

## **1 Timothy 2:8-15** **The Timeless God Versus Modern Culture**

Cherry picking WODs, cherry picking the Bible.

- avoid the ones you're not good at, avoid the ones that are difficult

Does Scripture have authority in your life? Can God, through His Word, tell you what to do and what not to do? Or, does whatever the Bible says have to pass through your filter and withstand your evaluation?

Let me put it bluntly so we can get it all out on the table and deal with it plainly – if you disagree with something the Bible CLEARLY says, who is wrong? The Bible, or you?

You have to answer that question and the way you answer it will determine the shape of your relationship with God.

The Bible claims to have authority.

**2 Timothy 3:16** “All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work.”

**2 Peter 1:20-21** “...no prophecy of Scripture is of any private interpretation, for prophecy never came by the will of man, but holy men of God spoke as they were moved by the Holy Spirit.”

It also includes the words of Jesus – God Himself. It's what He said; it's what He wanted us to know.

Now some of those words are comforting, they provide us with hope and promises. But the Bible isn't just one big love letter; it also contains corrections – things in our lives that need to change.

**Jer 23:29** “Is not My word like a fire?” says the LORD, “And like a hammer *that* breaks the rock in pieces?”

**Hebrews 4:12** For the word of God *is* living and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the division of soul and spirit, and of joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.

And that's where the problem comes – it's easy to pull out a highlighter and go marking up the verses that we agree with. Anyone, ANYONE, of ANY religious or even anti-religious background can find SOMETHING in the Bible that they could put on a bumper sticker and slap on their car. They can find something in there that they agree with.

But what about the things you disagree with? How do you handle that?

Let me come back to my earlier question if you disagree with something the Bible CLEARLY says, who is wrong? The Bible, or you?

Before you answer that, let me point something out - the Bible has said the same thing for thousands of years.

You and I on the other hand, change our minds and convictions every couple of years. We've all thought we were really sure about something, absolutely positive, at some point only to find out later that we were totally wrong. Or to have our attitude shift due to education or experience. You can spend most of your life saying "I would never" or "I will always" and then something happens and we find ourselves changing our mind or willing to compromise.

My point is this - if you disagree with something you find in the Bible, you should probably listen to the Scriptures, because they don't change. That's because the Bible was written *by* God *through* men, and He is the only One with absolutely perfect knowledge and authority.

He gave us the Bible so we would have access to truth - so that we could understand why the world is the way it is and what the world is coming to. And that includes our place in it individually. The Bible doesn't just give us the big picture it also zooms up close and takes a look at our hearts.

This divine authorship gives the Bible its authority - the Bible has authority because it is the Word OF God. The Word FROM God. So, when we're talking about your response to the Bible, we're also talking about your response to God. So, are you under His authority?

You have to answer that question BEFORE you come to controversial subjects. And there will always be controversial subjects.

Two of the most violent collisions between human opinion and the Bible today occur in the arenas of homosexuality and the role of women. But what I'm trying to tell you is, that although these are the hot button issues of today - issues that attract a lot of attention and make people really passionate, some of you might be getting worked up right now - at the roots, it's not about your sexual preference or your view of women, it's about your view of authority - could God authoritatively tell you something you disagree with and expect you to change?

Even those of us who think we hold, "Good, conservative, moral values and traditional views of gender and family" still need to face this issue of authority because no matter who you are, God's Word says something you don't like, or don't want to accept, or want to ignore.

You see, the same Bible that says Homosexuality is wrong says it's wrong for you to look at someone other than your spouse with lust. The same Bible that says sex between two

people of the same sex is wrong, says sex between two people, even two engaged people, outside of marriage is wrong.

The same Bible that talks about the role of women talks about the role of men, the role of employees, the role of employers, the roles of children and friends.

Paul is going to lay out some criteria here in chapter two for women, but then in the very next chapter he's going to lay out criteria for the leadership of the church.

You just can't escape it – through the Bible, God is confronting you with His authority and you have two choices – you can accept it or you can reject it.

But before you reject it, or if you have rejected it, can I share with you why you might want to reverse your course? Remember that God is good. The Bible, if you can accept it, says that He is love. And that He desires good for us, **if** we will return and submit to Him.

He took on flesh and bone and hung from a cross on a dusty hill outside of Jerusalem because He wanted to be able to forgive your rebellion. And now He promises, not only forgiveness, but comfort, wisdom, and strength for all that you face day by day until He calls you home to enter into His kingdom and riches for ever.

His motives toward you are excellent and pure. I've said before and I hope you'll memorize this "Sin isn't bad because it's forbidden, it's forbidden because it is bad." IOW, everything that God says no to, He says no to for a reason. He's trying to protect you from something that will harm you, even if it seems good for a moment.

So will you trust Him?

It's important that we keep this understanding of Who God is, and our need to submit to Him in mind as we move forward and look at the rest of this chapter.

[8](#) I desire therefore that the men pray everywhere, lifting up holy hands, without wrath and doubting;

Paul kicks it all off with an admonition to the men – that they need to be in prayer. Women, typically, are the more spiritually in tune of the two. Women tend to attend church more than men, and sometimes they rise up into leadership simply because there are no willing or able men around to do the job.

So Paul says, the men ought to be there, and they ought to be praying. And they ought to be doing it without wrath – no fighting or arguing about all kinds of stuff, and without doubt.

And then he turns toward the women and he addresses four issues: Appearance, Learning, Teaching, and Salvation.

The first is appearance. [9](#) in like manner also, that the women adorn themselves in modest apparel, with propriety and moderation, not with braided hair or gold or pearls or costly clothing, [10](#) but, which is proper for women professing godliness, with good works.

Here's the question you need to address: what do you want to be known for? How you look, or who you are?

Peter says something very similar in **1 Peter 3: 3** Do not let your adornment be *merely* outward—arranging the hair, wearing gold, or putting on *fine* apparel— [4](#) rather *let it be* the hidden person of the heart, with the incorruptible *beauty* of a gentle and quiet spirit, which is very precious in the sight of God.

Ladies, the question you have to wrestle with is: what will be the source of your beauty? Will it be the things you put on, or the things that come out of you?

What do you want to be known for?

- what you are trying to attract attention to affects who you attract

Men – what are you looking for?

- attraction is important, and it should be there, but more than that, you want a godly woman.
  - o Looks fade with time, Look your best on your wedding day
  - o Godliness grows – she will either start looking worse or better

Stewardship

- focusing on appearance consumes time and resources “costly clothing” that might be spent in other ways
- concern for appearance may keep you from some ministry opportunities - are there places you're not willing to go, or things you're not willing to do because you might get dirty or messed up?

[11](#) Let a woman learn in silence with all submission.

- Let her learn was a revolutionary command – Christians have always valued the education of women.
- Silence means decently and in order – as they were exposed to new learning they probably had all kinds of questions. They needed to hold these until the appropriate time and place and not interrupt the service.
- It wasn't like these liberated women were coming into the church from the culture and being silenced, they were being liberated in the church but it needed to be done properly
  - o Elsewhere Paul talks about women praying in the congregation

[12](#) And I do not permit a woman to teach or to have authority over a man, but to be in silence. [13](#) For Adam was formed first, then Eve. [14](#) And Adam was not deceived, but the woman being deceived, fell into transgression.

- most disputed verses in the New Testament – whole books have been written on these verses. BIG books.
  - Was it a temporary, cultural command, or a general command for all time
  - Argument is based in creation – God created man first and appointed him as head
    - Testimony of history seems to agree
  - Implication – women are only restricted from the single role of being the pastor of a church – that role is reserved for men
    - It has nothing to do with her love for God, or her knowledge of Scripture, it is God’s design
    - Men cannot bear children, no matter how much they might want to
    - Precedent of the choice of Israel over other nations
    - Precedent of priests in OT, Levites and Aaronic High Priests

[15](#) Nevertheless she will be saved in childbearing if they continue in faith, love, and holiness, with self-control.

- Another REALLY difficult verse to interpret
- Possibilities - Physical or Spiritual salvation/what child?
  - Spiritual salvation through actual childbirth?
    - No, what about those who cannot give birth
  - Salvation from physical pain or death in childbirth?
    - No, godly women have died in childbirth
  - Salvation/sanctification through child rearing – relishing the mother’s role
    - It’s definitely a sanctifying experience, it does bring joy, but does that mean she cannot work outside the house? I don’t think so.
  - Spiritual salvation through The Childbirth – Jesus came through woman and didn’t have to. Shows women are not cursed or rejected.
    - Like Jesus coming to Peter after His resurrection to show Peter’s denial had been forgiven

All of this is difficult stuff – which is why I started us off asking the question, what has the final editorial cut in my life? Do I get to edit Scripture to line up with what I want, or does God, through Scripture get to change me to line up with what He wants?

Even if you’re totally fine with the stuff we looked at this morning – there is something in this book that cuts against you. And when you come up against it, you’re going to have to have to decide – will I change the meaning of the Scripture, or will I let the Scripture change me?

It doesn't have to be an either/or proposition, you can have some nice jewelry and you can do your hair, but which is more important, and what do you want to be known for - what you have, or who you are?

If you want to be known by your appearance you're going to be chasing a moving target because here's the trick - physical beauty is subjective. Some people think short is attractive, others like tall.

Short hair, long hair?  
Blonde, Red, Brown, Black?  
Straight, curly?  
How thin is too thin? How big is too big?  
White? Black? Latino? Asian?  
"high maintenance" or "down home?"

It's all a matter of preference and cultural influence. And it's an ever moving, ever changing target. So whose definition are you going to accept? Who are you seeking approval from? Who needs to tell you you look good in order for you to feel good about yourself?

Let me point out something else here - you will be known for, and you will attract, based on what you display. If you constantly wear clothes that display a particular curve on your body, you will attract those who are looking for those curves.

You see, you have to ask - what foot am I putting forward? Do I want to get noticed for my curves and then hopefully show that I'm a nice person too? That might work, but the filter is kind of inefficient because not everyone who is attracted to how you look is also going to be attracted to who you really are on the inside.

So it's best to use wisdom when considering how you want to look and what you want to wear. You probably don't want all the attention that you are capable of getting.

But you what never goes out of style?

Loyalty. Honesty. Kindness. Faithfulness. Godliness.

All of that stuff that comes out of the inside, all that stuff that is produced by a heart made right with God. And that stuff doesn't fade, it doesn't go out of style. It doesn't get holes in it and have to be replaced.

And yet, Rev 21: [1](#) Now I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away. Also there was no more sea. [2](#) Then I, John, [\[fn1\]](#) saw the holy city, New Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband.

Definition of beauty

“It is the excess and sensuality that the items connote that Paul forbids, not braids, gold, pearls, or even costly garments in and of themselves.”<sup>1</sup>

Importance for men

Stewardship – time and resources, places you’re not willing to go because you might get dirty or messed up – me in Haiti, first place we go is to an orphanage, I hold a girl and she pees all over me.

You also have to keep in mind the setting in which this was originally written – most of society was poor – they lived very simple lives. Not just the early Jews and Christians, but all throughout the Roman Empire, you were pretty much either a “have” or a “have not.” We learn a lot about what Paul is talking about here from historical studies of the day. It was rich people, the courtesans, and prostitutes who dressed like this. Only they had enough money to afford to have their hair done in ornate styles, only they could afford gold jewelry, and only they could afford nice clothes.

Authority of Scripture

Role of Men

Appearance/Apparel/What is beauty?

Learning in Silence

No Teaching

Because of Eve

Salvation through Childbirth

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qhib8XiDc9Y&feature=related>

<http://abcnews.go.com/GMA/video/cassandra-banksons-makeup-tips-tricks-cover-severe-acne-15094910>

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<sup>1</sup> Knight, NIGCT, *The Pastoral Epistles*, 136.