

Good morning.

Today's scripture reading is from 1 Timothy, chapter 2, verses 11 through 15.

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.

Thanks, Jason.

Jason seems to get all the fun passages to read.

Put them on record on the internet, reading that stuff.

Before we tackle the text and before I ask for the Lord's help as we open up the text this morning, I just want to personally thank Scott and Shana as pastor here, but also as a parent for the time and effort that they put

invest in our teens, our preteens, and just the way that they care for them.

I know my daughter is cared for well as she goes to youth group and as she sits under Scott's teaching and the other leaders there as they pour in and speak truth to our teens.

And I just really appreciate the work that they do.

I've done that job before and it's a lot of work, right?

It's a lot of work details wise.

It's a lot of work coming in week in and week out prepared to teach and to

invest in our teens in that way.

And I just really, really appreciate them.

I do think that, and that goes for Scott and Shane as well as our other children's workers.

I think one of the ways that we will be evaluated and judged as a church before the Lord is how we've served those who are coming behind us, right?

Especially children.

Jesus says, whoever receives one of these little ones in my name receives me, right?

And one of the ways that he rebuked the disciples was, he said, let the little children come to me.

They were keeping them at a distance and Jesus wanted them to be near him and to hear him teaching.

And I think one of the ways we can evaluate how we're doing as a church

is how we care for our kids and how we invest in our kids, both young and up into the teenage years.

So again, Scott and Shana, I really appreciate you.

I know Sophia's looking forward to Recharge, and we'll be lifting up the kids in prayer before we open up here today.

I also want to say, too, if you're a young adult or just any adult and you're

The Lord's laying it on your heart to maybe invest in those coming behind you as well.

Feel free to talk to me or Scott and Shana.

I know Scott and Shana would love to have some help.

They have some help and would love to have even some more help in just caring for our teens in that way too.

Let's go to the Lord and ask for his help this morning as we tackle one of the more difficult texts here in 1 Timothy.

I shouldn't say more difficult, but definitely more controversial, so.

We want to be careful how we don't want to say less and don't want to say more than what Paul's saying and the Lord's saying in this passage.

So let's pray.

Heavenly Father, it is good to be a part of your people and a part of this church family.

Lord, it's good to gather together and worship today to acknowledge and to remind one another again that you are worthy.

Lord, that you are the lamb who was slain.

Jesus was the lamb who was slain on our behalf, and he is worthy of all glory and honor.

Lord, not just with our lips when the guitar is going, Lord, but also in how we live together, how we live personally and individually day to day, but Lord, how we live together corporately.

So we pray that we would submit that to you as we hear what your word has to say.

about who teaches and who leads in your church and how gender roles play a part in that.

We pray all this in Jesus' name.

Amen.

All right.

Ooh, sorry.

I'm a little out of sorts this morning.

We're going to go this way.

All right.

It's no secret.

That's not my sermon either.

What is going on?

I had a procedure done on Friday and I'm a little out of sorts.

I wasn't going to throw that out there as an excuse, but I am right now.

Give me a second.

There we go.

There we go.

That's it right there.

You know, it's a good thing that I've got the electronic version up here.

So if I bring the wrong thing up, I can actually get to the old thing.

All right.

Let's start over again.

Here we go.

So this is a difficult book with lots of controversial texts.

I told Dave, the senior pastor I worked on before, that I felt like the Lord was leading me to preach through 1 Timothy, that it addressed a lot of issues that we were currently facing as a church, but also that there's a lot of stuff that I probably wouldn't have chosen to talk about.

and to get up here and put my neck out on the line for and, you know, speak to you all about.

But it's in the scriptures and we preach the whole counsel of God.

And one of the ways we do that is we preach expositionally, verse by verse through a book.

We don't always finish a book.

We'll go back.

Like we know we've only done some of John and then we'll go back and work on John again in the fall.

But the goal is to preach it all, right?

And to preach every text as it comes.

And so when we have a book like this that have a number of difficult and controversial texts, it's especially fun when we come to probably the book's most controversial text, at least within evangelicalism.

This text is kind of a weird combination of being utterly clear and direct, and yet it's also helpfully nuanced in what it both says and what it doesn't say.

So I think one of the worst things we could do as we approach this text this morning is to treat it like...

you know, like a talk show.

Like, other than just ignoring it, I think the worst thing that we could do is come to it as if it's like a hot take on a talk show.

You know, just like read these couple verses and be like, oh, good one, Paul.

You know, that should make a good meme or that should get a good response.

You know, Paul isn't trying to make headlines or stir up engagement.

A lot of times in talk shows, podcasts, articles that we read, we'll have a really condensed response

clear statement given by somebody, but it's condensed and clear in order to get a rise, right?

And to get a response, you know, knee-jerk response, and to basically get attention through saying something that they don't really mean, you know what I'm saying?

Like they don't really mean what they're saying, but they're saying it so dramatically that other people are gonna respond negatively to it or positively, and there'll just be all this attention around that.

That's not what Paul's doing, right?

Paul, this is a well-thought-out, articulated conclusion that comes in the flow of a consistent, Holy Spirit-inspired argument.

So in a world of hot takes, we've got to just kind of put that out of our mind and realize that Paul says this succinctly and clearly in the flow of an argument because he means to be well-thought-out, succinct, and clear.

So all I'm asking today is that we take the time to do the work, to really hear and listen to Paul speaking with the authority of the Holy Spirit, right?

He was inspired by the Holy Spirit, inspired by God himself, to put this in the text, and to hear what Paul has to say, right?

To my knowledge, most of us in this room, I'm sure not all of us, but most of us in this room are in agreement with Paul's conclusion here, what he says, I think, very succinctly and clearly, but probably don't know why or maybe can't articulate the argument leading up to the conclusion.

And really the why is very important, especially these days.

We'll talk about why in a second.

So I'm just hoping to help with that too.

So even if you're in agreement with Paul's little succinct phrase here and you don't have a problem with it or don't think that he's speaking out of context or anything like that, I just want to help you be able to know why he comes to this conclusion and how he gets there.

All right, my big idea, please don't tweet it, all right?

Because it is as succinct and direct as Paul is, but the devil and the hope, right, is in the details of this morning.

So while it is clear and direct, I do want a chance to explain what Paul's saying and what I'm saying here.

So here's the big idea.

God's creation order is honored in the church when women defer teaching and exercising authority to men and embrace their unique ability to bear and nurture children.

So there's a lot that that means, and there's also a lot that that doesn't mean, and hopefully it'll be clear by the end, and you'll see why maybe I didn't want you to tweet it out right at the beginning, all right, and hear the passage out.

All right, Paul gives us three things in this passage, I think.

He gives us a rule,

He gives us a reason for that rule, and then he gives us a reality behind the rule and the reason.

So he gives us a rule or a command, gives us a reason for that command, and then he shows us how that command and the reason behind that command matches up with reality.

So first, let's just be clear about the rule.

Let's read verses 11 and 12 again, and then I'm actually going to tell you how a lot of us in evangelicalism are trying to skirt this pretty clear command that Paul gives.

He says, That's the clear, succinct, two-verse rule.

And because I'm going to draw some pretty widespread, large, as far as their impact goes, conclusions for us individually, but also us as a church, I just want to take a little time.

to kind of summarize how, if we're not going to take this rule at face value, some of the common arguments within evangelicalism for not taking this rule and command at face value.

So Kent Hughes, pastor scholar, sums up kind of the six main arguments for not taking this rule at face value that are provided in evangelicalism today.

I'm going to give you his six rules and kind of in my words, all right, I'm going to try to sum them up a little bit quicker and more succinctly than he does.

So first attempt to avoid Paul's meaning here.

And really these attempts have largely arisen since the 60s.

So that's not to say that there weren't women that were in pastoral roles prior to the 60s.

It just means that there wasn't a widespread movement or academic study explaining this passage in a different way than face value prior to the 60s.

So here we go.

Argument number one.

First, just simply put, Paul's wrong.

So attempts to avoid Paul's meaning here.

Argument number one, Paul's wrong.

He misinterprets Genesis.

So really no evangelical was making this argument until Paul Jewett in 1975.

They were, you know, again, largely nobody would say this out loud because concluding that Paul is wrong would then require a redefinition of what constitutes truth.

the inspired word of God, to include some mistakes.

And again, not just grammatical or punctuation mistakes, but ontological and theological mistakes that Paul misinterpreted Genesis and that he comes to a wrong theological conclusion.

conclusion in his misinterpretation of Genesis.

So for the most part, most evangelicals haven't gone there, won't go there, again, for sound biblical and philosophical reasons.

But I will say that someone close with the church, this church that we've recently parted ways with, said about this passage that

Well, that's just Paul, right?

That's just Paul.

Implication being, and he only says it in a couple places, right?

Implication being that Paul got it wrong, right?

That he looked at Genesis and interpreted Genesis in a wrong way.

While I'm stating this position bluntly here, that Paul got it wrong, it's not there.

There are people that we're bumping shoulders with that are making the argument Paul got it wrong in 1 Timothy.

All right, argument two.

Ephesus stood at, so argument two can kind of be summed up that Paul's addressing the Ephesian problem, or specifically Ephesian problem.

So Ephesus did stand as a bastion, or the argument is that Ephesus stood as a bastion for feminist supremacy, especially in the religion.

So Paul's just critiquing an Ephesian problem, or really he's just critiquing severe feminism, right?

So he's not saying that a mild form of feminism

that looks for equality in all spheres of life and all institutions is wrong.

Just severe feminism that would put like, especially women above men in all spheres is what he's really trying to critique.

There's problems with the logic of this argument, especially in the flow of Paul's thought.

However, we don't really need to address that.

I'll address that in a minute and for a different reason.

But the claim just isn't true.

So yes, the temple of Artemis, the Greek goddess, the Greek goddess Artemis was located in Ephesus.

But there's no evidence that Ephesus was more given to feminism than the rest of Rome.

So there were priestesses in the Temple of Artemis.

That was largely due to the fact that you worshiped Artemis in a sexual way, so that was necessary.

But there's no evidence that Ephesus had women magistrates or that wives played a different role even within the home or within Ephesus than the rest of Rome.

There's just no archeological evidence that feminism was a uniquely Ephesian thing or that Ephesus was any different than the rest of Rome in regards to how women related to men outside

of temple worship there at the Temple of Artemis.

Argument number three.

I've got to move a little bit quicker.

That Paul's saying that he's really addressing the abuse of authority.

He's not addressing the fact that women are an authority at all.

So the argument is that to exercise authority here doesn't mean lead positively.

It means to domineer and abuse authority over a man.

So in other words, Paul's saying,

I don't permit a woman to teach or to abusively use authority over a man.

They can have authority over men, but they just can't abuse authority over men.

So, you know, again, Paul's actually affirming women in leadership here.

It's okay for women to have authority over a man.

It's just not okay for them to abuse it.

The problem with this is grammatical.

Or here, which is *ude* in Greek,

is always used to compare things of like nature.

So it's not a contrast.

It's always used to compare things that are similar.

The word teaching here is never used negatively.

It's always used positively.

Teaching is always a positive thing, which would mean that exercising authority is a positive thing, not a negative.

So if he's using *ude* there, he's not comparing two different things of different natures.

He's comparing two things of like nature.

So it must be positive teaching and positive authority.

that they're similar in that way.

Argument four, here we go.

I do not permit indicates that Paul's giving a personal opinion here, right?

He says, I do not permit a woman to speak or exercise authority over a man.

So is Paul speaking personally about a temporary arrangement in the

The problem with this is that Paul speaks personally all the time to give universal and authoritative instruction all throughout his books.

He uses the first person to give commands and authoritative instructions, and he just did it in verse 8.

If you look up at verse 8, I desire that in every place the men should pray, lifting holy hands without anger or quarreling.

Likewise, women should adorn themselves with respectable apparel.

So yeah, Paul, given personal commands in the first person, we could go through a list in other books.

I'm just not going to do that right now.

Argument five, moving on, would be that women or woman means wives or wife, and therefore these instructions in particular are for the home only, not the church.

Again, the context doesn't support this.

Why would Paul be worried about

just a few verses earlier, about multiple men fighting in one home?

Or why would he be worried about what women are wearing in their own homes?

So the context is clearly the church right before this.

Also, as we saw before, chapter three, verse 15, the purpose statement for the book, Paul's writing so that people would know how to behave in the household of God, right?

Not necessarily in their own households, but in the household of God.

So that doesn't fit the context either.

Argument six, which is probably the one I hear the most, is that Galatians 3.28 trumps this passage.

So in Galatians 3.28, Paul writes, there's neither Jew nor Greek, there's neither slave nor free, there's neither male nor female, for you're all one in Christ Jesus.

So the reason Galatians doesn't trump this passage, there's two main reasons.

One, Paul wrote Galatians first, and then he wrote 1 Timothy.

So whatever Paul had in mind in Galatians, he was aware of what he wrote in Galatians when he wrote 1 Timothy.

So what he writes in 1 Timothy, obviously, is not in his mind contradicting what he had previously written in Galatians.

And secondly, these passages are compatible.

They're compatible in the same way that Genesis 1 and Genesis 2 are compatible.

You know, Genesis 1, male and female, he created them, right?

And, you know, God created man in his own image, male and female, he created them, indicating that

that we're equal, men and women are equal in worth and dignity and as human beings before the Lord.

But then in Genesis 2, we find out that we're made differently, right?

And that there was a different process that God used to make us differently.

I would say the same thing's going on here.

In Galatians 6, Paul's communicating that before the Lord, especially as brothers and sisters in Christ, we're equal in worth and dignity, equal in responsibility in how we stand before the Lord.

But that doesn't mean that we're exactly the same.

It doesn't mean that our biology isn't different, that we're not called to different roles, that we're not called to, that we're not even different as far as our proclivities go.

We'll talk about that more in a second.

But these passages are not incompatible.

They're compatible.

All right, so that's what Paul doesn't mean.

There's a short list there.

Pretty much any other argument that you're going to hear about this passage, why you can't take this passage at face value, is going to fall somewhere within those kind of six category arguments.

All right, but what is Paul saying in 11 through 12?

So if he's not saying that stuff, what is he saying?

Let me read it one more time, and then we'll take a closer look.

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.

So I've kind of broken this up into two because I think like verse 11 and 12 kind of parallel each other.

So Paul says that women are to learn quietly.

And he also says, I do not permit a woman to teach.

So what does Paul mean that a woman is to learn quietly and that she is to remain quiet?

Does this mean no talking for women at all in our services or anytime we gather together?

No, Paul clarifies what he means by learn quiet or what he means by quiet when he says, I do not permit a woman to teach.

Also, Paul and other New Testament authors instruct women to pray, to sing, to encourage, to speak the truth of love to one another, many other things that involve speaking together.

So Paul's not instructing here total silence in our corporate life together.

Rather, there's a quietness when the word is being taught, right?

When the word is being taught with authoritative instruction.

And we know that Paul has preaching and authoritative teaching here in mind, right?

So that he's got a specific type of teaching in mind because he couples teaching with exercising authority.

I'm not saying that they're the same thing.

I think they're distinct things, but you got to take the two of them together, right?

He couples them together for authority.

A reason.

So the kind of teaching that Paul has in mind is the explaining and the giving of the word that's done in preaching and in a regular Bible study that carries interpretive, this is the important part, that carries interpretive authority for the whole congregation, particularly over men.

So when we get up here and we preach the Bible and when we teach in Sunday school on a regular basis, when we hand over a Sunday school class to someone, we're largely entrusting them to explain what the text means for us, the congregation.

And yes, they're held accountable by the body based on the word.

So it's not just free reign, free authority.

There's accountability structures there.

but they're speaking on behalf of the church and for the church on what this text means, right?

Both in its interpretation and its application.

So Paul's not condemning women, instructing or correcting men in any format.

Women can be faithful to this instruction and teach women and children in the church.

They could teach men outside the context of the church, such in schools, I would argue seminaries, secular contexts,

And personally, and I'm not speaking for the elder board on this because we haven't talked about it, but personally, I'm comfortable with women teaching men in a Sunday school context under the authority of the elders with certain considerations.

So the considerations on my end would be two.

One, what's the subject?

It's difficult to impossible sometimes to teach certain subjects without exercising authority.

such as men's roles in the church and home, things like that.

So I would reserve that, certain subjects in certain contexts to men.

Also, I don't think it should be a regular indefinite class because by its fixed nature, you're teaching this class indefinitely.

It's your class.

We're going to say it's, you know, so-and-so's class that unavoidably carries a sense of authority with it.

So, for instance, at my dad's church, he, a lady, and another friend that they all got their MDivs together in counseling, came in, taught a class on counseling for, I think, eight weeks in the summer, eight or 12 weeks, and Linda, with my dad and Dan,

taught a couple of the sessions throughout those eight weeks.

Linda was instructing men at that time, but Linda and the content of the class, all of that was under the supervision of the elders.

So Linda's up there kind of speaking under the authority of the elders and within that context.

I'm personally okay with that.

So I understand that that's not going to be everybody's position, and I think we're open to discussion on that.

But all I'm trying to say here is that there is a line that we all have to draw, right?

So if you're gonna say teaching means teaching, period, it has nothing to do with the authority part, and women are never allowed to instruct men in a public context in the church,

Well, then I would argue like, okay, what constitutes public?

Because again, we have all of those other things that we're commanded to do together, speak the truth in love, to sing to one another, to pray, like all of these other things that we're to do that involve speaking and a degree of instruction, especially speaking the truth in love.

So if like two guys are in that conversation, is that too many?

Or three?

Or four?

Like, where's your line, right?

So

All I'm trying to say, I was just having this discussion with a brother the other day, and there is prayerful consideration that needs to go into where we draw the actual line when it comes to brass tacks and, you know, like boots on the ground.

What does this mean?

What are we allowed to do?

What are we not allowed to do?

All of that interpretation, I think, is done by the guidance of the Holy Spirit in prayer.

And it's no matter what position you take, you're going to have some of those decisions that you need to make.

All right, is that clear enough so far?

Moving on.

Paul's saying here, though, in summary, and he's prohibiting, I think pretty clearly, at least preaching and teaching in an authoritative context.

At least.

He may be prohibiting teaching, period, right?

With any instruction over men in the context of the church, I think that we can have a discussion about that.

But he's at least prohibiting preaching and teaching in an authoritative context.

He includes, as I said before, not just teaching, but he says with all submissiveness or exercise authority over a man.

I'm not going to take the time to go into the Greek here, but this is clearly pointing to holding the office of an elder or pastor.

Elders are to shepherd the flock.

They're to shepherd the flock as ones accountable for the believers that they care for.

One of the ways that they do this is by overseeing the church's life together.

Another word for an elder is an overseer.

primarily the church's doctrine and official beliefs or what they're overseeing, but also the day-to-day operations.

And Paul even says later here in 1 Timothy that elders that rule well are worthy of double honor.

He doesn't say elders that teach well or elders that shepherd well.

He says elders that rule well are worthy of double honor.

So those things, shepherding, teaching, overseeing, all of the other things that the elders are called to do involve a degree of authority.

It's not unilateral authority.

It's not unchecked authority.

There's, I'm not going into church polity, but there's structures in place, but there's authority there.

So what they do is with authority, therefore Paul's instruction is that women are not to teach or exercise authority over a man, particularly in the role of elder or pastor.

So why?

Why does he say this?

Not to teach or instruct with authority over a man, not to exercise authority over a man or be in a position of authority over a man.

Well, he gives the reason in verses 13 to 14.

For Adam was formed first, then Eve.

And Adam was not deceived, but the woman was deceived and became a transgressor.

So what's he saying here?

First, the clear thing is that there's intent in God's creation order.

That God did not create Adam and Eve the way that he did arbitrarily.

In verse 13, Paul's referring to Genesis 2, where Moses retells the creation story and how God formed man and woman in more detail.

And again, Paul's acknowledging that God doesn't do things arbitrarily.

And by the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, he interprets these details of the creation account in relation to our human nature.

He said Adam was made first, then Eve.

And in 1 Corinthians 11, Paul points out that Eve was made from Adam.

Adam was made out of the dust, and then Eve was formed from Adam, which indicates something, at least something, right?

I'm not gonna go into details as to all that it indicates.

We had a class about that.

But it indicates something about God's plan and purpose for gender roles and distinctions.

Again, I'm not gonna take a deep dive into all of these distinctions.

It's a little gray.

Takes some interpretive work within Scripture and some observation about men and women in general.

Not going to do that work this morning.

But we need to see that Paul repeatedly goes back in his writings to Genesis to defend gender roles specifically in marriage and in the church.

Gender roles in marriage and the church.

So essentially, Paul is saying that the role of elder, pastor, and teacher within the church is reserved for men, not because women are stupid or less capable of leading and teaching.

It's not about ability.

It's not about intelligence.

And it's not because women are inferior in worth and dignity.

Genesis 127 makes it really clear.

So God created man in his own image.

God created man in his own image.

In the image of God, he created him.

Male and female, he created them.

The Bible in Genesis 1 is clear that men and women are equal in worth and dignity, but Genesis 2 and passages like this clearly tell us that we're not the same.

We're not the same.

Equal in worth and dignity, but not identical.

God has made us, he's gifted us, he's equipped us differently, and he has assigned us different roles based on our sex.

I don't want to say more than that, but that's what he's saying here clearly, that certain roles within the family and within the church are based primarily on our sex or gender.

I'm personally fine using the word gender.

I know some people have a problem with it because it's been usurped in a lot of different ways these days.

I think we all know what we're talking about when we say gender, right?

Even though some people believe there's a spectrum.

God assigns roles based on our sex.

So honor and creation order is the main reason, right?

Honor and creation order and the way that God created us is the main reason that Paul reserves teaching and leading within the church for men.

Not some cultural context or a particular problem, but the main reason that this role is reserved for men goes back to creation.

But also, Paul points out the enemy's hatred of God's creation, right?

So he goes back to creation order, but then he goes back to the first sin and the first fall within that creation order.

So again, in verse...

14, and Adam was not deceived, but the woman was deceived and became a transgressor.

Paul's not saying that women are dumb and gullible, and the proof is that Eve was deceived.

What he's saying is that Satan's successful strategy that led to the breaking of God's one rule in the garden

was to attack and subvert God's creation order.

What led to the transgression was first a subversion of God's creation order.

The serpent, the devil, approached Eve and put her, had her, coaxed her into taking on the role of leader, leading Adam, who willingly submitted, Adam's not flawless here, obviously, who willingly submitted to break God's law.

It was Adam's responsibility to take the lead at that time, which he did not.

Again, we're not told the mechanics of why or how the reversal of creation order led to the breaking of God's command.

I think as soon as we start delving into, well, this is how Satan's approach and reversing the creation order led to Eve making this decision and Adam following, I think we're going to get into trouble and start speculating on things that we shouldn't.

But we're just told that that's what happened, right?

This is what happened.

Satan's approach, his strategy was to reverse the creation order to lead to sin and transgression here.

We're also told in Genesis 3 that it would continue to happen, right?

The second part of the curse pronounced on the woman in Genesis 3.16 was, your desire shall be for your husband or your desire shall be to be over your husband, right?

For your husband to dominate him.

and he shall rule over you.

So two abuses here, right?

The woman is going to buck against her role within creation, and the man is going to abuse his authority and his role within creation.

That's the curse, right?

These two bad things are going to be happening.

So Paul roots, again, his command for all churches everywhere.

You'll remember last week we set the table a

that Paul is talking about one God, one mediator between God and man, our unity within God and within that one mediator, so that he can launch off here into commands for all churches everywhere.

That's the context of the chapter.

He's talking to every church, regardless of culture or context, because we're unified under one God and one mediator.

And one of his commands within that, one of his rules for all churches everywhere is,

to honor creation order by not allowing a woman to teach or exercise authority over a man.

Now that's speaking negatively, right?

So Paul gives a negative command, do not do this.

But then he ends this little section here speaking positively by telling women, so he tells women what they can't do and then he tells women what they can do or what they ought to do based on reality here in verse 15.

It says, yet you'll be saved through childbearing if they continue in faith and love and holiness with self-control.

I'm not saying, I just want to get this up front.

It's not in my notes, but we should just get it up front.

Paul's not saying retreat to the kitchen and make lots of babies.

That's not exactly what he's saying.

He's saying to embrace your role, embrace your womanhood and what makes you unique as a woman.

So first off, what he's trying to point out here, what he is pointing out,

is that uniqueness or gender differences, gender uniquenesses, are not just spiritual.

He's already pointed out and made a command based on our uniquenesses spiritually.

So these roles that we have are indicators of,

of a unique spiritual calling that God gives based on gender.

Partly, that's one of the factors that God gives this call is gender is one of the factors there.

He's saying that that spiritual uniqueness is also linked with biology, right?

And biological uniqueness.

This is an oddly worded phrase, I'll be honest, right?

So again, let me read it one more time, even as oddly as it is.

Yet she shall be saved through childbearing if they continue in faith and love and holiness with self-control.

Being saved through childbearing, nobody can quite agree on what it exactly means.

But I think that the sense is pretty clear.

I

Save Through Childbearing points to the great parallel that happened, that while sin entered the world through Eve's deception and Adam's headship, salvation has come to us through Mary's conception and Christ's headship.

So literally, salvation came through a child born to Mary.

So there was real...

justifying salvation that came through childbirth.

However, Paul's pretty clearly speaking more generally about womanhood, right?

While that is a truth and a reality, Paul's talking generally about womanhood.

And I think the sense is that restoration, so there's a couple of ways to talk about salvation, right?

We could talk about salvation being made right with God or justification that happens at a point in time.

I go from being God's enemy to being made right with God.

And then there's salvation that is, I'm being saved from my sinful old flesh, right?

It's called sanctification, where I'm being progressively made more into God's image.

And then there's salvation that's called glorification, when all of that is finally complete, right?

When I stand before God, perfect, holy, no more sin.

When Paul uses the word salvation in the pastoral epistles, more often than not, he's got sanctification in mind.

So yes, he's talking about being made right with God a little bit, but he's more talking about us being saved out of a way of life to a holy way of life.

So when he says saved here, that she'll be saved through childbearing, I think he has more in mind, especially because he links it with if they continue in faith and love and holiness and self-control, I think he has more in mind here are sanctification or women's sanctification.

And he's saying that salvation or restoration for women is found in embracing your distinctness as a woman, not continuing to run away from it.

Again, the curse is to, I don't want to be who God made me to be.

I want to be like the man, and I want to have that role.

I want to have that responsibility.

I want to have that authority, and I want to get away from this role of submission and everything that comes with it, which includes bearing children and the responsibility and the great blessing, but also the burden that it is.

Why do you think?

that our society is just running, running away from having kids, right?

And bearing kids.

And you just, even talking with doctors recently, you know, they were remarking, remarking at how, how, how healthy nuns were and how healthy their hearts were.

And they're just joking around like, oh, no kids, you know, no responsibility, no burden, you know, like, and so like, just,

The way we view these great gifts and distinctiveness, distinctions, right, that God has given us.

And we just want to run away from it, flatten the curve, make everything the same.

And that's part of the curse, right?

It's part of the curse.

And what Paul's saying here is move, lean into those distinctions.

both biologically and spiritually.

Don't run away from them.

Lean into the role that God's called you to play.

Lean into the body that God gave you.

Lean into those things.

Don't run away from them.

And actually, restoration and renewal will come to you as you lean into those distinctions.

Men, that goes for you too.

It's really easy for us to just give up our role.

as head in the home, our responsibility even here in church and to run away from the role that God has called us to play and to shirk responsibility and just give responsibility away.

All right, spiritually, ontologically speaking, God has made women, again, generally speaking, more relationally inclined and given them the support, the role of support and the role of helper in the home and in the church,

which can look differently in many different contexts.

Again, we had a whole class on this.

I'm not going to go into details of what that does and doesn't mean.

We're not looking to go back to the 50s, right?

That's not what we're talking about.

I don't think Paul necessarily has in mind the 50s.

There were things wrong with that idea of headship and submission as well.

But whatever Paul means by this exactly, we know that this idea of childbearing, right?

She'll be saved through childbearing, is subservient to continuing in faith, love, holiness, and self-control.

That's the most important part, right?

But he's saying, lean into your distinctiveness as you pursue and as you continue in faith, love, holiness, and self-control.

Again, I think Paul points out these physical and spiritual distinctions, right?

to just remind us and to show us that teaching and nurturing aren't all that different.

I'm not going to tell you they're the same.

I feel like that would be insulting.

I'm not going to say that they're the same, but they're not as different as they appear on the surface, and I think that's worth pointing out.

Teaching and leading God's church and leading in the home is a way for some men who are called to be fathers and husbands and who are called to be elders within the church, a way for some men to exercise our gifts to serve others by helping them grow and passing on the faith.

Similarly,

Bearing and nurturing children is a way for some women to exercise their gifts to serve others by helping them grow and passing on the faith.

Listen, there's a deep desire in all of us to serve and to pass on what God has given.

And God has called us to do this in different ways and capacities.

And what Paul's saying here is that one of the factors when trying to determine how God is calling us

To do that, to pass on the faith and to serve others is our gender.

It is a factor in how he has called us to do it.

I'm not gonna, yeah, I'm not gonna say that.

We need to get to the so what here real quick.

We went way back to the beginning.

God's creation order is honored in the church when women defer teaching and exercising authority to men and embrace their unique ability to bear and nurture children.

Hopefully you can hear some of the nuance in that now.

But I just want to give two so what's.

I want to give two so what's.

I got it.

First, just because the role of teaching the whole congregation with interpretive authority is reserved for men doesn't mean that we don't need women trained in studying and teaching the Bible.

I was just listening to a podcast put out by our denomination meant to equip women for pastoral service and leadership.

And one of the first things they talked about in the beginning was how all they heard growing up in church was you can be a missionary, you can serve the potlucks, and there was really a demeaning tone towards those things that I don't want to take here.

But also there was this sense that they never felt

called or challenged or felt like it was communicated that being able to handle the word of God, to be able to exegete it for yourself and explain it to others was important for women.

And I just want to say right up front, it is incredibly important.

If we're to speak the truth and love to one another, which each of us is called to do, we need to be able to feed ourselves from the word.

We need to be able to exegete the word and understand the word for ourselves and bring that to bear in an applicational way on other people.

I would be lost if it wasn't for a lot of the women that were in my life up to this point and are currently in my life who talk to me about,

flaws that they're seeing in my life, speaking scripture into my life.

Timothy was taught by his mom and his grandmother leading up to his pastoral role.

There's a great, great, great need for all of us, women included, to know our Bibles well and to be able to speak that truth in whatever context God calls us to faithfully and well.

So I want to say that right up front.

Do not hear from Paul today or from me today that while this specific role of eldering and teaching with interpretive authority is reserved for men, that doesn't mean that you don't need to know your scripture and be able to teach and communicate and instruct and speak the truth and love to others well.

We need that.

And I would say, too, that while preaching is biblical, Paul tells Timothy to preach the word, right?

That's the one thing you gotta do.

While this is really important, what I'm doing up here, at least...

at least of equal importance, if not more importance, is that the truth is being communicated amongst yourselves in love.

If we're not communicating the truth and love to one another through confronting one another, through encouraging one another, through praying for one another in small groups, in one-on-one meetings over coffee, in Bible studies, if we're not doing that, we will not grow.

We won't.

I could say a ton of stuff up here, a lot of great stuff.

We will not grow if that word's not being communicated amongst ourselves.

So don't sell that role short.

Don't sell that role short.

Lastly, this issue is worth leaving our denomination over, and I just want to share briefly why.

We'll talk about this a little bit more at the business meeting on the 22nd.

But currently our denomination, Converge, allows its churches to ordain women and recognize, so they allow churches to ordain women and they recognize them as ordained pastors that they support with resources specific to women in pastoral ministry.

So I have to say that in a nuanced way because Converge has, we'll speak generously here, has nuanced things in such a way that it's hard to get a clear statement from them one way or the other.

But yeah, we have churches within our regional group, none here in Jamestown that I'm aware of, but churches within our regional group that, again, are producing resources for women in pastoral roles, claim to be in a pastoral role, but then when you go to their church website, it'll have a title like communications director or something, which is a little confusing.

Again, we could talk more about this at the business meeting.

But that's where, talking with our regional reps, the one thing that we will say clearly as a denomination is that we're allowing churches to do this within the denomination.

So,

Again, is this an issue worth breaking financial and ministerial partnership over?

I would argue yes, right?

In order to allow women to teach and exercise authority over men in the church, you must ignore scripture that is written on the basis of other scripture.

You've got to ignore a clear teaching or, to speak a little bit more generously, do some interpretive gymnastics to get around those of which I described earlier, to get around this clear command by Paul, which is given based on Genesis and other scripture.

You must also ignore how the vast majority of the church for the past 2,000 years has understood this passage.

I think Harold O.J.

Brown makes a good point here.

He says, when opinions and convictions suddenly undergo dramatic alteration, he's referring to the fact that there were no academic journals reinterpreting this passage prior to the 60s.

Again, doesn't mean that it wasn't happening in little pockets here and there.

But this just was not an issue and not a point up until the 60s.

And he says, 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 the spirit has had an important role to play in the shift.

It's well documented that when a denomination compromises its hermeneutics in this way,

It's a very small step to compromise them in similar ways again.

Very, very well documented.

Not all denominations have done this, I'm not saying that, but by and large, most of them have.

Talked to the Methodist Church, United Methodist Church most recently, but PCUSA, I could list a ton.

Not gonna do it right now.

But I think the one that hits most closely to home is the United Methodist Church.

We must let the scripture shape and define our life together.

If the scriptures do not have freedom or the authority to shape and define our life together, regardless of how countercultural that makes us look, regardless of whether or not this makes us feel isolationist, Amish, whatever, if the scriptures aren't calling the shots, culture will.

And it's really not, there's no middle ground there.

It's either the scripture defines who we are and what we do or what pleases us based on what's most comfortable will and that's dictated by the culture.

We

We turn to the scriptures for our instruction here because it's all we have, right?

All we have is Christ and his word and his authority given to us through the scriptures.

And there is beauty within these roles.

I don't want to apologize for them.

I don't want to make excuses for them.

I think when things are working well, right, when a husband leads his family well, and a wife joyfully submits to his leadership, and when elders lead their churches well without abusing that authority, and the congregation joyfully submits to their leadership, you know, the Psalms say that that kind of leadership is like...

It's like the dawning of the morning sun.

It's a beautiful, beautiful thing that's good for everyone involved.

And we see that most beautifully exercised and we see that most beautifully displayed even within the Godhead.

We see that Christ submitting himself to the will of the Father

following the Father's plan, even though they're equal in worth and dignity, and displaying his glory and his majesty as Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

And it's our goal and it's our intention to follow faithfully to the instructions he's given us, but also that model that we see in him as well.

Let's pray.

Heavenly Father, I just ask that everything that I said today would be an accurate reflection of what you have communicated through Paul here in 1 Timothy.

Lord, I pray in the coming days and weeks that as we look to act on what we see here,

And we look to be faithful to what we believe you're leading us in, Lord, that you would communicate clearly through your spirit as you have through your word.

And Lord, that you would lead, guide, and direct us for your glory and for our good.

We pray all this in Jesus' name.

Amen.