

# THIS WEEK'S MESSAGE

JULY, 7TH 2019 // 1 TIMOTHY

*We serve God by committing to prayer, to seeing the gospel spread to all people, and to loving, serving, and working together in our roles as men and women.*

## PRAYER & PROCLAMATION (1 TIM. 2:1-7)

In chapter 1, Paul provided a gospel foundation as he commanded Timothy to guard the gospel, use the law properly, and "fight the good fight".

- Based on that gospel foundation, he begins to give practical instructions to the church.
- So how do you guard the gospel and "fight the good fight"? You start, Paul says, by praying.

Paul uses four different words in vs. 1 to describe prayer- "supplications, prayers, intercessions, and thanksgivings"- most likely for emphasis.

- Prayer should be the central discipline of the Christian life and a vital part of Christian worship.
- We're told to pray for "all people"- all in this sense is all kinds of people!
- Salvation is not for a small group of the religious elite.

Prayers should be made for "kings and all who are in high positions".

- This instruction is fascinating when one considers that Paul was writing under the reign of Nero, a Roman emperor who violently persecuted Christians.
- We're to pray for our political leaders, regardless of what we think about their politics.

Paul not only tells us whom we're to pray for, but what we're to pray for- "that we may live a peaceful and quiet life..." (vs. 2)

- Peace within a nation is pleasing to God, and it lends itself to the free and unrestricted proclamation of the gospel.
- This is "pleasing to God" because God "desires all to be saved and come to the knowledge of the truth". (vs. 4)

God desires "all to be saved" does not all will be saved- there's a difference between God's decreed will and His declared will.

- God has made salvation possible for ALL people in Christ, and this is what God desires ("declared will").
- Not all will respond to the offer of salvation, but this doesn't mean that God's will is thwarted- God's "decreed will" is always accomplished.

The point is this- God loves all people and desires them to come to salvation.

- Therefore, we're to pray for ALL kinds of people and pray that the gospel can be spread.
- There's only one God and one "mediator" between God and man- Jesus (vs. 5-6)
- Jesus has bridged the gap between sinful humanity and a perfect God as He gave His life as a "ransom" for all.

## MEN & WOMEN (1 TIM. 2:8-10)

Ephesus was known around the world for the Temple of Artemis (or Diana), a massive structure that would have dominated the skyline and brought in visitors from around the world.

- The cult of Artemis was run by female priests- they ruled the show and kept the men in place.
- Most likely in Ephesus women were also the spiritual leaders in the home and family, and men weren't particularly involved in religion.

So Paul directly addresses the men and instructs them to step up and become men of prayer.

- This would've seemed different and foreign to some of the men in the church whose wives had always been the ones to pray out loud in worship and in the home.
- But Paul is encouraging the men to step into their God given role as spiritual leaders and actively participate in the life of the church.

He instructs them to pray, "lifting holy hands"- this is probably not referring to a specific posture, but rather to spiritual purity.

- Psalm 24:3-4 speaks of "clean hands and a pure heart" before ascending the hill of the Lord, and Psalm 26:6 says "I wash my hands in innocence" before going around the altar.
- When we approach God in prayer, we're to humbly confess our sin and then pray with purity.

The instruction to pray without "anger or quarrelling" is speaking of the necessity of living without offense or any unreconciled conflict with someone else before we pray (Matt. 5:23-24).

- Paul then instructs the women in the church to "adorn themselves with respectable apparel, with modesty and self-control" (vs. 9).
- There are cultural aspects of modesty in dress- what is modest in one culture may be provocative in another!

This passage is not telling women that dressing fashionable, wearing jewelry, or styling your hair is a sin- there are cultural implications to consider in this instruction.

But there are two principles that are for all women-

1. Don't dress in a way that draws inordinate attention to worldly wealth.
2. Don't dress in a way that might make men who aren't your husband sexualize certain parts of your body.

## WOMEN & SPIRITUAL LEADERSHIP (1 TIM. 2:11-15)

### THREE VIEWS OF 1 TIMOTHY 2:11-15

1. Non-authoritative
2. Authoritative and absolute
3. Authoritative but culturally limited.

In Ephesus, many women were the spiritual leaders in the place of worship and most likely in the home.

- When they converted to Christianity, many would have imported their own cultural understanding of gender roles.
- But God's design for the family & home is for God to be head, the man to serve by being the spiritual leader, and the woman to serve by lovingly following her husband's leadership (Eph. 5:21-33).

The Christian life is one of submission because there is submission in the Trinity.

- Therefore, we submit to Christ, we submit to the commands of God, and we submit to each other (Eph. 5:21).
- God's order for a marriage is for the wife to serve the husband by submitting to his leadership, and for a husband to serve his wife by loving her and leading the family.

So that's the home and the family, but what about in the church?

- For the women to learn "quietly and in all submissiveness" (vs. 11) simply means peaceably- without disagreements, questions, and differences of opinion interrupting the worship service.
- Apparently, women disrupting worship was also happening in Corinth (1 Cor. 14:35).

But now Paul directly gives two prohibitions in vs. 12- Women are not to 1) teach, 2) exercise authority over a man, but to "remain quiet".

- We know that Paul encouraged women to teach in some settings, such as Titus 2:3 (women teaching younger women) and Col. 3:16 (the whole church to be "teaching and admonishing" each other), and we know he encouraged women to pray and prophesy (1 Cor. 11:5).

What is Paul saying? To understand his point, we have to connect these two prohibitions.

- Perhaps a better way of understanding the prohibition is this- "do not exercise spiritual authority over men in the church BY teaching them as a spiritual authority".
- In the broader context of 1 Timothy, Paul speaks of "overseers" and their spiritual authority in the church.

In 1 Tim. 3:2 we see that the ability to teach is a qualification for an overseer, so that you lead the church through the teaching of God's Word.

- Those who occupy the office of "the overseer" in the church express their authority by teaching God's Word.
- Therefore, when Paul said women aren't to teach or exercise authority over men, he was pointing specifically to the two primary responsibilities of an "overseer"- a lead pastor or ruling elder.

Speaking of God's design, Paul points back to the theological structure that began in creation as "Adam was formed first, then Eve" (vs. 13).

- What Paul is saying is that God formed the man first to signify him as the spiritual leader in the family and church.
- When the "woman was deceived", this points to Satan's distortion of God's order for authority within the home and church.

God gave Adam the responsibility of leading and protecting his wife as the spiritual leader, but when Satan showed up he undercut God's design and went to the woman first (Gen. 3:1).

- In turn, Adam sat back and did nothing, and God's design was distorted.
- Perhaps one reason for why women have had to assume spiritual authority in the home and church is because men have abdicated it!

Yet she'll be saved by childbearing" (vs. 15)

- Even though the woman ate the fruit first and sin entered the world through her, the promise remains that the Savior would enter the world through her ("seed of the woman", Gen. 3:15).
- We can't just focus on the prohibition- there are so many things that women can do that men can't; one of which is that women can bring life into this world- and eternal life (Jesus) came into this world through a woman!