was time to go to war, Deborah told Barak to go and fight and he said that he would not go unless she went with him. Not a good thing when you think like that. And Deborah did not go into battle. That was the correct thing.

The main point here is that the only reason she was a Judge in Israel is because no man stepped up and took that role.

And that is a big problem today in the church. Many women are serving because men are not. And even in the role of a pastor, many times a woman is there because no man has stepped forward. How sad!

Here's the thing. The man is the spiritual leader in the family and in the church. Not because I said so, but because God did. And you don't have to agree with it but if you reject what God is saying, then you are in rebellion against God.

In saying that, please send all your e-mails to Steve . . . just kidding!

Let me ask you this. How many of you believe that Jesus Christ is Almighty God?

I hope all of you do. We have been through the Gospel of John and that is the focus of that Gospel, that Jesus is Almighty God! So if you are not sure, go and look at the notes or view the audio or video files of our studies through the Gospel of John.

Then what is my point if we believe that Jesus is Almighty God?

My point is this. Since you all believe that Jesus is Almighty God, then why did He say this in John 14:28, **“You have heard Me say to you, ‘I am going away and coming back to you.’ If you loved Me, you would rejoice because I said, ‘I am going to the Father,’ for My Father is greater than I.”**

It seems like Jesus is saying that He is not Almighty God! In saying that, what does Jesus mean in John 14:28 when He says, **“For My Father is greater than I”?**

Like I have said, some would say that Jesus is lesser than God the Father, as the Jehovah Witnesses do, He was a created being.

That is not what Jesus is speaking of, not at all. Jesus is not speaking in essence or being because over and over again we have seen John show us that Jesus is God, equal to the Father.

What does He mean then?

He is saying that when He became flesh, He emptied Himself of some of His Godly attributes and freely submitted Himself to the Father. It didn't make Him a lesser God, but He freely submitted to the Father.

Jesus is Almighty God, equal with the Father but in His role as our Savior, when He became flesh and dwelt among us, He submitted Himself to the Father, He came to do the Father's will.

Now, for those who don't agree with what Paul is saying about women being a pastor in a church because they feel that they are just as spiritual as men, look at the example of Jesus.

He was not lesser than God the Father and yet He humbled Himself and submitted and that is what Paul is speaking about here!

Can women teach in the church?

Specifically, women can teach children in church, as Paul tells us in II Timothy 3:15 how Timothy learned the Scriptures from his mother, **“and that from childhood you have known the Holy Scriptures, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus.”**

And in Titus 2:3-4 Paul tells us that the older women are to teach the younger women the things of God. We are told, **“the older women likewise, that they be reverent in behavior, not slanderers, not given to much wine, teachers of good things - that they admonish the young women to love their husbands, to love their children.”**

But women are not to be pastors in the church. And when we get to I Timothy chapter 3 we will see the qualifications for pastors and Paul is speaking about men, as we will see next time.

What I want you to see here is that what Paul is speaking of is God’s design, and it was His design before the fall, before sin entered the picture.

We are told in Genesis 2:18, **“And the LORD God said, ‘It is not good that man should be alone; I will make him a helper comparable to him.’”**

A husband is the spiritual leader in the family, and men are the spiritual leaders in the church, not negating women or their role, that is just how God set things up and apart from that, there is disorder in the family and in the church!

And look at what we are seeing today. How messed up churches are. How messed up families are. God has a design, and we need to obey His design not only for the church, but for the family as well!

And as you look at I Timothy 2:13-14 you will see how Paul puts this all together.

Paul goes back to the beginning, to creation and tells us that man was created first, Adam; then woman was created, Eve. He was the spiritual leader, it was his role and God said to Adam, **“And the LORD God commanded the man, saying, ‘Of every tree of the garden you may freely eat; but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat of it you shall surely die.’”** Genesis 2:16-17.

So far so good!

Then came sin as Eve lusted after that which was forbidden, she was deceived and ate the fruit.

Now, why is Eve not spoken of as the one who allowed sin to enter the world, she sinned first?

Romans 5:12 tells us of this, that Adam was responsible for sin entering the world as we are told, **“Therefore, just as through one man sin entered the world, and death through sin, and thus death spread to all men, because all sinned.”**

Why was Adam responsible for sin and not Eve? The reason is simple. Adam was the spiritual leader of the family, he had the authority, he had the responsibility to protect Eve and he failed.

Husbands, what an important lesson for us to learn from!

Eve was deceived, Adam was not, he went in with his eyes fully open, and he knew it was wrong.

I also think women are more in tune, many times to spiritual things than men, they are more sensitive. But they can also be deceived, not saying that men can't, but once again we are to be watching over them, protecting them, guiding them!

It is our responsibility, and we have the authority to do that! You see, sin entered because man neglected being the spiritual leader and he was held accountable!

Warren Wiersbe summed it up like this. He wrote, *“The second argument has to do with man’s fall into sin. Satan deceived the woman into sinning (Gen. 3:1ff; 2 Cor. 11:3); the man sinned with his eyes wide open. Because Adam rejected the God-given order, he listened to his wife, disobeyed God, and brought sin and death into the world. The submission of wives to their own husbands is a part of the original Creation. The disorder we have in society today results from a violation of that God-given order.”*

But again, we have lost respect today for order, God established order and thus, we are reaping the consequences of that.

Look at how we have lost respect for police officers.

Look at how we have lost respect for marriage.

Look at how we have lost respect for parents.

Look at how we have lost respect for teachers.

And that list can go on, but you get the idea that here in America and really all over this world, this is a loss of – **RESPECT!**

One writer put it like this in regard to respect. He wrote,

When did we lose it? When did we lose that deeply-engrained, forever-sanctioned sense that however much we might disagree with each other or even dislike each other, we still need to accord each other basic courtesy, respect, and politeness?

We've lost that, at least for the most part. From the highest levels of government to the crassest platforms on social media, we are witnessing the death of respect, courtesy, and basic honesty. Nobody, it seems, is accountable any more for even the most basic manners or for honesty. Things we used to punish our kids for doing (name-calling, ethnic slurs, taunting, lying, and blatant disrespect of another) are now becoming acceptable in the mainstream. Even more worrisome is the fact that we feel justified morally in doing it. To be seen as courteous, respectful, and polite is no longer judged as a virtue but as a weakness. Civility has died.

What's behind this? How did we move from Emily Post to what happens today on social media? Who gave us permission, societal and sacred, to do this?

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How did this happen?

Because we refuse to submit to God and thus, we do what is right in our own eyes and that is never a good thing.

You see, we can be disrespectful to people and then justify our outrageous behavior.

I don't know if you have seen some of the video clips of the fights that are breaking out on airplanes between passengers. That did not happen years ago because there was respect. Now it is happening more and more frequently. That is just one example!

And here's the thing. Without order there is anarchy and places like San Fransico we see that it has gotten so bad that they are telling people to work from home because it is too dangerous to be out on the streets! What a sad state of affairs but it is because we have rejected God and we do what is right in our own heart and our hearts are wicked, deceitful!

David Guzik tells us that,

This idea of authority and submission to authority are so important to God that they are part of His very being.

The First Person of the Holy Trinity is called the ***Father***; the Second Person of the Holy Trinity is called the ***Son***.

Inherent in those titles is a relationship of authority and submission to authority.

The Father exercises authority over the Son, and the Son submits to the Father's authority – and this is in the ***very nature and being*** of God.

Our failure to exercise Biblical authority, and our failure to submit to Biblical authority, isn't just wrong and sad – it sins against the very nature of God. 1 Samuel 15:23 speaks to this same principle: ***For rebellion is as the sin of witchcraft.***

- David Guzik

So the point here in these verses for women is – ***BE SUBMISSIVE!***

But why?

Not only because that is what God has told us, but the last point here is that when you obey God – ***THE BLESSING!***

VERSE 15

This is a very difficult passage to understand. In fact, many consider this passage to be one of the most difficult passages to understand in the entire Bible!

Let me share with you what I believe Paul is saying here and really what he is not saying here because knowing that it will help bring to light what he is meaning.

First of all, some say this speaks of sparing women in childbirth, that she won't die if she is a godly woman.

Now as great as that sounds, we know this is not true. Think about looking back to any time in history and we never see this, but particularly at that time, it is not true.

We do need to think about this. We know that godly women have died giving birth to a child and ungodly women have lived! So that can't be what Paul is talking about. It does not fit in with what we see and what Paul said.

Others feel it speaks of eternal life but that makes no sense. Women are not saved because they gave birth to a child, even though I must admit, they should!

If men gave birth, we would not have a population problem!

But think about the reasoning here. Think about all the godly women that can't have children, are they not saved because of that?

Of course not and our salvation is based in Christ not giving birth!

Also, that would mean that ungodly women who give birth would be saved because they had a child. Again, that is not what the Scriptures are teaching us, and it is not what Paul is saying here. This can't be what Paul is talking about.

Others say that Paul has laid down the role or function of men in the church – to teach, and the role for women in the church – having babies!

What a blessing to have children, but I don't see Paul saying that women are to be barefoot and pregnant, that is their role! That truly would put Paul in a bad light if he did mean that, but he didn't!

Let's approach this verse like this, in the context it is in.

In the original it says, “***She will be saved in the childbirth***” meaning that even though women were deceived, fell into transgression as we saw with Eve, they can be saved by the Messiah, for a woman brought Him into the world, she was a vessel in which God used!

I tend to lean in that direction for what Paul is speaking of here.

Think about our salvation. We are saved by grace alone through faith alone in Christ alone. Women are not saved by giving birth! Thus, that is the idea that Paul is speaking of here, that even though Eve was deceived, women can be saved by the Messiah, by Jesus.

Now, as Paul concludes he speaks of fruits of the Spirit, qualities that are to be evident in a woman’s life and as she has nurtured her children in these things, the things of God, passing on to future generations of godly men and women, what a blessing!

A woman can’t pass on godliness and virtue to her children if she doesn’t possess and walk in those qualities herself.

It is as Solomon said in Proverbs 1:8-9, “**My son, hear the instruction of your father, And do not forsake the law of your mother; For they will be a graceful ornament on your head, And chains about your neck.**”

As someone has said, “***The hand that rocks the cradle is the most powerful hand of all.***”

Let me share this with you about motherhood. We are told,

According to the Bible, the role of a mother is to love and care for her children. She is to teach and train, nurture and discipline. A godly mother is to model godly living for her children and take care of her home. She is also to care for and help her husband.

While motherhood often feels like a thankless job, God places high value on the role of a mother. As mothers, we have a significant role in the lives of our children. Our influence and care allow our children to thrive. We also teach and train our children in the ways of the Lord along with our husbands.

Mothers play an important role in the Bible. We see courageous **mothers in the Bible**, such as Jochebed, who thoughtfully developed a plan to save Moses; Hannah, who begged God for a son, only to give Samuel back to God; and Sarah, who waited years and years to bear the long-promised Isaac. Of course, we can't forget about Mary, the woman favored by God to birth Jesus the Messiah!

The Bible also talks about what a blessing it is to be a mother along with the many roles and tasks a mother is called to do. While motherhood may be intimidating, especially at times, as Christians we have the Holy Spirit to help and guide us along the way. As we lean into Jesus, He changes us into amazing mothers and women of God. Just take a deep breath. We have God on our side!

- <https://bit.ly/3siFZM6>

And let me also say this. You not only have an important role in the family, but women have an important role in the church. Please understand that Paul is not putting women down, he is just speaking of their role in the church and what an important role it is.

Warren Wiersbe wrote,

Godly women do have an important ministry in the local assembly, even though they are not called to be teachers of the Word in a pastoral sense. If all is done “decently and in order,” then God will bless.

- Warren Wiersbe, the Wiersbe Bible Commentary – NT, - p. 755

And another said,

In this passage we see how God has perfectly balanced the roles of the sexes. Men are to be the leaders in the church and the family. Women are kept from any accusation of inferiority through the godly influence they have in the lives of their precious children. For the church to depart from this divine order is to perpetuate the disaster of the Fall.

- John MacArthur – I Timothy 2

May we not lose sight of that because God’s design for the church is for order and that comes from being obedient to His Word and the position that He has for each of us!

If we want order in the church, then men need to be the spiritual leaders and pray!

If we want order in the church, women need to submit to the role that God has for them and serve faithfully!

And I will close with these words from Deuteronomy 5:32-33, “**Therefore you shall be careful to do as the Lord your God has commanded you; you shall not turn aside to the right hand or to the left. You shall walk in all the ways which the Lord your God has commanded you, that you may live and that it may be well with you, and that you may prolong your days in the land which you shall possess.**” May we listen and obey!