

The Role of Women

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Introduction:

- I. The Nineteenth Amendment to the Constitution of the United States is very simple in its wording: “The right of citizens of the United States to vote shall not be denied or abridged by the United States or by any State on account of sex. Congress shall have power to enforce this article by appropriate legislation.”
 - A. It passed both the House of Representatives and the Senate in the summer of 1919.
 - B. On August 18, 1920, the Tennessee General Assembly, by a one-vote margin became the thirty-sixth state legislature to ratify the Nineteenth Amendment, making it a part of the U.S. Constitution.
- II. The Nineteenth Amendment had been a long time coming.
 - A. Women’s suffrage first started in Europe, perhaps as early as the Mid-Eighteenth Century.
 - B. By the Mid-Nineteenth century there was more than one internal war lurking on the horizon in this country.
 1. The issues of State’s Rights and Slavery were raging, ultimately resulting in the Civil War.
 2. But women like Elizabeth Cady Stanton, Lucy Stone, and Susan B. Anthony were fighting on another front.
 - C. It took 144 years from the founding of this country for women to gain the right to vote.
- III. Women and their role in society remains a hot topic in our country and across the world.
 - A. Anyone who takes a domestic view of the role of women is likely to be excoriated and “tarred and feathered” both from without the church and, sometimes, even from within.
 - B. In general, though it hasn’t been totally ignored, I believe that this subject has certainly not been discussed as openly and widely as other critical issues of our day.
- IV. Women have played a major role in the Bible.
 - A. In the Old Testament.
 1. Time would fail me to tell of the righteous contributions of women like Sarah, Miriam, Deborah, Ruth, Hannah, and Esther.
 2. Evil women have also been of influence – Women such as Potiphar’s wife, Jezebel, and Athaliah.
 - B. In the New Testament.
 1. The importance of women in the Bible story is seen in that no less than five women are mentioned in the genealogy of Jesus – Tamar, Rahab, Ruth, Bathsheba, and Mary (Mt 1:1-16).
 2. Women played a significant role in the life of Jesus.
 - a. There is obviously Mary, his mother, and Elizabeth the mother of John, along with Mary and Martha of Bethany.

- b. Other named women include Mary Magdalene, Joanna, and Susanna, “and many others who were contributing to their support out of their private means” (Lk 8:2-3).
 - c. Besides these, there are unnamed women of significance – Peter’s mother-in-law (Mt 8:14-15), the woman Jesus healed of a hemorrhage (Mt 9:20-22), and who can forget the Samaritan woman (Jn 4).
3. Other women played a significant role in the early church – Dorcas (Ac 9:36-42), Lydia (Ac 16:14-15), Priscilla (Ac 18:26), and Phoebe (Rm 16:1).
- C. In the life of Timothy women played a major role. It was his mother and grandmother who set his feet on higher ground by teaching him from childhood the stories of Abraham, Moses, and David.
- D. I want nothing I say in this lecture to take away from the lofty role that women have and do serve in the kingdom of God.
- V. My task is to talk about the role of women as presented to us in the pastorals. Particularly, I intend to focus on three passages —1Tm 2:11-15, 1Tm 5:14 and Ti 2:3-5.

Body:

I. 1 Timothy 2:11-12

A. The context:

1. Written for the purpose of showing Timothy “how one ought to conduct himself in the household of God” (1Tm 3:15).
 - a. **Patton:** “This has no reference to the building in which saints assemble, nor to proper conduct therein. Rather it refers to obedient believers – members of the spiritual body of Christ, which is his church. These instructions have to do with the proper behavior of saints individually as they carry on the work of the church” (Patton, 85).
2. Timothy was given instruction dealing with false teachers (1Tm 1:3-11).
3. Paul addressed the need for grace and mercy, using himself as an example (1Tm 1:12-17).
4. Then he urged Timothy to “fight the good fight” of faith; a fight in which some had suffered “shipwreck in regard to their faith” (1Tm 1:18-20).
5. Paul addresses the subject of prayer, particularly that “men” (males) are to lift up holy hands in prayer (1Tm 2:1-8).
6. It is at this point that Paul turns to the role of women (1Tm 2:9-15).

B. **The matter of modesty (1Tm 2:9-10)**

1. This woman’s adornment was to be such “*as is proper for women making a claim to godliness*” (2:10).
2. “Adorn” is from the Greek *kosmeo*
 - a. **BDAG:** “1. to put in order so as to appear neat or well organized, make neat/tidy; 2. to cause someth. to have an attractive appearance through decoration, adorn, decorate” (560).

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- b. It is the word from which we get the terms *cosmos*, *cosmetology*, *cosmetic* used in Mt. 23:29; Lk 21:5; Ti 2:10; Rv 21:2.
 - c. Note that adornment as such is not condemned, but enjoined (*cf.* Prov. 31:22), and that adornment involves orderliness.
3. “*With proper clothing*” is from the Greek *en katastole kosmio*
- a. Literally, the phrase means, *in clothing that is becoming*; particularly with regard to her station as a Christian. It denotes being orderly, well arranged, decent, modest.
 - b. The adjective that describes *clothing* here is used with reference to the *behavior* of an elder in 1 Tim. 3:2, i.e., respectable (NASB95).
4. “*Modestly*” is from *aidos*
- a. **BDAG**: “1. Modesty of women;... 2) Reverence, respect” (25-26).
 - b. **Vine**: “‘a sense of shame, modesty,’ is used regarding the demeanor of women in the church, 1 Tim. 2:9 (some mss. have it in Heb. 12:28 for deos, ‘awe’: here only in NT). Shamefastness is that modesty which is ‘fast’ or rooted in the character” (Vine, 2: 568).
 - c. It may be more literally and better translated in the ASV as “*shamefastness*”.
 - d. “*Modestly*” involves a sense of shame, a sense of shame that is not merely external but is rooted deep within the character; a moral abhorrence of doing anything disgraceful, an inner reserve. It involves proper behavior, and in this case proper clothing that is held fast or firm by a sense of shame (*cf.* Gn 24:64-65).
5. “*Discreetly*” is from *sophrosune*
- a. **BDAG**: “1. gener. soundness of mind, reasonableness, rationality... 2. practice of prudence, good judgment, moderation, self-control as exercise of care and intelligence appropriate to circumstances” (987).
 - b. **Vine**: “denotes ‘soundness of mind’ ... Acts 26:25, “soberness”; 1 Tim. 2:9, 15, “sobriety”; “sound judgment” practically expresses the meaning; “it is that habitual inner self-government, with its constant rein on all the passions and desires, which would hinder the temptation to these from arising, or at all events from arising in such strength as would overbear the checks and barriers which *aidos* (shamefastness) opposed to it” (2:583).
 - c. Our English word *discreet* means being “careful and prudent in one’s speech or actions, especially so as to avoid giving offense or attracting attention.”
 - d. *Discreetness produces a balance* in one’s dress.
6. “*Not with braided hair or gold or pearls or costly clothing.*”
- a. The idea is not that outward adornment, however nice it may be, is wrong *absolutely*, but that, in *comparison* to the adornment of good works, it is of lower priority and lesser importance.
 - b. For the Christian, the adornment of good works should be a matter of much greater concern — it is obviously of more fundamental significance than the other.
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- c. What is condemned here is the idea of excess and ostentation. Contrast Ezekiel 16:10-14 with Isaiah 3:16-26.
7. The point to 1 Timothy 2:9-10 is that there is both an *attitude, behavior, and dress* that is “*proper* (fitting, seemly, suitable, becoming) *for women making a claim to godliness.*”
8. Women who seek to follow God’s counsel in their attitude, behavior, and dress, will do so wherever they go – inside or outside the assembly.

C. The matter of submissiveness (1Tm 2:11).

1. Translations:
 - a. NASB95: A woman must quietly receive instruction with entire submissiveness.
 - b. ASV: Let a woman learn in quietness with all subjection.
 - c. KJV: Let the woman learn in silence with all subjection.
 - d. NKJV: Let a woman learn in silence with all submission.
 - e. ESV: Let a woman learn quietly with all submissiveness.
 - f. NIV: A woman should learn in quietness and full submission.
 - g. LEB: A woman must learn in quietness with all submission.
2. “Receive instruction” is from *manthano*
 - a. **Vine:** “denotes (a) “to learn” (akin to mathetes, “a disciple”), “to increase one’s knowledge,” or “be increased in knowledge,” frequently “to learn by inquiry, or observation,” (2:361).
 - b. **BDAG:** “to gain knowledge or skill by instruction, learn abs. 1 Cor 14:31; 1 Ti 2:11; 2 Ti 3:7... learn from someone as teacher; ... be someone’s disciple” (616).
 - c. The point of vs. 11 relates to the demeanor a woman exhibits as she gains knowledge or learns.
3. “Quietness” if from *hesuchia*
 - a. **Thayer:** “1. quietness: descriptive of the life of one who stays at home doing his own work, and does not officiously meddle with the affairs of others, 2 Th. iii. 12. 2. silence: Acts xxii. 2; 1 Tim. ii. 11sq.” (281)
 - b. **BDAG:** “1. State of quietness without disturbance... used of living in a way that does not cause disturbance, 2 Th 3:12.” (441)
 - c. **Vine:** “...denotes quietness, 2 Thess. 3:12; it is so translated in the R.V. of 1 Tim. 2:11, 12 (A.V. ‘silence’); in Acts 22:2, R.V., ‘(they were the more) quiet,’ A.V., ‘(they kept the more) silence,’ lit., ‘they kept quietness the more.’” (3:242)
 - d. It is important to note that Paul brackets what he says about the demeanor of women with this word (*hesuchia*). Note 2:11, 12. Suggests its importance.
4. “Submissiveness” is from *hupotage*
 - a. **BDAG:** “the state of submissiveness, subjection, subordination, as opposed to setting oneself up as controller” (441)
 - b. **Thayer:** “1. the act of subjecting.... 2. obedience, subjection: 2 Co. ix.13...Gal. ii. 5; 1 Tim. ii. 11; iii. 4.” (645)

5. Observations:

- a. This instruction is drawn from and is an application of the principle of headship as established by God at creation (1 Co 11:3, 12; 1 Tm 2:13).
- b. This passage addresses the general demeanor of women as they receive instruction.
 - 1) It demands that, in any teaching situation where men are present, a woman must not set herself in such a position as to be in control.
 - 2) She is to take a submissive, obedient, and subordinate role. She is to arrange herself under God's law for her life.

D. **The matter of teaching and exercising authority (1Tm 2:12).**1. Translations:

- a. NASB95: But I do not allow a woman to teach or exercise authority over a man, but to remain quiet.
- b. ASV: But I permit not a woman to teach, nor to have dominion over a man, but to be in quietness.
- c. KJV: But I suffer not a woman to teach, nor to usurp authority over the man, but to be in silence.
- d. NKJV: And I do not permit a woman to teach or to have authority over a man, but to be in silence.
- e. ESV: I do not permit a woman to teach or to exercise authority over a man; rather, she is to remain quiet.
- f. NIV: I do not permit a woman to teach or to have authority over a man; she must be silent.
- g. LEB: But I do not permit a woman to teach or to exercise authority over a man, but to remain quiet.

2. *"I do not allow a woman teach..."*

- a. The inspired apostle, speaking on God's behalf and exercising his apostolic authority, issues a very strong prohibition. Here is something the woman must not do – teach.
- b. "Teach" is from *didasko*
 - 1) **Vine**: "is used (a) absolutely, "to give instruction," e.g., Matt. 4:23; 9:35; Rom. 12:7; 1 Cor. 4:17; 1 Tim. 2:12; 4:11" (2:619)
 - 2) **ESL**: "1 to teach. 1A to hold discourse with others in order to instruct them, deliver didactic discourses. 1B to be a teacher. 1C to discharge the office of a teacher, conduct one's self as a teacher. 2 to teach one. 2A to impart instruction. 2B instill doctrine into one. 2C the thing taught or enjoined. 2D to explain or expound a thing. 2F to teach one something." (#1321)
- c. But, obviously, the statement, *"I do not allow a woman to teach"* cannot be an unqualified prohibition.
 - 1) Women are commanded to teach (Mt 28:18-20; 2 Tm 2:2; Ti 2:3).
 - 2) Women did teach.

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- a) Timothy was taught by his mother and grandmother (2 Tm 1:5; 3:14-15)
 - b) Priscilla and Aquila taught Apollos (Ac 18:24-26)
- d. Therefore, this prohibition must be qualified by something.
- 1) Many believe it is qualified by place – the assembly.
 - a) Yet despite the assertion, there is nothing in the context that suggests that this principle is limited to the assembly.
 - 1] The instructions about prayer are not limited to the assembly (1 Tm 1:8).
 - 2] The instructions about modesty are not limited to the assembly (1 Tm 2:9-10).
 - 3] Women are to adorn themselves with good works both in the assembly and everywhere they go (1 Tm 2:10).
 - 4] Women “will be preserved through the bearing of children,” and this is certainly not an “assembly only” concept (1 Tm 2:15)
 - b) If the instructions here are limited to the worship assembly, what passage would prevent a woman from preaching to a mixed audience at the courthouse square?
 - c) If Paul’s instructions relate to the assembly, this could have been stated much more clearly as he did in other places (*cf.* 1 Co 11:17-18, 20; 14:18-19, 23, 27-28, 33-35).
 - 2) Some believe it is qualified by what is taught - the gospel. Here there are usually two lines of reasoning.
 - a) The first is represented by Christian feminists such as Catherine Kroeger.
 - 1] They have taken this phrase, “*I do not allow a woman to teach...*,” to mean that women are prohibited from teaching *error*.
 - 2] The position is taken that a woman can teach a mixed assemblage, as long as she teaches truth.
 - b) The second line of reasoning suggests that a woman can teach (math, history, *etc.*) to a mixed assembly, she just can’t teach the gospel.
 - c) My response to both lines of argumentation is the same. There is nothing inherent within the word *teach* that suggests the subject matter.
 - 1] To the contrary, *didasko* is used in the LXX with reference to:
 - a] Training a soldier for battle (2 Sm 22:35, *cf.* Ps 18:34 - LXX)
 - b] Father’s teaching their children to follow Baal (Jer 9:14 - LXX)
 - c] Women who taught their children to wail (Jer 9:20 - LXX)

- 2] If the woman's teaching in 1 Timothy 2:12 is in any way qualified by what is taught, i.e., *the gospel*, then this limitation must come from the context and not the meaning of the word itself.
- 3) The context, I believe, better suggests that the prohibition against a woman teaching is qualified by her position as seen in the next part of the verse.
3. "... or exercise authority over a man..."
- a. "Or" is from *oude*
- 1) **BDAG**: "1. *and not, nor* joins neg. sentences or clauses to others of the same kind... 2. also not, not either, neither... 3. not even" (734).
 - 2) **Lenski**: "If this statement were positive it would be followed by an explicative *kai*; since it is negative, we have explicative *oude*, for 'neither to exercise authority over a man' states the point involved in the forbidding 'to teach.' To teach is to act as an *authentēs* over all those taught, as a self-doer, a master or -- to put it strongly -- an autocrat." (563)
 - 3) **Dr. Homer A. Kent**, professor of N.T. and Greek at Grace Theological Seminary, commented in response to a question from Weldon Warnock: "I understand Lenski's comment to be the proper explanation for that passage. I regard 'neither to exercise authority over a man' to be somewhat exegetical of the previous clause and giving one of the reasons why the prohibition to teach is made." (Via Warnock, "Women And Bible Classes," *Searching The Scriptures*, Oct., 1985, 26:10:6)
 - 4) **Patton**: "The word 'nor' is an explicative conjunction joining the two phrases (before and after), the latter explaining the former, i.e., the kind of teaching not to be done. Thus, the kind of teaching forbidden to the woman is that in which she **usurps authority over the man.**" (Patton, 52)
- b. "*Exercise authority over*" is from *authentēo* and is used only here in the New Testament.
- 1) **BDAG**: "to assume a stance of independent authority, give orders to, dictate to" (150)
 - 2) **ANLEX**: "strictly, of one who acts on his own authority; hence have control over, domineer, lord it over (1T 2.12)" (81)
 - 3) **Vine**: "from *autos*, 'self,' and a lost noun *hentes*, probably signifying working (Eng., 'authentic'), 'to exercise authority on one's own account, to domineer over,' is used in 1 Tim. 2:12, KJV, 'to usurp authority,' RV, 'to have dominion.' In the earlier usage of the word it signified one who with his own hand killed either others or himself. Later it came to denote one who acts on his own 'authority'; hence, 'to exercise authority, dominion.' (2:46)
- c. The KJV of this phrase, "nor to usurp authority," is unfortunate because it may leave the impression that what is forbidden here is authority that the woman has wrested from someone else.
- 1) Christian feminists have argued, that when the woman has (by permission) been given the pulpit, she is not usurping authority but only exercising her God-given abilities.

- 2) Yet, there is nothing in the phrase “exercise authority over” to suggest that the woman under consideration has forced herself upon anyone.
- d. I think herein is the underlying principle and teaching of this passage — that women are to be in submission to men and not to hold a position of authority over men — whether it be teaching or anything else.

E. Excursus: Important and Practical Questions.

1. Is this passage an assembly passage?
 - a. For the most part I have already answered this question.
 - 1) There is nothing in the context, that I can presently see, that would limit the instructions here to the assembly.
 - 2) Had Paul wanted to limit this instruction to the assembly he could have stated it much more clearly (*cf.* 1 Co 11:17-18, 20; 14:18-19, 23, 27-28, 33-35)
 - b. There is, however, an argument that has been presented in favor of an assembly view of this passage that I want to address.
 - 1) The argument in syllogistic form goes something like this:
 - a) Major Premise: Males only are told to pray in 1 Tm 2:8.
 - b) Minor Premise: The only place where males only are to pray is in the assembly.
 - c) Conclusion: Thus, the instructions to both men and women in 1 Tm 2 refer only to the assembly.
 - 2) The flaw in this argument is in the minor premise. The assembly of the local church is not the only place where men only are to pray (specifically lead in prayer). In any mixed group, only men should lead in prayer.
2. Does this passage prohibit a woman teaching a man?
 - a. If so, then Priscilla was wrong in aiding her husband to teach Apollos (Ac 18:24-26).
 - b. But, the prohibition in 1Tm 2:11-12 is not that a woman cannot teach a man, it is that she cannot teach in such a way as to exercise authority over the man.
3. Is “exercising authority” limited to the church?
 - a. There is nothing about the word *authenteo* that suggests assembly.
 - b. There is nothing about the context that demands assembly.
 - c. My conclusion is that 1 Tm 2:11-12 teaches that a woman cannot exercise authority over a man period (1 Co 11:3; *cf.* Eph. 5:24).
4. What about women speaking in church business meetings? (This is what Kevin calls, “a sticky wicket”)
 - a. In my search of the New Testament, I struggle to find authority for a men’s only business meeting (particularly, as a substitute for an eldership).
 - b. What I do read about is whole church meetings to conduct the affairs of the church.

- 1) Jerusalem selecting servants (Ac 6:2-3)
- 2) Paul giving a report of evangelistic work accomplished to the church at Antioch (Ac 14:27)
- 3) In the selection of representatives from Jerusalem to the church in Antioch (Ac 15:22).
- 4) In the discipline of an unfaithful members at Corinth (1 Co 5:4).
- c. Concerning meetings of the local church (1 Co 14:23, 26), in these assemblies, Paul instructed the women to keep silent (1 Co 14:34).
- d. I recognize both the dangers and the benefits of having women present in whole church meetings, but my judgment is that the benefits far outweigh the dangers and, more importantly, has the precedent of Scripture behind it.
- e. The over-arching issue in all of this is congregational organization and the failure of so many local churches to be fully organized as God designed with elders and deacons.

F. The reasons for Paul's instruction regarding the submission of women (1Tm 2:13-15)

1. The order of creation (1 Tm. 2:13).
 - a. God's intent in creating man first was to place him in a position of headship.
 - 1) God put Adam in the garden with the intent that he cultivate and keep it (Gn 2:15). This was man's first dominion.
 - 2) His role in naming the animals (Gn 2:19-20) was, at least in part, an act of "ruling over" the creation.
 - b. It was after God put man in the garden with duty to keep it that God said, "*It is not good for the man to be alone; I will make him a helper suitable for him*" (Gn 2:18).
 - 1) "Helper" is from 'azar meaning, "to help, assist, or aid" (Vine, 110).
 - 2) "Suitable" is from *nagad* meaning, "opposite, counterpart..., corresponding to him" (Kohler, 226)
 - 3) God created Eve as Adam's perfect counterpart. Like him, but at the same time very different. Complementing him in every way, yet subordinate to him.
 - c. Paul's statement in 1 Co 11:8-9 supports this view.
2. The circumstances of their fall (1 Tm 2:14)
 - a. If the first reason for woman's subordination was due to the order of creation and her God-assigned role, the second was punitive in nature – "*It was not Adam who was deceived, but the woman, being deceived, fell into transgression.*"
 - b. Does Paul's statement imply that women are more vulnerable to deception than men? Some commentators think so.
 - 1) **Barnes:** "This is the second reason why the woman should occupy a subordinate rank in all things. It is that in the most important situation in which she was ever placed, she had shown that she was not qualified to take the lead. She had evinced a readiness to yield to temptation; a feebleness of

resistance; a pliancy of character, which showed that she was not adapted to the situation of headship, and which made it proper that she should ever afterwards occupy a subordinate situation. It is not meant here that Adam did not sin, nor even that he was not deceived by the Tempter, but that the woman opposed a feebler resistance to the temptation than he would have done, and that the temptation as actually applied to her would have been ineffectual on him. To tempt and seduce him to fall, there were needed all the soft persuasions, the entreaties, and the example of his wife. Satan understood this, and approached man not with the specious argument of the serpent, but through the allurements of his wife. It is undoubtedly implied here that man, in general, has a power of resisting certain kinds of temptation, superior to that possessed by woman, and hence that the headship properly belongs to him. This is, undoubtedly, the general truth, though there may be many exceptions, and many noble cases to the honour of the female sex, in which they evince a power of resistance to temptation superior to man. In many traits of character, and among them those which are most lovely, woman is superior to man; yet it is undoubtedly true that, as a general thing, temptation will make a stronger impression on her than on him. When it is said that “Adam was not deceived,” it is not meant that when he partook actually of the fruit he was under no deception, but that he was not deceived by the serpent; he was not first deceived, or first in the transgression. The woman should remember that sin began with her, and she should therefore be willing to occupy an humble and subordinate situation.” (Notes on the New Testament, Gospel Advocate Deluxe Elec. Ed.)

- 2) **Patton:** “There is a definite implication here that, as a rule, the woman is more vulnerable to deception than the man. While exceptions may be noted, to the honor of women, they are not the rule. Had Eve consulted with her husband first, her deception might have been avoided” (54)
 - 3) Whether or not women are more vulnerable to deception, Paul’s statement is a record of historical fact.
- c. **Hendriksen** observes: “Eve’s fall occurred when she ignored her divinely ordained position. Instead of *following* she chose to *lead*. Instead of remaining *submissive* to God, she wanted to be “*like God*” (110)
 - d. In punishment for her sin in the garden, God declared, “...*your desire will be for your husband, and he will rule over you*” (Gn 3:16).
 - 1) **Pulpit:** “Not merely a prophecy of woman’s subjection, but an investiture of man with supremacy over the woman; or rather a confirmation and perpetuation of that authority which had been assigned to the man at the creation. Woman had been given him as an helpmeet (ch. 2:18), and her relation to the man from the first was constituted one of dependence. It was the reversal of this Divinely-established order that had led to the fall (ch. 3:17). Henceforth, therefore, woman was to be relegated to, and fixed in, her proper sphere of subordination” (“Genesis,” 66-67)
 - e. Paul is simply affirming in 1 Tm 2:14 what God had already decreed in Gn 3:16 — Because of Eve’s deception and perhaps all women’s vulnerability to deception, God has possessed men with the responsibility to lead and women to be subordinate to them.
3. What about culture?

- a. Evangelical feminists have argued that Paul's instructions are based in the culture of the day, and therefore, are not binding on modern women.
- b. The truth is, however, that Paul does not base his argument for the submission of women on culture but upon creation!

G. The salvation of women (1Tm 2:15)

1. Paul draws his thoughts on the submission of women to a close by pointing out that, despite her weakness and her vulnerability to deception, woman can still be "*preserved through the bearing of children.*"
2. This is admittedly a difficult passage. Different views have been submitted.
 - a. Some believe the passage to teach that women will be delivered from danger through the bearing of children if they are faithful.
 - 1) **J. B. Phillips Paraphrase/Translation:** "Nevertheless I believe that women will come safely through child-birth if they maintain a life of faith, love, holiness and gravity"
 - 2) **James Moffat:** "...women will get safely through childbearing if they continue to be faithful and loving and holy" (*The New Testament: A New Translation*)
 - b. Some believe the passage to teach that women, and all mankind, will be saved through the ultimate childbirth of Jesus Christ the Savior (an indirect reference to Gen. 3:15).
 - 1) **Patton:** "Thus, God, in bringing to pass the great scheme of redemption used woman and the act of childbearing as a means to that end (cf. Gen. 3:15)" (55)
 - c. Some believe the passage to teach that, through childbearing, the stigma of having brought sin into the world can be removed from woman.
 - 1) **MacArthur:** "Paul teaches here that although a woman precipitated the Fall and women bear that responsibility, yet they may be preserved from that stigma through childbearing. The rescue, the delivery, the freeing of women from the stigma of having led the race into sin happens when they bring up a righteous seed." ("1 Timothy," 88)
 - d. Some, making the assumption that women feel insignificant in their role as subordinates, believe the passage to teach that, in childbearing, a woman finds significance.
 - 1) **Walvoord:** "...preserved (from insignificance) by means of her role in the family" (*The Bible Knowledge Commentary : An exposition of the scriptures*, 2:736)
 - e. I believe that the most logical view is to hold that "childbearing" is a synecdoche (a part for the whole – cf. Ac 20:7) for woman's role in the home.
 - 1) I believe the passage to teach that a condition of woman's salvation is related to her role in the home.
 - 2) This is emphasized by the last part of vs. 15: "... *IF they continue in faith and love and sanctity with self-restraint*" (Emphasis mine - jhd)
 - 3) Further, that this is the correct view of this passage is borne out in the message of the last two passages we will consider.

II. 1 Tim. 5:14

A. Translations:

1. NASB95: Therefore, I want younger widows to get married, bear children, keep house, and give the enemy no occasion for reproach
2. ASV: I desire therefore that the younger widows marry, bear children, rule the household, give no occasion to the adversary for reviling
3. KJV: I will therefore that the younger women marry, bear children, guide the house, give none occasion to the adversary to speak reproachfully.
4. NKJV: Therefore I desire that the younger widows marry, bear children, manage the house, give no opportunity to the adversary to speak reproachfully.
5. ESV: So I would have younger widows marry, bear children, manage their households, and give the adversary no occasion for slander.
6. LEB: Therefore I want younger widows to marry, to bear children, to manage a household, to give the adversary no opportunity for reproach.

B. The context:

1. The context of this passage has to do with the care of widows.
 - a. First, children and grandchildren are told to “practice piety at home” and take care of their parents (1 Tm 5:4, 8, 16)
 - b. But some are “widows indeed,” who have no one to care for them, hence, the church was charged with their care (1 Tm 5:9, 16).
 - 1) As a “widow indeed” she was “put on the list”
 - a) **Vincent** explains that she was to be “enrolled in a body of widows who are to receive church support” (4: 261)
 - 2) Among the qualifications for her receiving church support was that she be “not less than sixty years old” (1 Tm 5:9).
 - 3) The church at Ephesus was to “refuse to put younger widows on the list” (1 Tm 5:11) for two reasons:
 - a) The probability of remarriage and thereby “setting aside their previous pledge” (perhaps to serve the church in a special way) (1 Tm 5:12)
 - b) The probability of becoming an idle gossip or busybody (1 Tm 5:13)
 - 4) It is then that he gives instruction to younger widows, not merely because they are young widows but because they are young women (1 Tm 5:14; cf. Ti 2:3-5).
2. “Get married”
 - a. Marriage and the home was God’s first institution. When God said, “it is not good for the man to be alone,” (Gn 2:18), He was speaking of a need possessed by both male and female of someone with whom to share in the vicissitudes of life.
 - b. **Patton**: “He wants the younger widows to fulfill their natural calling; to occupy that domain and province which the Almighty God ordained for woman and in which she is without a peer, namely, the home and motherhood. It is here that all

womanly virtues and endowments find their fullest fruition. All women should remember that woman's throne of glory is in the home. She has been created biologically and emotionally by God to fit this role as none other can. There is no place she can serve better" (123)

- c. **MacArthur:** "It is God's design for young women who lose their husbands to remarry. That protects them from living a life of singleness, which their strong desire for marriage and longing to rear children make them ill-suited for. It also protects them from seeking solace in improper relationships. But most important, it recognizes that a woman's highest calling is to the home." (MacArthur, 211-212)
3. "Bear children"
- a. From the very beginning, motherhood has been a part of God's divine plan (Gn. 1:28; 9:7)
 - b. Generally speaking, few things make a woman happier than when she becomes a mother...
 - 1) Sarah (Gn 21:5-7)
 - 2) Rachel (Gn 30:23)
 - 3) Hannah (1Sm 2:1)
 - c. It has been said that "the hand that rocks the cradle rules the world"
 - d. No one rises to any higher plane of moral accomplishment than does a godly mother.
 - 1) No one selflessly sacrifices as a mother.
 - 2) She shares her body with the unborn, gives nourishment, protection; and shares her time, energy, talent, and her very heart as she weeps and laughs through the turbulent changes from childhood to adulthood.
 - 3) No task on earth requires more dedication, commitment, and highly refined skills tempered by compassion and patience, as a mother.
 - e. It is not surprising, then, that "*the bearing of children*" is the phrase that Paul uses (1 Tm 2:15) as a synecdoche to describe the fulfillment of a woman's role in the home – and the path by which she is saved.
4. "Keep house"
- a. Obviously, the phrase doesn't mean, "keep her at the house."
 - b. The meaning of this phrase is best presented in the ESV where the text says, "*manage their households.*" (from Gr. *oikodespoteo*)
 - 1) **BDAG:** "...manage one's household, keep house 1 Ti 5:14." (695)
 - 2) **Thayer:** "to be master (or head) of a house; to rule a household, manage family affairs: 1 Tim. v. 14." (439)
 - c. The point that Paul is making is that the woman's throne is in the home.
 - 1) It is her responsibility to see that her husband and children are loved.
 - 2) It is her responsibility to see that her husband and children are fed and clothed.

- 3) It is her responsibility to see that the household is kept in proper decorum.
- 4) It is her responsibility to undergird home support and provide the inner strength that only a wife and mother can provide.
- d. King Lemuel's mother painted a beautiful picture to her son of what it means to manage the household -- the beautiful portrait of the worthy woman (Pr 31:10-31).
5. "Give the enemy no occasion for reproach"
 - a. **Patton:** "The word occasion is a military term for a base of operations... He did not want young widows, by their conduct, to afford a base of operations for any attack against the cause of Truth." (124)

III. Titus 2:3-5

- A. At the risk of sounding repetitious, I want to look at Titus 2:3-5 separately. This passage is very similar in instruction to 1 Timothy 5:14.
 1. Where the latter addresses "young widows" specifically, this passage addresses young women in general.
 2. To be more precise, the passage addresses older women and what they are to teach the younger.
- B. The context:
 1. Paul instructed Titus to "*set in order what remains and appoint elders in every city*" (Ti 1:5).
 2. The appointment of elders who were able to "*exhort in sound doctrine and to refute those who contradict*" (Ti 1:9) provided the leadership necessary to silence rebellious men (Ti 1:10-11).
 3. Like these elders, Titus was to be a man of sound doctrine (Ti 2:1). Part of this relates to the conduct of different classes of people: Older men, older women, young women, and young men (Ti 2:2-6).
 4. Paul singles out older women and gives to them the task of encouraging younger women to specific domestic endeavors (Ti 2:3-4).
- C. **The responsibility of older women to encourage or teach younger women (Ti 2:3).**
 1. Am I overstepping the bounds of exegesis too much to suggest that part of what needed to be "set in order" – a part of that which was lacking – consisted of not having older women who could or would step up and assume this role?
 2. "Encourage" in Ti 2:4 is from *sophronizo*
 - a. **ESL:** "translates as "teach to be sober... 1 restore one to his senses. 2 to moderate, control, curb, disciple. 3 to hold one to his duty. 4 to admonish, to exhort earnestly." (#4994)
 - b. **BDAG:** "to instruct in prudence or behavior that is becoming and shows good judgment, encourage, advise, urge" (986)
 3. Am I missing something? Or, is there a conspicuous absence of older women who are both willing and able to take on this role? Why is this so?

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- a. Is it because there are few good women Bible students? Few women who have prepared themselves for this role?
 - b. Is it because older women are afraid of confrontation and unwilling to accept this duty?
 - c. It is because there is such arrogance among the young that they will not heed the older?
4. The reasons, no doubt, are many and unknown to me. But I do lament the fact that there seems to be so few older women who are willing to step up and teach the younger.
 5. Could the greater failure be in those of us who preach the gospel to “set in order the things that are lacking?” Maybe we have not done a good enough job “*equipping the saints (particularly women - jhd) for the work of service, to the building up of the body of Christ*” (Eph 4:12).
- D. What the older women were to teach the younger women (Ti 2:4-5)
1. “*To love their husbands*”
 - a. “Love” is from *philandros* and carries the idea of affection, particularly like one would have for a friend.
 - b. **Patton** says that “This love also involves being supportive of their husbands in his dreams, ambitions, and every worthy endeavor” (282)
 - c. It is possible that this includes the idea of a wife fulfilling her physical duty to her husband (1 Co 7:3-5).
 2. “*To love their children*”
 - a. “Love” here is from *philoteknos* and carries the idea of motherly affection for one’s offspring.
 - b. In a time when motherhood seems to be thought of more in terms of biological reproduction than in function, we should never take for granted that women will have affection for their children.
 - c. There are modern Athaliah’s (2 Kgs 11:1) who are “without natural affection” (Rm 1:31 - KJV). The blood of millions of aborted babies cry from America’s soil in testimony.
 - d. Motherly affection includes hugs, and Bible stories, and wiping fevered brows. It includes diaper changes, and soda pops, and pops of a different nature.
 3. “*To be sensible*”
 - a. “Sensible” is from *sophron* and means “prudent, thoughtful, self-controlled” (BDAG, 987)
 - b. No one needs the ability to control their senses like a mother. Of all people, she needs wisdom and sound judgment.
 - c. How many of us praise our mothers for wisdom and sound judgment?
 4. “*Pure*”
 - a. “Pure” is from *hagnos* and signifies “pure from every fault, immaculate” (Vine, 2:97)
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- b. How unfortunate are some children who have mothers like Athaliah who was “his (*Ahaziah’s - jhd*) counselor to do wickedly” (2 Chr 22:3).
5. “Workers at home”
- I mentioned earlier that this doesn’t mean “keep her at home.”
 - Nor does it mean that she can’t work outside the home at times and under certain circumstances. The virtuous woman of Proverbs 31 engaged in business.
 - But I must point out that the modern idea of a career woman is in direct conflict with the woman pictured in the Bible as a “good manager of the home.”
6. “Kind”
- “Kind” is from *agathos* meaning, “1 of good constitution or nature. 2 useful, salutary. 3 good, pleasant, agreeable, joyful, happy. 4 excellent, distinguished. 5 upright, honourable.” (ESL, #18)
 - To be kind is to be gentle, considerate, amiable, congenial, and sympathetic, even with those who are undeserving and unkind to them.
 - To be kind is to be godlike, “for [God] Himself,” Jesus said, “is kind to ungrateful and evil men” (Lk 6:35).
 - Paul admonishes believers to “be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving each other, just as God in Christ also has forgiven you” (Eph. 4:32).
7. “Subject to their own husbands”
- “Subject” is from *hupotasso*.
 - Vine:** “primarily a military term, “to rank under” (*hupo*, “under,” *tasso*, “to arrange”) (2:602)
 - ESL:** *hupotasso* means “1 to arrange under, to subordinate. 2 to subject, put in subjection. 3 to subject one’s self, obey. 4 to submit to one’s control. 5 to yield to one’s admonition or advice. 6 to obey, be subject. Additional Information: A Greek military term meaning “to arrange [troop divisions] in a military fashion under the command of a leader”. In non-military use, it was “a voluntary attitude of giving in, cooperating, assuming responsibility, and carrying a burden” (#5293)
 - But inequality does not imply inferiority
 - When the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, His role was subordinate to that of the Father’s (1 Cor. 11:3; Phil. 2:5-8), but He was not inferior to the Father (Jn. 1:1-2, 14; 5:17-18, 22-23; 10:30; Col. 2:9)
 - Furthermore, when Jesus delivers up the kingdom to the Father, He will again be subordinate to the Father, but not in any way inferior (1 Cor. 15:24-28)
 - My role as a citizen in this country is subordinate to that of the governor of this state and the president of this country, but that does not mean that I am inferior to them in worth and value in any way
 - Likewise, the subordinate role that God has given women does not make them inferior to men.
 - In fact, submission is a responsibility for all who would follow Christ

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- 1) Christians are to submit to elders (Heb. 13:17)
 - 2) Children are to submit to parents (Eph. 6:1-3)
 - 3) Slaves are submit to masters (Eph. 6:5-6)
 - 4) Citizens are to submit to civil government (Rom. 13:1)
 - 5) The younger are to submit to the older (1 Pet. 5:5)
 - 6) Christians are to submit to one another (Eph. 5:21; 1 Pet. 5:5b)
- f. Yet we are not inferior to one another but equal in Christ (Gal. 3:26-29)
- 1) **McGuigan:** “And what is submission but the placing of ourselves, for Christ’s sake, at one another’s disposal so that we can supply what it is that the other needs?” (222)
 - 2) **Stauffer:** “That the word ‘subjection’ or the role of subjection makes no statement regarding inferiority or superiority is evident in the business world. Employees, for example, are subject to their employers, but are often more intelligent and more talented than their bosses. And surely they are not sub-human or second-class citizens because someone rules them. Roles whether of submission or dominion, say nothing of themselves about ability or value. They speak only of functions and responsibilities.” (38)
- g. **Blackford:** “God made neither the church nor the family a democracy. He ordained a chain of authority. This does not mean He loves elders more than He loves deacons, or kings more than He loves citizens, or parents more than He loves children, or husbands more than He does wives.” (“Living In Subjection,” Searching The Scriptures, July, 1992, 33:7:152)
- E. The reason for this teaching and conduct– “*so that the word of God will not be dishonored*” (Ti 2:5)
1. “Dishonored” is from *blasphemeo*
 - a. **BDAG:** “to speak in a disrespectful way that demeans, denigrates, maligns.... in relation to humans slander, revile, defame.... in relation to transcendent or associated entities slander, revile, defame, speak irreverently/impiously/disrespectfully of or about” (178)
 2. All Christians are to guard their conduct in such a way as not to give the devil and his minions an opportunity to speak against God and His word (1 Co 10:32; 1 Tm 6:1; Ti 2:8; 1 Pt 2:12; 3:16;)
 3. Paul is concerned here with the godly conduct of wives (cf. 1Tm 5:14).

Conclusion:

- I. I believe it to be abundantly clear from the pastorals (as well as other related passages) that God intended that the primary role of a woman be domestic.
 - A. I realize that, in our present society, this is not a “politically correct” view to take.
 1. In fact, I am amazed at the number of commentaries and other sources I have read that take a “Jewish” approach to phrases like “*being subject to their own husbands*” (Ti 2:5) and observe the “Passover,” *i.e.*, not even comment on them.

- B. In addition, I believe that the stance I have taken is (or will be) unpopular among most women in the church. The feminist movement has had its effect upon us, causing many women to occupy positions of authority that I question their right to hold
- C. Generally speaking, we have not discussed, debated, or thrashed out this subject as we have issues like institutionalism, MDR, and a host of others. Why?
- II. So, to carry you back to the question raised by my introduction, should women have the right to vote?
- A. I'm going to leave the answer to that question up to you and your wife as you "*work out your salvation with fear and trembling*" (Phil. 2:12).

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