

INTRODUCTION / REVIEW

Paul is writing to Timothy, left in Ephesus to confront the turmoil stirred by false teachers. It's around AD 62-67, after Paul's release from Roman imprisonment, and he pens a letter rich in guidance for church order and conduct; a letter preserved to help us discover God's desires for a local church.

Last time we left off in the middle of an uncomfortable conversation. We already discovered that the instruction to women in verses 9 and 10 was in relation to the world:

- Dress Modestly, with Decency and Propriety
- Not with Elaborate Hairstyles
- Not with Gold or Pearls
- Not with Costly Garments
- But with Good Deeds

These instructions were to combat the cultural shift in Ephesus where the women were highlighting influence and promiscuity through dress, hairstyles, and adornment. The believing women who were “announcing their godliness” was to separate themselves from the culture and be a positive behavioral witness for the Gospel.

WOMEN (2:11-15)

In verses 11 through 15 we see women being instructed in the function within the assembly.

Verse 11 – We explored this last week and concluded that the vocabulary does not mean women must remain silent in the assembly. Instead, it calls them to learn in peace from those responsible for teaching.

Verse 12 – I do not allow a woman to teach or exercise authority over a man. But to remain quiet. The same word for quiet is used here as it was in verse 11 and verse 2.

“διδάσκω *didaskō*” – Provide instruction, first they were in need of instruction from verse 11 and there is a responsibility given to men in the instruction of doctrine.

“αὐθεντέω *authenteō*” – To exercise authority, often with nuances of "domineer," "control," or "assume authority." Etymologically, it stems from *authentēs* (master). Lexicons vary: BDAG suggests "assume independent authority, give orders to"; Louw-Nida indicates "control in a domineering manner"; Liddell-Scott means "have full power over"; and Friberg conveys "have control over, lord it over." In Kione Greek, it carries a forceful connotation (domineer, control).

1 Timothy Lesson 7

1 Timothy 2:11-15 – Women Part 2

A fitting translation: "But I do not permit a woman to teach or to domineer over a man; rather, she is to be in quietness, tranquility, and peace."

What emerges is that the believing women in Ephesus needed guidance to follow proper, gender-specific roles in the assembly. The basis for this instruction lies in the created order and the Fall (13-14). Paul references the Hebrew Scriptures: Adam was created first, and Eve's deception warns that proper instruction helps avoid deception, aligning with God's prescribed order for the church.

The main focus in this section is to correct the character of male and female believers in the assembly. The broader context suggests the cultural movement was in opposition to God's order, particularly women's disposition when receiving doctrinal information from elders.

Is this still applicable today? There are three reasons that this injunction is not for them alone but is applicable for all assemblies.

1. The basis is in the created order and the fall.
2. All passages concerning Pastoral/Eldership responsibilities are about men, with additional information given to women (1 Timothy 3:11; Titus 2:3-5)
3. Women have a specific responsibility in the rearing of children and teaching of younger women.

What does this injunction not mean? Many people have taken this injunction coupled with a poor understanding of the context to mean various things, let's observe what this passage, or any other passage is not saying.

- This is only for the local assembly; this does not extend to society.
- This is not about vocation.
- This is not for the family.
- This is not a prohibition to teach at all.
- Women are not forbidden from holding responsibilities, sing, ask questions, contribute doctrinal points, assist, advise, or pray.
- This is not about ability.

Verse 15 – Women will be preserved through the bearing of children...

"Preserved" translates *sōzō* (σώζω), meaning "saved" or "kept safe." But saved from what? The context suggests women in Ephesus sought greater participation in the assembly. This "salvation" refers to their preservation and flourishing *in the local assembly*."

“Childbearing” is not about having babies but about *raising children*. Women, as primary caregivers, are responsible for teaching young children doctrine, self-sacrificial love, separation from the world, and sound-mindedness. By fulfilling this role, and modeling it, they fulfill their primary role in the church.

For a quick note on 1 Corinthians 14:34-35: This parallel injunction fits the context of orderly activity in the assembly during tongues and prophecy, where formal teaching occurs. It reinforces, rather than contradicts, our understanding here.

FOCUS ON THE POSITIVES, NOT THE NEGATIVES

In Scripture, women are not background characters. They are *integral* to history and God’s plan. Here are key examples:

Old Testament Heroines

- The Hebrew midwives defied Pharaoh’s command to kill infants (Exodus 1).
- Jochebed (Moses' mother) courageously hid her son in the Nile basket, preserving the future deliverer of Israel (Exodus 2).
- Miriam led in song after the Red Sea escape (Exodus 15).
- Rahab risked everything to protect God’s people (Joshua 2).
- Deborah judged Israel and worked with Barak to deliver the nation from the Canaanites; Jael infiltrated and killed the enemy general (Judges 4-5).
- Ruth and Bathsheba were instrumental in the line of Jesus (Ruth 4; 2 Samuel 11-12; Matthew 1).
- Abigail intervened with wisdom and diplomacy to avert bloodshed, protecting her household and influencing David toward righteousness (1 Samuel 25).
- Huldah served as a prophetess whose interpretation sparked King Josiah's reforms and revival in Judah (2 Kings 22:14-20).
- Esther positioned herself with great courage and political savvy to preserve the Diaspora Jews (Esther 4-7).

New Testament Heroines

- The Samaritan woman proclaimed the Messiah to her city (John 4).
- Joanna and Susanna made significant contributions to Jesus’ ministry (Luke 8).
- Mary and Martha professed bold faith in Jesus as the Resurrection and the Life during their brother's death, then prepared a feast honoring him as Messiah (John 11-12).

1 Timothy Lesson 7

1 Timothy 2:11-15 – Women Part 2

- It was women who first saw and testified to the Resurrection of Jesus (Matthew 28; Mark 16; Luke 24; John 20).
- Priscilla taught theology alongside her husband (Acts 18).
- Lydia used her resources to support the Gospel (Acts 16).
- Phoebe, a servant and benefactor, likely delivered and explained Paul's letter to the Romans, advancing the early church's mission (Romans 16:1-2).

These women remind us: God uses women in a variety of ways. Women also have an instrumental part in the local church.