

10/1/23 - 1 Tim. 2:8-15 - "The Household of God"

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[0 : 00] Please turn with me to 1 Timothy 2, verses 8 to 15. I desire then that in every place the men should pray, lifting holy hands without anger or quarreling, 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, but with what is proper for women who profess godliness, with good works.

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

For Adam was formed first, then Eve, and Adam was not deceived, but the woman was deceived and became a transgressor. Yet she will be saved through childbearing.

If they continue in faith and love and holiness with self-control. Amen. Thank you, Emily. So, welcome everyone.

If you don't know me, I am Rick Deschains, one of the pastors here. And we're going to be continuing our study in 1 Timothy. We started a few weeks ago.

[1 : 21] Brent has led the first few chapters. And now, as we turn to these next verses, we're going to be looking at verses 8 through 15. But in case you weren't here for the previous messages, I want to give a little bit of a summary of some of the key points that are important to keep in mind as we move through these verses.

First, the thesis statement of the letter is given a little bit later in chapter 3, verse 14 and 15 of the letter.

And Paul clarifies when writing to Timothy that the reason he's writing these things is so that Timothy may know how one ought to behave in the household of God, which is the church of the living God.

And so that sets the context of this letter. It is about the gathered church and how we behave when we gather together in the church.

And then at the beginning of chapter 2, as we heard last week in the first seven verses of chapter 2, Paul urges foremost for supplications and prayers, intercessions and thanksgiving to be made for all people.

[2 : 36] And that when we pray for all people, when we pray for kings, when we pray for people around us, we may be able to lead a peaceful and quiet life, which is godly and dignified in every way.

And from this, he continues, and then he gives in the second half of chapter 2, and then through chapter 3, he gives instructions to two groups of people that make up the church.

He gives instructions to men and women, and then, as we'll see in chapter 3, he continues that with a discussion of elders and deacons. And his aim is to clarify the expectations for the behavior of these groups within the church when we gather together on Sunday or other times during the week. And so, his instructions for men and women need to be read understanding that this is speaking in this chapter about the church, about gathering together, and about behavior in the household of God.

But I'll admit these verses are at times controversial, at times misunderstood, at times misapplied.

[3 : 57] And so, I want to read, normally I don't go to secular sources for wisdom, but maybe as a contrast, I'm going to read a quote from Aristotle.

And this is from his book on politics, written about 300 years before Paul's time. And as we think about Paul's own instructions for the household of God, and also his other instructions for the household, which are given in other parts of the Bible, it's interesting to see what those in his time thought about these things.

And so, these are Aristotle's words, translated by Benjamin Jowett, because it was in Greek in the original, but the translation says, of household management, we have seen that there are three parts.

One is the rule of a master over slaves, which has been discussed already, another of a father, and the third of a husband. A husband and father, we saw, rules over wife and children, both free, but the rule differs.

The rule over children being a royal one, over his wife a constitutional rule. For although there may be exceptions to the order of nature, the male is by nature fitter for command than the female, just as the elder and full-grown is superior to the younger and more immature.

[5 : 28] Why is that important? Well, Paul is writing to the church in Ephesus, a Greek community that was shaped by Aristotle's politics.

And so, this was the culture that was in the place where Paul was writing to, and it helps us understand why he wrote the things that he did in the way that he did.

Specifically, within all the churches of Greece, Paul had to contend with a culture that understood the importance of the household within society. It was the base unit of society.

But they had abused God's design in order to command power and to demand obedience from those in their care. Also, some within the church were imposing legalism and insisting on ceremonial law, but then others on the other side were insisting that their new freedom in Christ meant these traditions of marriage, of family, or of distinct roles for anyone ceased to exist.

And so, although the culture had some marred fragments or reflection of what God had intended, it had been distorted and abused.

[6 : 55] And so, I think Paul's intention was to restore God's design, to prune away what was broken, and to allow the good to flourish through godly nourishment.

And so, he gave his own instructions to the family in Titus 2 and Ephesians 5. Specifically, he called the family the household. But here in 1 Timothy, his focus is on the household of God, the church.

And I want to show how the household of God is an extension of the family. But before we get into the verses and look at the meaning of these verses and how they apply to our lives today, I want to pray and ask for God's wisdom and guidance as we move through these verses.

So, let's pray. Father, we do thank you for this opportunity to gather together as the household of God, to spend time in worship and prayer and praise, and to spend time studying your word.

Lord, and I pray that we would come to a deeper understanding of your word, a deeper understanding of you, and a greater appreciation for how vital the family and the church are to the work that you have for us, to being a light and a witness in the community around us.

[8 : 24] And so, I pray that you will give us wisdom to submit to Scripture and to do these things well. We thank you and praise you. In your holy name we pray. Amen. So, my first point, I want to look just at verse 8, which speaks to men, and I've titled this point Lifting Holy Hands.

And so, this will be the first point. I'll reread the verse just to refresh your mind, but I encourage you to look along in your Bible as well so that you can see how these thoughts connect together.

Paul says, I desire then that in every place the men should pray, lifting holy hands without anger or quarreling. So, the first thing to point out is that Paul says in every place.

So, I think we must recognize that although he's writing to Timothy in Ephesus, his vision is for all the households of God. And this letter would be passed from church to church and throughout the centuries to us today, 2,000 years later.

And so, it applies to us as well. But then Paul offers two instructions to men. The first is about praying with lifted holy hands, and the second flows from it and is to keep from anger or quarreling.

[9 : 53] So, regarding his first instruction, he is again referring to prayer, which was the topic of the previous verses, that the church be a place of prayer.

And specifically, he is commanding that men of the church gather in prayer with lifted hands. Now, lifting hands, I don't know if this was common in Ephesus, but I know it was common in Jewish and Hebrew culture.

We can turn to the Psalms, specifically 28 and 63, where David says that he prayed with lifted hands towards the most holy sanctuary, referring to heaven.

He prayed with his hands lifted towards heaven. I also like Psalm 134, the first two verses say,

Come, bless the Lord, all you his servants of the Lord, who stand by night in the house of the Lord.

Lift up your hands to the holy place and bless the Lord. So, this posture of lifting hands is expected as we worship and as we pray in all the places where the church gathers.

[11:04] you may notice that you don't see this practiced consistently in every church. We don't always pray with lifted hands, although I think it would be beneficial and there's no reason not to.

But I don't think Paul's emphasis falls on the lifting hands, right? He's not commanding us to lift our hands. He's commanding us to have holy hands, to worship with holy hands.

So, his intention is not an outward desire for, his intention, rather, is not that we have a desire for attention, but rather that we have a posture of worship and a heart of holiness.

So, it is to be an outward reflection or expression of an inward godliness. And his second part of the command flows naturally from this, and it's in regard to the orderliness of worship.

He desires, as he said earlier, that we lead a peaceful and quiet life, and that can't happen if there is anger and quarreling in the church.

[12:21] And so, he saw that, in general, men were prone to anger and quarreling, particularly when the church gathered. And quarreling here doesn't mean fistcuffs.

I don't think there were fistfights going on in the church. Rather, it means debate. There was debate, unhealthy debate, and controversy taking place during the church gathering.

Later, to Timothy, in chapter 6, verse 4, Paul says that some have an unhealthy craving for controversy and quarrels about words, and that this produces envy, dissension, slander, evil suspicions, and constant friction among people who are depraved in mind and deprived of the truth. And so, Paul, I don't think he wants the church to be distracted. He doesn't want prayer and worship to be interrupted or neglected.

Instead, his desire is for orderly worship, which he similarly instructed to the Corinthians in 1 Corinthians chapter 14. And as I said, I think these verses apply to us in the church today.

[13:37] We must strive to avoid controversy or disputes over secondary issues. Timothy was called to uphold doctrine, the sound words of the Lord Jesus Christ, as he was commanded by Paul in chapter 6, verse 3.

But when it comes to other matters, we're called, as in Ephesians, to submit to one another. And so, I believe the men of the church are called to set the example in prayer, in worship, in holiness, in submitting to the word of God, and submitting to one another out of reverence for Christ.

Christ. Now, there is a time and a place for disagreement, for quarreling, obviously done in love. As Baptists, we usually turn to democracy to solve our debates.

Maybe it's about paint color or carpet or a variety of other things. We establish committees and then we establish committees for our committees. We like our democracy.

democracy. But, this is resolved for secondary issues. When it comes to matters of doctrine and upholding the word of Christ, we are called to defend them, to uphold them, to keep to the teachings.

[15:02] But Paul is more specifically concerned about when we gather together as a church. This could be on Sunday, it could be in small or house churches throughout the week, but when we gather together, we must never let disputes or quarrels divide or extinguish prayer and worship.

I don't think I've seen much of this in our church, but it definitely is something that we are prone to and can happen, and so we must guard our hearts.

But I think of great importance is that every man of the church is called to a life of prayer. I believe this should start before we even enter the church on Sunday, that we should start the morning with prayer to prepare our hearts for worship together, that we should continue in prayer even before the service starts, perhaps praying together in the office upstairs for a while before the service starts, that we should pray together in the service, which I think we model well here, and I think that we should continue to pray after the service and throughout the week.

We're called to a life of prayer. Remember from last week, or you can look back at the first seven verses of the chapter, that God desires that all people be saved and come to the knowledge of the truth in the man Christ Jesus, who gave himself for a ransom for all.

And he commanded us to intercession, to supplication, to thanksgiving, and to prayer for all people. The church takes part in this reality of God desiring that all people be saved.

[16:52] We take part in it through evangelism, through proclaiming the word of God, but also through prayer. And so we must commit to pray. So I would encourage you, if you are a regular attending person in the church, to come here a little bit early.

Join us for prayer at 945. Pray before the service starts. Pray during the service. Pray throughout the service, throughout the week, because the mission of the church cannot happen apart from fervent prayer.

Amen. As we move into verses 9 and 12, or 9 through 12, Paul also has instructions for the women in the household of God. And so I've titled my second point Adorned with Godliness, and we'll focus on verses 9 through 12.

Paul starts in verse 9, Likewise also, that women should adorn themselves in respectable apparel, with modesty and self-control, not with braided hair in gold or pearls or costly attire, but with what is proper for women who profess godliness, with good works.

Let a woman learn quietly with all submissiveness. I do not permit a woman to teach or exercise authority over a man. Rather, she is to remain quiet. So first, I want to point out that he starts out with likewise, and this could mean in the same way.

[18:22] So there's something similar about his previous command to men and his command to women. But he offers two instructions for women as he did for men.

The first is regarding dress with modesty or self-control, which could be translated moderation. And then the second is to learn quietly with all submissiveness.

Regarding his first instruction, Paul saw that in general, some of the women were prone to excess in their appearance. Now, Ephesus was a very wealthy trade city on the Aegean Sea, and there were many wealthy people within the city, and I'm sure some of them became Christians, and so people had the means to dress extravagantly, but also to dress immodestly.

And so Paul desires that the church be godly and dignified, as he said earlier in verses 7 and 8. And so he wants the church to dress with moderation in keeping with being godly and dignified.

If you recall, Peter gave similar instructions in 1 Peter 3.3. He said, Do not let your adorning be external, the braiding of hair and the putting on of gold jewelry or the clothing you wear, but let your adorning be the hidden person of the heart with the imperishable beauty of a gentle and quiet spirit, which in God's sight is very precious.

[20:01] And so Paul, similar to his command to the men, does not want women wearing immodest or indecent clothes that draw attention to themselves. But again, he's not calling to sackcloth.

He's not calling to dressing in, I don't know what would be a good example, but maybe a one-color, one-piece dress, like we've seen some churches interpret this in the past.

He's just calling for moderation. And more importantly, he's calling for this moderation to express inward godliness. His intent is on the expression of inward godliness.

So rather than external adorning, Paul desires that in all the churches that women adorn themselves as is proper for those who profess godliness, which is with good works.

We see that this is similar to his instruction to men in that the intent is an outward expression of inward godliness. His second instruction for women is about their behavior during the gathering, the corporate gathering of the church.

[21:12] Women are called to learn quietly with all submissiveness. Paul gave similar instruction to the church in 1 Corinthians 14, specifically verses 33, 34, and 35.

And we must clarify, he doesn't mean that women were never permitted to speak in the church.

This would contradict Paul's own writing in 1 Corinthians 11, 5, where he expected that women would take part in prayer, in singing, and in prophesying, which is reading the word of God.

But his aim, similar to the way that he commanded men not to quarrel or to anger, his aim here is to maintain order during the gathering of the congregation.

As he explains in 1 Corinthians 14, 34, during the public gathering of the church, women should learn quietly and ask questions in private.

He's specifically talking about what we're doing right now, in that if someone were to stand up and begin quarreling with me, then that would be disorderly and distracting.

[22:26] That's what he's calling for, right? He's not saying that women or men have to be silent in the church, only that we have to be orderly and respect authority.

He desires, however, that women learn, right? Learn quietly with all submissiveness. So his intent is that women participate in learning, whether it be learning during the church service, learning from the scriptures as they read them, learning from other women as he instructed in Titus 2, and learning from their husbands as he instructed in Ephesians 5, 22 through 33.

He's encouraging women to take part in learning the scriptures. The scriptures offer a wealth of wisdom that transform the lives of those who read them and who study them.

He also doesn't mean that women can never teach, right? I think a historic traditional reading would be that women can never teach, but I don't think that this fits with scripture because we can find examples such as Acts 18, 26, where Priscilla and Achilla took Apollos aside and clarified the ways of God to him.

But if you notice, even in that verse, Priscilla and Achilla took Apollos aside from the synagogue, which was the church, and corrected him in private. So it keeps with Paul's intent for orderly worship.

[24 : 02] He doesn't want there to be confusion or disorder within the synagogue or the church. And so Paul draws a line when women seek to teach, reprove, or correct men publicly within the corporate gathering of the church because that couldn't be done without confusion or exercising authority over a man.

And so Paul is calling the church to submit to God's design. This means the church is to look different from the culture. Although Western culture for centuries has been a primarily Christian culture and upheld some aspects of biblical views on marriage, on family, and on gender, these views have come under attack and many have turned from them.

But I think there are good aspects of God's design that Paul wanted to maintain in order that the family and the church might flourish.

And so speaking practically, this means when we gather we should look different from the culture. Our clothes should be modest so that we may never show partiality to those who cannot afford extravagant clothing.

And our adorning should be that of inward godliness not outward extravagance. It also means that men and women will have different roles within the gathered corporate church.

[25 : 36] While the men are called to setting the example in peaceful, orderly worship in prayer and teaching, the women are called to adorn themselves with the imperishable beauty of a gentle and quiet spirit which in God's sight is very precious.

And I think when the world sees the church that we are flourishing despite the culture, the brokenness around us, then it bears witness that the church is godly, that it is dignified, and that there is truth to be found within.

Unfortunately, many churches today reject or try explaining away any of these verses that oppose the culture regarding moderation or roles for men and women.

And so I want to give you a few of the common objections and then we will think about them as we look at the last three verses. One I've heard often is Paul's commands were written for a specific time and place, the context of ancient Ephesus, and they're no longer relevant today.

Also, I've heard that his commands were a compromise. He made a compromise in order that the church could take part in the culture of its day, but we don't live in that culture and so these verses do not apply to us.

[27 : 04] Another one I've heard is that Paul was speaking to both men and women, but he saw general struggles within each and so he wrote those commands to each of those two groups.

And then finally, one I hear more frequently is that Paul desires that we obey these commands, but that it's not possible because there are not godly men who are equipped for answering the call regarding preaching the word of God and therefore women must step up into this role.

And so I think we need to be aware of these. I think they've become quite prevalent in the church today and I think they're all attempts to conform the church to the culture when Paul and God's intent was the other way around.

So as we look to verses 13 and 15, we'll see that Paul provides some answers to these objections with some verses as we look at our third point that may be a little bit difficult to understand at first or perhaps seem odd, but I think there's a lot to be learned from verses 13 through 15.

I've titled this point Continue in Faith and Love. And Paul says starting in verse 13, for Adam was formed first, then Eve, and Adam was not deceived but the woman was deceived and became a transgressor.

[28 : 49] Yet she will be saved through childbearing if they continue in faith and love and holiness with self-control. So notice Paul was a scholar of the Hebrew Bible, meaning the Old Testament, and he knew it well and he knew the traditional way in which Hebrew was written, particularly the poetic writings of Genesis.

And so he's really pointing us to Genesis with these verses. He's giving us a summary of the account of Genesis 2 and 3.

And so I believe he is either counting on us having a good understanding of Genesis or that we turn to Genesis to get a deeper understanding of what he means.

So I want to look at the three main things that he points out. Adam was formed first, then Eve. Adam was deceived, or Adam was not deceived, but the woman was deceived and became a transgressor.

Yet she will be saved through childbearing. So, in the first point, Paul is drawing our attention back to Genesis 2, 18-25 to clarify the relationship between Adam and Eve, or in general men and women.

[30 : 11] If we turn to these verses, and I encourage you to keep Genesis 2 and 3 open and you can follow along and see the connections here, but if we remember in Genesis 2-22, Adam was created, and then God created Eve from Adam.

And I think it's helpful to understand this in the context of the relationship between the Father and the Son, between God and Jesus. Because we know that the Son is not less than the Father. Christ, after all, is the radiance of the glory of God, and the exact imprint of His nature, as we learn in Hebrews 1. However, the Son is generated from, or as the Scriptures often say, the firstborn of the Father.

But the opposite is not true. The Father is not of the Son. As such, the Son's work that He accomplished within creation was distinct from that of the Father.

the Father. Analogously, the woman is not less than man. Instead, woman is the glory of man, as Paul put it in 1 Corinthians 11. Eve was from Adam.

[31 : 33] He literally said, this is bone of my bone and flesh of my flesh. But Adam was not from Eve. Therefore, Eve's agency, or her work that she accomplished within creation, was distinct from that of Adam.

But Paul says, nevertheless, in the Lord, woman is not independent of man, nor man of woman. For woman was made from man, so man is now born of woman.

All things are from God, in 1 Corinthians 11. 11. In Paul's second point, he draws upon Genesis 3, 1 through 13 to remind us and to clarify how Eve was deceived, but Adam was not.

So, if we turn to Genesis 3, 1, we see the account. We see that the serpent confronted Eve and asked her, did God actually say, you shall not eat of any tree in the garden?

But if we recall back in Genesis 2, 17, God actually said, 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.

[32 : 55] And also, that took place in Genesis 2, 17. Eve was created in Genesis 2, 18. So, God gave these words, he entrusted these words to Adam before Eve was created.

and then the serpent questions her and says, did God actually say? Right? He's questioning God's word. So, we have to wonder, how did she get God's word?

Well, either God repeated it to her or he trusted Adam to repeat it to her. Seems more likely that God entrusted it to Adam and that he passed them along to her and perhaps he did so incorrectly or incompletely because when she quotes God, she says, neither shall you touch it lest you die.

But God didn't say that she shouldn't touch it but that she shouldn't eat it. Right? However, she was deceived. She doubted God's word.

She saw that the fruit was good for food and to make her wise so she took some and she ate it and then she gave some to her husband and then she became a transgressor when she disobeyed God's word and gave into her desires.

[34 : 17] She was the one who was deceived but Adam was there. The account says that Adam was there. He knew God's word but he still listened to the voice of his wife and ate also.

He too became a transgressor when he failed to uphold the word of God and to protect his wife.

The serpent subverted God's intention and targeted the woman and then caused both to sin.

And we see when God enters the garden and confronts them he confronts Adam because it was Adam who failed to uphold the word of God and to protect his wife.

So how does this help explain why Paul does not permit a woman to teach or exercise authority over a man? because based on this account from the beginning God had given the role of upholding the word of God of receiving it and teaching it to the man.

He did not restrict women from teaching the word of God within the church of God because they're less equipped to do so or because they're more easily deceived. rather he gave and called men to this role of leading and nurturing their family with the word of God as he says in Ephesians 5:26 and 6:4 and it had nothing to do with merit but because of the order God established in the creation.

[35:52] In Paul's third point he then draws upon Genesis 3:14 through 16 to clarify how Eve was saved through childbearing and I think the phrase maybe is weird right because in many of our translations it says women are saved through childbearing but let's turn to Genesis and continue reading the story in verses 14 through 16 after having confronted the man and he blamed the woman and God for his own sin God then confronts the serpent and he promised that there would be enmity between the serpent and between the woman and that her offspring would crush the head of the serpent and then he confronted Adam and Eve as well rather than kill them as he had said in his word he showed them mercy to Eve he said I will surely multiply your pain and childbearing in pain you shall bring forth children and then to

Adam he said cursed is the ground because of you in pain you shall eat of it all the days of your life we notice that when death entered the creation childbearing became difficult due to infertility due to infant mortality and due to the constant perils that would require women to toil in nurturing their family their children and similarly working the ground was made difficult by disease by famine by constant threat and that the man would be required to toil in providing for and protecting his family childbearing is not an easy task right it is quite a difficult task especially when children are young they require constant care and nurturing and it was impossible for men or women to accomplish this task alone but that was never

God's plan God called for men to provide for and protect their wives so that they could devote themselves to childbearing and then for 76 generations this continued women continued in bearing children until the promise was fulfilled as Paul says in Galatians 4:4 when the fullness of time had come God sent forth his son born of a woman born under the law to redeem those who were under the law so that we might receive adoption as sons the point I think Paul is making is that men and women were never meant to be independent of one another because neither could flourish without the other from the beginning God called them to complementary roles within the family and the family is a microcosm of the church and so even after the promise was fulfilled we see that Paul upheld distinct roles within the church for men and women because as he said God is not a God of confusion but of peace so how does this apply in the church today 2,000 years later well I think as we saw God's plan was from the beginning thousands of years before Paul's own time but Paul defended it in his day and he warned Timothy that it would come under attack in the future as he says in 1st Timothy 4:3 and so I think Paul believed that it was a timeless plan for all the households of God not one that would pass away when the promise was fulfilled and not one that would pass away before Christ returned now to be clear a woman's salvation does not depend upon childbearing many women will not bear children many are unable to do so but all are saved as Paul says at the end of verse 15 by continuing in faith and love and holiness with self-control faith in the completed work of Jesus who died on the cross for the forgiveness of sins God but practically speaking in the corporately gathered church Paul calls women to continue in the tradition of learning quietly with submissiveness however I believe there are countless ways which women contribute to the life and the ministry of the church to the nourishment of the church this can include singing and praying and prophecy as we saw earlier it can include evangelism and discipleship hospitality administration teaching in children's ministry teaching in women's ministry various other roles among which childbearing remains I want to make a note that I skipped over a minute ago regarding childbearing that this word does not necessarily mean literally giving birth to children [41:20] I think perhaps that's how we read it sometimes this word childbearing means nurturing children the entire process and we know that that is something that goes on for a lifetime once a child is yours to care for and to nurture it is yours to care for and nurture for life and finally I want to clarify that this does not exempt men from the role of nurturing children right Ephesians 6:4 says that God calls and expects fathers to bring up their children in the discipline and instruction of the Lord and this word bring up it literally means to nourish or to nurture and so the responsibility of nurturing family and child in the ways and instruction of the Lord continues to fall to men so in closing the point

I want to take away from this is that the household of God which is the church of the living God is a pillar and buttress of the truth as Paul put it and we've been called to lead a peaceful and quiet life

godly and dignified in every way but if we concede to the culture's ideals for men and women we may for a time be free to lead a peaceful and quiet life but we will cease to be godly or dignified in any way we've been called to submit to the word of God not to the culture around us and so men I charge you that you must pray with holy lifted hands without anger or quarreling that you must not cease in teaching the sound words of our Lord Jesus Christ which accords with holiness and godliness and that you must also give yourself up for your family to sanctify them in the water of the word to love them as your own body to nourish and cherish them just as Christ does the church to women

I say continue to adorn yourself with godliness let your adorning be the hidden person of the heart with imperishable beauty of a gentle and quiet spirit this means avoiding teaching reproving or correcting men publicly in the church so as to maintain order and respect but instead when it's necessary to bring them aside and to correct them in private and when discipline is necessary to follow the paths of church discipline to bring them to the elders finally we must remember that each has been called to complementary roles which when practiced well allow the church to flourish the men are to complement women just as we will see the elders are to complement deacons I'll leave you with this God has so composed the body giving greater honor to the part that lacked it that there may be no division in the body but that the members may have the same care for one another if one member suffers all suffer together if one member is honored all rejoice together let's pray